

Titus 2:6-10

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 December 2022

Preacher: Nathan Rambeck

[0 : 00] Chapter 2. Anybody excited about that? I'm excited about that. But you know what? I'm actually going to go back to Chapter 1. Is that okay? Just for a few minutes.

Just because something came up this week and I it just got me a little bit animated and so I wanted to talk about it. Because it's really an application of something that we talked about a couple weeks ago. And if you go back to Chapter 1 Paul is talking to Timothy about the requirements for elders and one of the things he talks about is the Word of God and being good stewards of the Word of God.

He says he talks about Cretans being liars and evil beasts and lazy gluttons. He says in verse 9, he said, So those who are leaders in a church need to make sure that there is sound doctrine being taught and not additional things.

And so later on down in verse, let's see, where is it? Verse 14, he says this So I wanted to talk just briefly about commandments of men.

So God has given commandments, right? From heaven. It's from God. But sometimes we can be extra creative and create our own commandments.

[1 : 44] And we can put heavy burdens We might think that they're light burdens But for some people what might be a light burden for us is a heavy burden for someone else.

And so we can come up with our own rules our own commandments that seem you know, to be good. But does God allow us to do that? To just create up our own commandments that we think that put on obligations on people that what we might think is a good idea.

Does he give us the liberty to do that? No, in fact, right here Paul says don't allow this to happen. So just this last week Christmas is coming up, right?

Everybody excited about Christmas? I'm super excited about Christmas. And Christmas Day falls on what day this year? Does anybody know? Sunday, right? And so when Christmas falls on a Sunday what do a lot of people like to do on Christmas morning?

Yeah, you get up do you get dressed? You stay in your pajamas anybody else do this? Is that just me? Our family? Okay. A few others. Stay in your pajamas hopefully they're Christmas pajamas anybody have Christmas pajamas?

[2 : 56] Yes, awesome. We have Christmas pajamas a lot of them don't fit anymore because we bought them a few years ago. And then what? You open up presents underneath the Christmas tree right?

And I don't know maybe have a nice breakfast whatever maybe you get together and you drive to grandma's house for Christmas morning. There's all kinds of different traditions that people will do on Christmas Day.

And so out there on the internet you know people on social media you know giving their opinions on different things and I've seen it several times already you know make sure that because Christmas is on a Sunday this year that you don't skip out on church.

Make sure you go to church on Sunday morning. Right? Because why? Because well God might be mad at you if instead of going to church you get up and you open presents with your family.

Is that what the Bible teaches? No. Now is it a good to go to church? Yes. It's great to go to church. In fact if you don't go to church regularly then you will become unhealthy as a Christian.

[4 : 06] It just you just will. Even if it's not your fault. Right? It can lead to a lack of spiritual health in your life if you don't go to church on a regular basis. Being among the people of God is healthy for you spiritually.

And so people ought to do that. But is there does the Bible teach us that you have to be at church every single Sunday? No.

Not at all. Peter tells us what does he say? He said don't forsake the assembling of one another. He's saying hey you guys need to get together as a church and do these things. And so some people might think well since it's a good idea for people to assemble together for church and it's healthy spiritually then let's make a rule.

We'll make a regulation and tell people that they need to be at church at every Sunday otherwise God's going to be mad at them. And that will help encourage people to go to church.

And you know what? That actually works. Do you know that? A lot of times people if you tell them they have to go to church they'll go to church more often. But the risk of that is that what?

[5 : 23] You bring people under condemnation and guilt if they miss church. And imagine coming under condemnation and guilt because you miss church because you're having a good time celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ with your family on a Sunday morning and you feel guilty about that.

That is horrific. So the commandments of men teach things that God did not teach. It's healthy to go to church.

It's wonderful to meet with the saints. But sometimes it's actually a better decision to maybe stay home on a Sunday. things come up.

You know sometimes people have to go to work. Right? That's what their job requires. There's important things they have to do. Sometimes you get called in. Sometimes people are sick. There's all kinds of different reasons where that might be appropriate.

And when we make a rule saying that you have to be in church every Sunday and if you don't you're out of the will of God. God's going to be angry at you. You know you're going to be on shaky ground with the Lord that puts people under condemnation and is that why Jesus died for all our sins and died on the cross so that we could live in guilt and condemnation?

[6 : 38] Because of the commandments of man of all things? Absolutely not. So church is going to be open on Sunday this Christmas.

I'll be here. And anybody who wants to come we'd love to see you. but if you want to stay home with your family and open presents under the Christmas tree on Sunday morning then I will be thrilled with that as well.

There's more that we could say about that but I'm going to stop there because I have to save my voice. Am I allowed to tell people that it's okay to not come to church?

Ron, is that okay? All right. Yeah, so church we'll be here we'll have church service on Sunday morning but if you choose to stay with your family we will be more than thrilled for that to happen and I'm sure the Lord will as well.

