

Slavery And The Bible

“Consult the Bible and you will discover that the creator of the universe expects us to keep slaves.”

Atheist Sam Harris in
Letter To A Christian Nation

Does the Bible endorse slavery?

When writing to Christian slaves and masters, why doesn't the Apostle Paul explicitly condemn slavery?

Slavery In New Testament Times

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- Different from the slavery that existed in the American South during the pre-Civil War era
Not racially based, but the consequence of war or indebtedness
- Deeply embedded in the structure and economy of Greco-Roman society
Dismantling slavery all at once would have brought about a collapse of society.

Slavery In New Testament Times

- Christianity was a minority religion with no social or political clout.
Any attempt to overturn the institution of slavery would have been a feeble failure, and the fledgling Christian movement likely would have been squashed.

Slavery In New Testament Times

- The NT instruction to masters and slaves was counter-cultural—even revolutionary!
Its call for radical transformation of workplace relationships (Christian masters and slaves are brothers and sisters in Christ!) undermined the very concept of slavery, and led to its eventual abolition.

Respect Your Boss!

Obey those over you—
whether they are Christians or not.

Colossians 3:22, Titus 2:9, 1 Timothy 6:1-2, NIV

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything... Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them... All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect... Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow-believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and devoted to the welfare of their slaves...

Ways To Respect Your Boss

- **Do your job even when the boss isn't watching!**
 ...do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor...
 Col. 3:22, NIV

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- **Do your job even when the boss isn't watching!**
 ...do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor...
 Col. 3:22, NIV
- **Do your job without mouthing off or being unethical!**
 Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted...
 Titus 2:9-10, NIV

Ways To Respect Your Boss

- **Do your job with enthusiastic excellence!**
 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart...doing the will of God from your heart. Serve whole-heartedly...
 Col. 3:23, Eph.6:6-7, NIV

Even Bosses Have a Boss!

Earthly masters have
Someone over them—way over them!

This should affect how they treat those under them!

Colossians 4:1, Ephesians 6:9, NLT

Masters, be just and fair with your slaves...Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them; remember that you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites.

Your REAL Boss!

Ultimately, as a follower of Jesus, you work for him!

Colossians 3:23-24, NIV & Ephesians 6:6-7, NLT

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not human masters...It is the Lord Christ you are serving...As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

Make Your REAL Boss Look Good!

Others in the workplace are
watching you more than you know!

1 Timothy 6:1, Titus 2:10, NIV

All those who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of respect, so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered...so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

Your Final Review And Reward

Never forget that your REAL boss will someday evaluate your job performance, and make your good work for him eternally worthwhile!

Ephesians 6:8, Colossians 3:24, NLT

Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slave or free...Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward...

Your Workplace Is Sacred Space!

Turn it into a sanctuary where God is glorified!