All right. So just one little bit from chapter one and we'll go back to chapter two. Okay, we ready? Where are we at here? So we're talking about basically how should Christians live?

[7 : 59] In chapter one we talked about leaders in the church and leaders in the church should have upright character. You shouldn't be a leader in the church if you're not living the Christian life. You know, Christians are in different places in their life and some people are still maturing.

They're growing. Some people came right out of the world just, you know, not knowing how to live the way that they ought maybe because they weren't they didn't grow up that way or because they just got wrapped up into all kinds of sinful behavior.

Then they become Christians and sometimes it takes some time to grow, right? So if you're still growing and you haven't figured out how to follow Christ live a godly life live a life of character according to how God would want us to live then you shouldn't be a leader in a church maybe in the future as you mature but not right now.

But really all of us should live the Christian life. And so in chapter 2 here Paul talks about four groups of people well he actually talks about five.

He talks about older men older women younger women and younger men. And then he talks about those who are in bondage who are slaves or bond servants and we'll get to that in a second.

[9 : 19] We talked last week about older men and older women and then the younger women and things about character and behavior and there are many things that overlap for whether you're a male or female whether you're young or old there are things that are part of our character that are the same for everyone.

And there are a few things I think that are unique and we talked about that last week as well. But where are we at today? We're in verse 6. We'll read to the end of up to verse 10.

Likewise exhort the young men to be sober minded in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works in doctrine showing integrity reverence incorruptibility sound speech that cannot be condemned that one who is an opponent may be ashamed having nothing evil to say of you.

Exhort bond servants to be obedient to their own masters to be well pleasing in all things not answering back not pilfering but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

So let's go back to verse 6 and this time we're talking about young men. We talked about older men and older women and younger women and now we're talking about older men and he says exhort those young men to be sober minded.

[10 : 49] Exhort just means to entreat or encourage and so hey give some instruction here to young men that they should be sober minded. You know one of the differences there are differences between older men and younger men especially when you've been believers for a while.

typically when you're younger you still have some maturing to do. Now even when you're older you still have some maturing to do right? But when you're older you've had more time you're kind of seasoned you know I call it right?

Now does that mean that everyone who is older even someone who's been a Christian for 20 years is mature? No right? We've all experienced those who have been Christians for many many years and for whatever reason have decided that they're they don't they're not going to grow in the faith maybe as they ought to.

We all should be growing. So when it comes to younger men you might notice a difference in knowledge right? And wisdom. Paul talks in he mentions in 2 Timothy 22 he says this to Timothy he says to Timothy flee youthful lusts.

lusts he talks about lusts that tend to be something that accompanies youth right? And it makes me think of you know you see this a lot in in the culture right?

[12 : 12] Where you have these young people who just get into all kinds of sexual immorality and drugs and drunkenness and that kind of thing and it ends up catching up with them.

Because when you're young those kinds of things you might be able to whether through youthful strength or a lack of responsibility you know having a family or whatever kind of avoid the destruction that comes with those things.

But eventually it catches up doesn't it? It catches up to you. And so those that are older a lot of times have that experience. Not necessarily because they they didn't do those things but maybe because they did right?

When you're younger and then those things did catch up to you. And as an older person you have more experience. You have experience of the destruction that comes with a lifestyle of sinfulness.

And so I think that young people tend to be more susceptible to deceptive kinds of lusts and the seductions of the world because they haven't experienced the destruction that comes with it.

[13 : 21] So for young men one be sober minded sober minded and that sober you know you think about drunkenness and alcohol and this isn't necessarily talking about that but it's talking about your mind though it can relate right?

So in your mind don't be like a drunk person and when you're drunk you don't have the full capacity of your mind and you do foolish things right?

So don't be foolish but be sober minded be prudent be wise in your life. Make good decisions. Verse 7 In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works.

So really I think there's a translation the ESV which I think is a pretty good translation uses this phrase it's he says or it says a model of good works.

In today's culture sometimes we talk about being a good what? Role model right? You should be a good role model and that's what he's talking about. You should live your life so that others can pay attention to you and say hey that person is living the kind of Christian life that I know I ought to and I want to follow after the model the pattern that they're showing me.

[14 : 41] All of us should live that way. We all may not be there yet but we all should aspire to be good role models. this makes me think of some things in the culture.

You know there are certain things that put people in the spotlight in our culture. You might be some kind of sports superstar right? Throwing a football really well, shooting hoops, whatever it might be or maybe you're in the movies right and people know who you are because they've seen you on the latest hit picture or maybe you're a you sing really well and you've got a new album out that has sold millions of copies and so you're in the spotlight and people tend to put those people up on a pedestal and things have happened in the culture where maybe it's a sports star and they got into trouble.

They committed adultery. They did something that is not a great example. In fact, it could be a horrible example and that happens maybe every once in a while, right, in our culture?

It's interesting because today it seems that it's now kind of expected, right, if you are in the spotlight that you will live a lifestyle that is ungodly.

It's not shocking, it's not surprising, it's kind of just expected. But one of the things that I've heard from people, they do something that even the world thinks is yucky and they're chastised for not being a good role model.

[16 : 15] And sometimes what I'll hear is, well, I didn't sign up to be anybody's role model. Anybody ever heard that? Yeah. And is that an appropriate response?

Do we get to choose whether we are going to be role models to people in the world? Absolutely not. We have a duty, an obligation before God to be a good role model regardless of who we are or what our job is or how much spotlight we do or don't have.

People are watching and God expects us, especially as believers, to be good role models to all of those around us. And you know, God even expects us of unbelievers.

Right? If you're not a believer, you still ought to live a good life. In fact, that's what the whole sin and God dying for the sins of the world is all about.

There was a video that came up, a video clip that I saw on social media the last couple of weeks about a minister who said something, and I won't say his name because I wasn't, I didn't watch the whole thing, so this is just a clip and sometimes things are taken out of context.

[17 : 32] But he was apologizing, he was on the television or YouTube or whatever it was, and apologizing to unbelievers because certain Christians have expected them to live according to Christian principles.

He was apologizing to unbelievers because there are Christians who have expected them to live according to biblical principles. Now, that's exactly what sin is, right?

It's not like the Christian life is some kind of different life than just general goodness. Right? That's what the Christian life is. It's just living a good life.

And that's what everybody ought to do, whether you're a Christian or not. Now, you should be a Christian to follow Christ because he is the Lord and Savior, and of course, he is the Savior of all of our sins, and all of us have failed to live the kind of life that we ought to.

Right? And that's what the gospel is all about. That we can have life in him even though we have failed. But it certainly is not inappropriate to expect everyone, regardless of your religion or lack thereof, to live a good and upright life.

[18 : 50] Be a good role model. Showing yourself to be a pattern of good works. And he says this, in doctrine, showing integrity. The King James says uncorruptness of doctrine.

I didn't know that was a word, uncorruptness. But evidently it is, at least back in when the King James was originally written. Uncorruptness of doctrine.

You know, having good doctrine is not something that's just important for elders or teachers or bishops or pastors or whatever you might want to call it. It's important for all of us as believers to have good doctrine.

To study our Bibles. To become students of the Word. Even at a young age. And what does that require? Requires opening up the Bible and seeing what it says.

It means listening to teachers, those who have studied the Bible before, and see if they can open up our eyes to things that are in the Scriptures that maybe we haven't seen before. And yes, not every teacher is going to explain the Bible accurately.

[19 : 59] You know, even me, I'm not a completely foolproof Bible teacher. There are mistakes that I made, and you know, I hope I don't make any, but you know, such is life, right?

We're not perfect. So we need to study the Bible for ourselves, but the Bible says, Paul says, he says that God has set teachers in the church to be a help to us, to help us explain the Bible, what it says, what it teaches.

Another part is asking lots of questions. When you're studying things, when you're trying to learn, it's good to ask questions. One of the mistakes I see a lot of young people make, whether it's children or maybe people who are younger, and of course, this applies to everybody.

People can make this mistake at any age, but I tend to see it in younger people, is right to think that you know a lot, or to maybe want to put on an appearance that you have lots of knowledge or wisdom.

You know, I've been in a software engineer for many years, and sometimes I'll work with people who are just starting, and they do things the wrong way, or things that maybe are not a wise path to go when they're building software or whatever it might be.

[21 : 17] And I think to myself, they should be asking a lot more questions. Asking questions. What do you think, you know? Is this the right way to do it? And the same in our Christian life. It might be embarrassing if you let somebody know that you don't really know something about the Bible.

That might be embarrassing, right? But if you don't ask the questions, and maybe even talk to people about it, you'll never come to the answer. You'll never get the feedback that you need.

So be willing to ask questions. So for all of us Christians, we need to study the Bible. We need to make sure that we have a good grasp and understanding of the Bible.

And it's not something that you're going to get in a week. Are you going to become a Bible scholar in a week? Are you going to become a Bible scholar in two years? No.

I mean, some people, they, you know, spend a dedicated amount of time, and they can grow a lot in two years. But it takes really a lifetime of growing in the Lord. And we should be okay with that. That's okay.

[22 : 20] And really, are we going to know everything by the time we come to the end of our life? No. And when we go to be with the Lord forever, which the Bible says that one day we will, we will be with the Lord forever, are we going to know everything then?

Or will there still be opportunities to grow? I think so. I think we will continually be growing with the Lord for all of eternity. Is there really an end to the knowledge of God?

I can't imagine that there is. We'll always be learning and growing in Him and finding out more about Him, which I think is wonderful. Wouldn't it be kind of boring in your life if you just knew everything?

I don't know, maybe not. The next thing he talks about here is reverence, being a reverent person.

And this is something that I think has come up for every individual. He talked about it with the elders. He talked about it with the older men and the older women and the younger women, this term reverent. And he's talking about it now with the young men.

[23 : 29] And this is not that you are a reverent person, but that you are a person worthy for other people to revere. You're worthy of, we would say today, respect.

That you garner respect. That people respect you because of your character, because of the way that you walk, the way that you live your life. And then the next word that he used here is incorruptibility.

Incorruptibility. And this is a reference to your character. Your character. This is the same word that's used in speaking of our current bodies and then our future bodies.

This verse in 1 Corinthians 15. 1 Corinthians 15 is all about the resurrection of the body. That those who trust in the Lord and really unbelievers as well will be resurrected.

Some to eternal life and some to eternal damnation. But we will all be resurrected. In verse 15, or excuse me, 1 Corinthians 15 verse 42 it says this, so also is the resurrection of the dead.

[24 : 39] The body is sown in corruption. This body that we have now is subject to decay. It gets older and it wears out. But it is raised in incorruption.

He's talking about the future resurrection of the body. Our bodies will be raised up and they will no longer be subject to decay. Is that the most wonderful thing you've ever heard?

Isn't that amazing? That we will get bodies that will no longer be subject to all the pains and weariness and decay that we experience now.

But this word corruption and incorruption that's used here about our bodies, both our current ones and our future ones, is the same word that Paul is using here in talking to Titus about young men.

That you are incorruptible. Is he talking about our bodies? Can we help whether our bodies are corruptible right now? We can't. He's talking about your character. You have the kind of character that cannot be corrupted.

[25 : 40] And we use that language today, right? This isn't just biblical language, though maybe we have pulled it from the Bible. But we talk about, especially young people, right, being corrupted. corrupted. And people can be corrupted by others.

Right? By the influence of others. And so, don't be the kind of person that is easily tempted, seduced, swayed by the different things that are coming from the world.

Do you ever see that with even Christian people? You know, you have some kind of new idea that comes from the world. Right? And you see Christians who are just pulled into it.

The Bible teaches against it. But they just kind of go towards it because, well, it looks appealing or whatever it might be. I'm going to read the whole first psalm because it kind of speaks to this whole idea.

Psalms chapter 1. And if you're looking for that, it's right there, almost right in the smack in the middle of your Bible. Psalm 1 speaks to this.

[26 : 54] It says this, Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night.

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither, and whatever he does shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so, and are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish.

I love the Psalms. Both Proverbs and Psalms have so many great kind of word pictures that illustrate things. I think this is a good visual illustration of uncorruptedness, somebody who is incorruptible.

Now that was in the dispensation of law, and so it's talking about being faithful to basically the law of Moses. But we know under this dispensation of grace that we will find success in living a godly life by finding our righteousness in Christ, and by living in the Spirit.

[28 : 18] But we can still look at these visual illustrations from the Psalms and from the Old Testament. We want to be like that tree that when the world comes at us with these new ideas, we are going to be rooted and planted in God's word, and won't be swayed by those things, whether it's through temptation or false doctrine or whatever it might be.

In verse 8, he goes on and he says, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to speak of you.

sound speech is just, again, that word sound, wholesome, wholesome speech. And in the culture today, you know, I have been, I'm 44 now, and I have noticed in my 44 years a change in the culture.

When I was younger, even just a teenager, in high school, and high school, is high school a place where there's a lot of virtue? Not through my experience.

Maybe some of you have experienced that, but I have not. But I remember that there were certain kids in school who would use vulgar language, curse words, vulgarities, and they would get in trouble for saying those things.

[29 : 47] And, you know, they were like the really bad kids. Other kids got into trouble. They did naughty things, things that they ought not to do. But they didn't use this vulgar language. You know, a lot of times people would go to, often to the military, right?

And what do they call it? Talking like a sailor, right? We use, we say that for a reason. Military is kind of known for salty, vulgar language. But has that changed today?

Oh my word. It's been, it's been difficult to experience that. Even in the work life, I remember, you know, being a job as a young man and never, never would somebody use a vulgarity in the workplace.

And then as time went on, just people drop in all kinds of curse words to their colleagues all day long. And it's become somewhat acceptable to speak in vulgar terms, even in, even in the business world.

It should not, it should not be that way. Our speech should be healthy, sound, and that doesn't just apply to, you know, make sure you don't say a cuss word, right?

[31 : 00] And there's actually even debate today, and we won't get into it, but whether, you know, it's okay to say cuss words or not. I've heard kind of that. But cuss words are cuss words for a reason.

And really, they're cultural, right? In fact, there are words, even people who speak English in other nations, like if you go to the UK, right, there are words that might be a curse word in the US.

It's the same language, but it's not a curse word in England, and vice versa. So you might say something that seems fairly innocuous when you're in England, and somebody might say, oh, you shouldn't say that, right?

But you just don't know, right? But when you are in a culture that deems certain words to be vulgar and obscene, we shouldn't say those words because we don't want to be seen as vulgar and obscene.

And why are those words used? The purpose of those words is to be obscene and to be vulgar. That's their purpose. And many people, that's what they want to do.

[32 : 04] That's their purpose in using those words is to be obscene and to be vulgar. And we should not follow in their footsteps. I think about comedy today.

It seems like you're not allowed to be funny anymore without being obscene. Have you noticed that? There's a whole YouTube channel. What's it called, guys? Dry Bar Comedy.

Dry Bar Comedy. And the whole thing is kind of clean comedy. And sometimes they push the envelope. But it's not anywhere near what you see most today if you were to, you know, just go to some kind of a comedy club or something like that.

So much vulgarity and obscenity. And I guess, and to me, I think that's an indication that you're not really a funny person, right? If you have to be obscene and vulgar in order to try to get a laugh, that means you're not really funny.

And so, you know, work on your craft a little bit. So, sound speech that cannot be condemned. And it's not like people won't try to condemn you, right?

[33 : 15] But that you can't be credibly condemned for what you say. That one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. So, there are, you know, people that might want to accuse somebody who is noble and good, whether Christian or not, because they have an agenda.

But, you know, we should live our lives in a way that somebody looks at us and what we do and what we say with our words and say, wow, that's a good person.

And we'll see the value of that here as we get to a few more verses. The next thing he points to is to bond servants or slaves.

And we'll talk about that word. Doulos is the word. He says, exhort bond servants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well-pleasing in all things, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior, in all things.

So, there's kind of a debate. Well, what does this word doulos mean? That's the word. Here in my Bible, New King James is what I'm reading from, it uses the word bond servant. But some have pointed out, well, this word doulos actually means slave.

[34 : 29] And so, is Paul talking about bond servants or is he talking about slaves? Well, I don't know that matters a ton, right? Regardless of whether you are a servant to someone who has relative freedom or you are a slave who does not have any freedom, the same thing applies.

How you ought to treat those who you are under their authority. A bond servant is more of like a temporary slave. Somebody who has sold themselves a lot of times just for a period of time.

So, this is something that has happened throughout all of history. People get themselves into a jam in their life and they can't provide for themselves.

And so, they will find opportunity to find somebody who has a lot of wealth usually and they'll say, hey, I'll serve you for three years, four years, five years and, you know, you can kind of provide for me and I'll be your servant for that time.

And maybe you will kind of, over that five years, you know, earn back your freedom or whatever it might be. Now, there are a lot of people who criticize the Bible because, you know, it seems here that Paul is condoning slavery.

[35 : 52] Now, it's not necessarily true that he is condoning slavery, but I'd like to ask the question, you know, is slavery in and of itself something that is evil?

Now, we have, I think, our vision of kind of the whole history of the world is a little bit marred in this country because we have a heritage of the worst, most grotesque type of slavery that you can imagine.

and I'm sure there are other places in which you could find that it was worse, but what we did in this country is we did something which the Bible explicitly forbids, which is to kidnap people and to sell them into slavery.

The Bible speaks about slavery and actually regulates it to a certain degree in the Old Testament and the Jews, for the Jews, but if you're a King James person, the Bible expressly forbids man stealing.

So there was a big debate in this country during the time where we had slavery in this country about whether this was legitimate or not and even among Christians of all things and there were those and it was mostly a north and a south thing but those who said, well, look, slavery is actually approved of in the Bible.

[37 : 18] it's looked at, it's regulated, it's looked at with some level of acceptance and then there are those who are the abolitionists who are the Christians fighting against what we call today chattel slavery who are saying, no, that's different.

There are forms of what we call slavery that are appropriate but what you are practicing is completely against God's will and they would refer to it as man-stealing.

This is man-stealing where you kidnap someone whatever the case may be from their own nation or whatever it might be and then you sell them off into slavery. They didn't sell themselves, they didn't commit a crime.

That's one of the things, if you look in the Bible under the Jewish law, if you commit a crime you might be sold into slavery to maybe pay back a debt that you owe because you stole something and you don't have the ability to pay it back.

Even in America here, we have, everybody knows, does anybody know, I'll ask this, see everybody's constitutional government knowledge. We have an amendment to our U.S.

[38 : 32] constitution that outlaws slavery. Does anybody know which one it is? What number? Ooh, good job. 13th, the 13th amendment and it outlawed slavery.

But did you know that it actually doesn't outlaw all slavery? I'll just quote from it here. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted shall exist within the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

So we outlawed chattel slavery in this country because it was evil and wicked and completely and totally unjust. But they, when they wrote this amendment they said, well, when people commit crimes it might be appropriate to lock them up.

In fact, do we lock people up today? We do. And is that, do they have freedom when somebody is in prison? No, not really.

slavery, right? And so even today we have, we don't call it slavery, right? But it is punishing someone for a crime by taking away their freedom.

[39 : 50] Now, I don't think jail in general is a good idea, but we won't get into that. Maybe for another day. So, but for, but in general, whether you have sold yourself into slavery because you think that it would be beneficial to your life.

In fact, some people would do this. There are actually regulations in the Bible about Jews, for the Jews, on selling themselves into slavery. And it was not allowed for more than seven years.

It was a maximum. And it wasn't, there was a year of jubilee every seven years. And on the year of jubilee, anybody who had sold themselves into slavery had to be freed. You had to.

And so, if you sold yourself into slavery one year before the year of jubilee, then after one year, you had to be freed. There was an exception made for those who really loved their master.

If you really loved the person that you were serving, and you just like, you didn't want to have to deal with life yourself, you could say, okay, I'm going, you had to do this ritual. You would put your ear on the doorpost and take an awl and you'd, you know, poke your ear with that awl, and it was like a symbol that I'm going to be tied to this house for the remainder of my life.

[41 : 09] And people were allowed to do that if they wanted. They could choose to do that. But the Bible in general kind of discourages selling yourself in that way or being under bondage.

It's in general a bad thing. It is always better to be free than to be in bondage of any kind. 1 Corinthians 7, 21, Paul says this, were you called while a slave?

Don't be concerned about it. But if you can be made free, rather use it. It's like, you know, don't make this a huge deal. If you are born a slave, you know, don't be so upset.

Right? I mean, there are worse things in life. But if you have an opportunity to become free, definitely use that opportunity. for us today, we don't really experience this kind of thing, except we kind of do.

So, there are kind of contracts you can bind yourself to in which you kind of give away certain of your freedom. Anybody ever here been in the military? A few, yeah.

[42 : 16] And do you give away some of your freedoms when you do that? Yeah, you do. It's, you know, we don't call it slavery. It's certainly not full-fledged slavery, but you are giving away some of your rights that you would have otherwise when you join the military.

And, you know, you get a paycheck, and, you know, the government will take care of you to a certain degree. But, if you decide, well, the country's going to war, and I don't really want to do that, so I'm just going to not show up to the battle, you know, is that okay?

No, that's not okay. You don't have the liberty, you don't have the freedom to just do whatever you want. You have an obligation in that scenario when you join the military.

And even for those of us, you know, and I think this applies to most of, many of us, more of us than any of these others, is we have a job, we have an employer that we work for, and so we can apply these kinds of principles to our job.

And, you know, for some people, their job might even feel like slavery. Anybody ever felt like that with a job? Especially in this day and age, a lot of people live paycheck to paycheck, right? And, you know, sometimes that's how you got to start out, you know?

[43 : 33] You live in paycheck to paycheck and you haven't had time to build up savings or whatever, and so if you lose that job, you're in big trouble.

And so it feels like slavery because you feel like you don't have an option. you have to do this job, and sometimes your employer makes you do yucky things that you don't like.

You know, you have to deal with people that you don't want to deal with. They're having a bad day, you're having a bad day, and you just want to, you know, maybe you work at a restaurant and somebody mistreats you and you're like, why am I doing this?

But, if you, you're not going to get a paycheck if you don't, right? And if you don't get a paycheck, bills are going to get missed and you're going to get kicked out of your house or the lights are going to get turned off and you feel stuck.

You feel like a slave to your job. Even in those cases, we can put ourselves in the shoes of somebody who is as a slave or as a bond servant.

[44 : 37] But even if we have options, right? And a lot of us do have options, you know, if we don't like this job, well, maybe we can find another one. Even if that is the case, we should pay attention to what Paul says here.

Exhort bond servants to be obedient to their masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back. Be obedient. If you have an employer, do what they ask you to do.

In general, right? I mean, if somebody asks you to do something evil, I want you to steal from the customer. No, don't do that. But in general, be a compliant employee. Be the kind of person that you would want to have as an employee.

Not somebody who is constantly resisting or looking for ways to avoid doing your job, but somebody who is faithfully doing what they're supposed to. There's a ton of entitlement today.

People feel like others owe them a job. Everybody met somebody like that? It's not hard today. People feel like their job is owed to them. And today, in the kind of economy in which we live, where it's actually really hard to find good people, people are desperate to find employees to work at their restaurant or whatever it might be.

[45 : 47] And so, they tend to put up with a lot of shenanigans from their employees because otherwise, they won't have anybody. There's not a lot to choose from. It's slim pickings. And so, it could be easy because you kind of feel like, well, they can't find anybody else, so what are they going to do?

Right? And so many people have that kind of attitude. And it should not be the case for the Christian, that we have an entitlement attitude, that somebody owes me a job. We should have an attitude of gratitude, that we have the job that we have, that somebody was willing to offer us an opportunity to make a wage through our skill, through our labor.

We should be grateful, even if it's hard, even if there are bad days. He says this, well-pleasing in all things. You want your boss to be happy with you, to be pleased.

In fact, that's just a great principle in general. If you work for a company or an organization, whatever it might be, is to make your boss happy, put a smile on their face, to make them successful in the business.

You know, sometimes I'll see, you know, it's been a long time since I've, but I remember I worked for a big corporation years ago, and I could see people kind of like vying for position. I want their job, and so I'm going to make them look bad and make myself look good.

[47 : 09] And that's not how a Christian ought to live. You know, you can make yourself look good by making others look good, can't you? Things can work that way.

And then he says not answering back. So don't be a backtalker, don't be a smart aleck, don't be a wise guy, don't be a thorn in someone's side, but be, you know, in your words and in your behavior.

Be obedient, be kind in your employment. Then he says this, not pilfering. Pilfering, I think that's a word we sometimes use, but not always. But pilfering is like, it's stealing, but it's stealing in kind of a deceptive kind of way, right?

It's not where you, you know, run into the store. I've seen, I've seen these YouTube videos, especially out in like San Francisco, where people are just running into the store and they could care less because they basically made it a law.

You can't arrest somebody unless they steal more than like \$10,000 worth of stuff or something like that. And so people are just running into stores and they're just grabbing stuff and they don't care. Everybody's watching. Employees are not allowed to do anything.

[48 : 17] They just grab stuff and they run out. It's just horrific. But it's not, that's not what pilfering is. That's just in your face like stealing. Pilfering is where you steal but you don't want anybody to know about it.

Right? We call that today embezzlement. And people will find opportunities in the company that they work for. Well, I mean, they have plenty of money.

It's a, you know, the owner of this business, I've seen his house, it's really nice. And so if I just skim a little bit off the top, it'll be fine. He won't even miss it.

Right? Or maybe there's some equipment at work. And well, I could really use that. It'll just be for a couple months and then I'll bring it back. But I don't really want to ask because they might say no.

So I'll just take it with me and I'll bring it back. Or maybe I'll bring it back. We'll see how much I like it. But nobody will miss it, so it'll be fine.

[49 : 18] So this is pilfering. This is embezzling. This is stealing from your employer. The other thing that we can do, because a lot of times, what are employers paying for? They're paying for somebody's time.

And is it possible to steal someone's time? Yeah, they're paying for you to be doing a job, eight hours let's say. Sometimes it's more, sometimes it's less. And there's a real problem today, especially, we had this pandemic, right?

And what's everybody doing? Where's everybody working from? Everybody's at home. And some places, you know, people have started going back to the office. And some places, the office doesn't even exist anymore.

They ended their lease, they're like, okay, we're just not going to pay for an office. This seems to be working. Other people are like, we need people back in the office. And a lot of times, why?

It's because they realize they can't trust their employees. They're at home. How do I know you're doing a good job? Sometimes it's hard to measure. And I have seen, in so many cases, people taking advantage of this whole work from home thing.

[50 : 30] And it's really, it is stealing. It's stealing from your employer. You're supposed to be working, but instead, you're playing video games all morning. And you check in, you know, on email, see if anybody needs anything.

Nope, nobody needs anything. Okay, I've got to beat the bad guy or whatever. And that's horrific. We shouldn't live that way. I've even heard stories, people who anonymously brag online about how they've got this job at Google as a software developer, and they applied for another job at Facebook, but they kept their job at Google.

Since they're working from home, nobody knows. So they've got two full-time jobs. And isn't this awesome? I beat the system.

They're getting two paychecks. And then trying to, you know, just make sure nobody finds out. And, you know, this is stealing.

It shouldn't be that way. Not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity. Fidelity is just, you know, we use that term with audio, low fidelity, high fidelity.

[51 : 43] Somebody who's reliable. It really has, it's the word, it's a faithfulness. Somebody that can be trusted. Trustworthy. Honest.

One good example, especially in the context of slavery in the Bible, who was somebody in the Bible who showed themselves to be faithful? A slave.

Somebody who was a slave. Joseph. Joseph. The Bible. He was a slave, but he didn't, like, just feel sorry for himself and say, oh, I'm going to try to do as little as I can. Because, you know, my brother sold me into slavery.

Instead, he did a good job. He worked hard. He was loyal. He was faithful. And he ended up getting promoted for it in more ways than I'm sure he ever expected.

We ought to be that way in the arena of life in which we live, whether we, you know, to whatever degree of freedom that we have. And thankful for the degree of freedom that we do have.

[52 : 45] But we should live lives that are honoring to God. And then he finishes off with this, and this is where we'll end. He says this, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

He's talking about they, the people, those who are, whether they're slaves, or really everybody, right? All of us who are Christians. That we as Christians may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

And I think that word adorn is especially relevant this season in which we live. Because it's a word that basically means to decorate. Decorate the doctrine of God, adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

Our lives should be as an adornment, a display to the Lord. So that everyone who is looking at those Christians, those Christians over there, they're different.

They stick out. They kind of shine. And they twinkle. people. And I like it. I like those people.

[53 : 59] And there's something that draws you to what is it that makes them different? And so we can be a testimony to Christ by how we live. And God does not determine whether we are Christians or not based on how we live.

Our righteousness is in Christ. He's willing to make us his own, to give us eternal life, whether we successfully live the Christian life or not. But don't we want to be an adornment of God?

Don't we want to be a shining star? There are two verses that relate to this and then we'll finish. And we'll have time for comments after. We can maybe use this microphone.

Mark, or excuse me, Matthew 5, 17, Jesus said this, Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. It was important to Jesus that our light should shine before all men.

That we would be a light to the Father. That we would be glorifying to our Father. And then Philippians 2, 15 says this, That you may become blameless and harmless children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

[55 : 10] Does that sound relevant today? In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom you shine as light in the world. that is how we ought to be and how we ought to live.

You know, in the world we live in today, it's not really that hard to shine. There's a lot of darkness. But we want to shine as bright as we can in this dark world and be a bright and shining light for the Lord that we might bring others into the fold.

Amen? That they might know that Christ died for them and they can have life eternal in Him. And they can have a life that is shining as well. Amen? All right.

We'll take a few minutes and see if anybody has any comments or questions. Anything they want to add or ask? Anyone?

Anyone? All right. We've got one taker. Is it on?

[56 : 22] Yes. Okay. So, there's two things I appreciate you calling out. One, earlier on we were talking about the one pastor that was apologizing for, you know, Christians wanting the world to live as good.

And it's a sad opportunity missed there to let people know that good comes from God. Right? And even in our culture people who don't want to accept God, they want, they expect people to live a certain way and ultimately it's usually good things in most cases.

And people just need to understand it's a connection to the righteousness of God and what He's put out. You know, and so even people who don't accept God, they still don't want you stealing their stuff and things like that.

Well, those are God's principles. So, that's just one thought that I had. But on the whole servant thing or slavery and all that, I think that's a good call out on, you know, what type of slavery that we all kind of kind of think about when we think about what that is.

And it reminded me of, I'd look it up, but Proverbs 22, 7 where it says, you know, that the borrower is, right, slave or servant to the lender. And so, we do have a form of, you know, I wouldn't call it slavery, but yet we all, I mean, who owns our house, right?

[57 : 41] So, who owns our house? You talked about employers. So, you know, we have obligations that it might feel sort of like you're a servant if you decide to just not meet your obligations. You won't have a place to live and you don't have any choice about that.

So, just some things to think about modern day. That's good. Yeah. There's some correlation. Yeah, the whole slavery and freedom is a spectrum, right? You know, I mean, even the worst kinds of slavery, a lot of times, there's a certain amount of freedom that is allowed and there's a whole spectrum.

And there are employers in the past that I've heard of, you know, and maybe even this happens today, where people will take advantage of their employees. In fact, there's a song. It's a Basie song.

What's the name of that song about the coal mines? 16 tons. Anybody heard of that song? 16 tons. What do you get? Another day older and a deeper in debt. And the last part of the refrain is, you know, I sold my soul to the company store, right?

And so these big companies, they'll take advantage of people and they'll intentionally try to keep them in poverty or indebted, right? In debt by, you know, taking out credit from the company store and you got to keep on working, keep them going into those coal mines in order to pay off that debt.

[58 : 57] That's horrific. That is a form of slavery. It is. And companies shouldn't do that, shouldn't take advantage of people like that. But there's also an amount of kind of, you know, you're the one that borrowed the money too, right?

So we need to be careful, every one of us, you know, we can indebt ourselves, we can enslave ourselves through debt. Be careful. Be careful with that. Thanks for pointing that out.

Anything else? One more right here? Or another one? Yeah, I just had another song in mind when you were talking about being a light. This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine and don't hide it under a bushel.

Yes. Let that light shine. Don't hide it under a bushel. Another one? Just thinking about modern day slavery is listening to people's comments, kind of following up on what Joe said, but I'm thinking about credit card use today.

Yeah. And how we're not exactly tricked, but it's easy to fall into, you know, the groove of, well, this week I can't pay, but, you know, I'll use my credit card and I'll pay it back next month, and then next month you don't really have any more money.

[60 : 15] And it's kind of like that company store thing, if you let it. So. Yeah, that's right. We've got to be careful. The Bible, God wants us to remain free as long as we're able, as long as we're able.

Anything else? Going once. All right. We'll end it there. I'll end in prayer.

Father, thank you so much for your word and for giving us guidance in our life. We really want to be lights. We ask that you would work in our life, that we would be lights, decorations, ornaments that reflect your glory in a dark world.

We pray that you would work in us each and every day to be those bright lights, those ornaments for you. In Jesus' mighty name. Amen. Don't forget, if you want to renew your membership to fill out the membership form, we do this every year and just drop it in the drop box.

We've got a couple or a few more weeks left to do that. So find a time to do that this month. Thanks, everyone.