

# CHIEF MINISTRIES

November 2019

*“So Joshua did as Moses had said to him.” (Exodus 17:10).*

I’m certain Moses was a great guy, but do you always think he was always great to work for? He had tremendous responsibility and bore the burden of leading millions of very selfish, independent thinking people. And he had a temper. This is a man who struck the rock and didn’t enter the Promised Land because of it! Don’t you think that there were times when Joshua was just a little bit frustrated, irritated or agitated with Moses? And yet the Bible says that Joshua obeyed Moses without complaint. Why? I believe Joshua knew in his heart that one day he would lead Israel across the Jordan to take the Promised Land. He knew God was preparing him for war.

When God created the church, He gave only one job opening to every member: slave. In one New Testament epistle after another Paul declared that he was merely a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, but the word he used in the Greek meant “slave”. The kind of slave were talking about here is someone who is utterly and completely devoted to their master. Even if they were offered their freedom, they would refuse it because of their lifelong commitment to their beloved Lord. In this same sense, we are called to be servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pastor.....slave of the Lord Jesus Christ, engineer.....slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. Parent.....slave of the Lord Jesus Christ, construction worker....slave of the Lord Jesus Christ, worship leader.....slave to the Lord Jesus Christ, field minister.....slave to the Lord Jesus Christ, spouse.....slave to the Lord Jesus Christ, teacher.....slave to the Lord Jesus Christ, CEO....slave to the Lord Jesus Christ, usher.....slave to the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you’re too good for the job, no other openings are available! Jesus made this very clear to His disciples on the night of His betrayal when; *rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. <sup>v5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. (John 13:4-5), If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>v15</sup> For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. (John 13:14-15).*

None of us has any justifiable excuse for ever say, “that job is beneath me”, or of thinking “I’m too good for that job” if we truly want to be warriors for Christ. The only job opening in the kingdom of God is slave!

Paul, after explaining the importance of submission and authority as it relates to husbands, wives and children and parents (see last month’s letter), he now begins his discourse on the servant and the master.

*Those who are employed should listen to their employers and obey their instructions with great respect and honor. Serve them with humility in your hearts as though you were working for the Master. <sup>v6</sup> Always do what is right and not only when others are watching, so that you may please Christ as his servants by doing his will. <sup>v7</sup> Serve your employers wholeheartedly and with love, as though you were serving Christ and not men. <sup>v8</sup> Be assured that anything you do that is beautiful and excellent will be repaid by our Lord, whether you are an employee or an employer. <sup>v9</sup> And to the caretakers of the flock I say, do what is right with your people by forgiving them when they offend you, for you know there is a Master in heaven that shows no favoritism. (Ephesians 6:5-9 TPT).*

Many in Ephesus and other nearby areas had been sold into servitude when Rome invaded their part of the world. In addition to those who were suffering slavery to the Romans, there was a tradition of slavery in the Hebrew community as well. Hebrew men sometimes sold themselves into service in order to repay debts or to acquire something they desired to possess. One of the earliest examples we have of this tradition is Jacob, who became a servant to his uncle Laban in order to gain Rachel as his wife. He worked for Rachel for 14 years as a servant in Laban's household (Genesis 29:1-28).

Both the Hebrews and the Romans had a number of classes – economic, governmental, and social. As a result, virtually everybody in the early church served somebody. In this passage of Ephesians Paul is essentially saying to them and to us, “Refuse to take advantage of your masters and do not rebel against them. Serve them as if you were serving Jesus Himself. And masters, do not abuse or mistreat your servants, because Jesus is watching.”

Paul knew a great truth about our relationship with the Lord: Regardless of our outer state or circumstances in life, we are servants to Christ Jesus inwardly and eternally free in Him. This is part of the mystery of Jesus and His Church, that as slaves to Christ we are free. Then, because we are called to serve God alone, our service to other people is always “as unto the Lord”. We do all of our work for Him, by Him, and in Him. He sees our work and He alone rewards us “*according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus*”. (Philippians 4:19).

Our employer may be the person who signed your paycheck, but your ultimate boss is Jesus Christ. He is the only one who calls you to the highest standards of morality, integrity, ethics, and godly behavior. He is the one who will convict you that you shouldn't be calling your grandma on the company phone and pretending she is a client of your company, that you cannot take an hour and ½ for lunch and pretend you were only gone 30 minutes! And He is the one who will see your faithfulness and reward you.

This is an interesting verse of Scripture about Joshua that illustrates this very point: *“and the Lord spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp; but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.”* (Exodus 33:11).

The Scripture indicates that Joshua served Moses, but he looked to God for mercy, justice, blessing and promotion. Often when we do things for men and women, we naturally expect our reward to come from them. But the Bible says that we are to do all things as unto the Lord and that our reward comes from Him. Nobody may see how much you rehearse for the choir number, but Jesus knows. Nobody may have seen you studying that word at 2 AM, but Jesus did. So when you look for your rewards, look to Jesus!

Paul tells us, *“Knowing that whatsoever good thing that any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”* (Ephesians 6:8). It is the Lord who provides reciprocity for all we do. He is the one who balances the scales and gives us rewards according to our giving, not according to what others think we are worth.

Many Christians get involved in ministries and after a year or two of active involvement, they begin to lose interest and their participation declines. Some of them even lose interest to the point of leaving the church, and a good number of these people give as their excuse, “They were using me. They were asking me to do this and give to that and get involved with this and participate in that.” My answer to those people is, “why did you get involved in the church if you weren't available to be used by the Lord?” the Lord uses people, and He uses people by asking them to serve other people!

Joshua easily could have complained that he was being “used” by Moses. When Moses stayed on the mountain while Joshua was battling Amalek and fighting for his life down below, Joshua may have been tempted to cry, “Moses is using me”! But Joshua submitted to Moses and receive special recognition from the Lord as a result:

*And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. <sup>v14</sup> And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the*

*remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. v15 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah nissi: (Exodus 17:13-15).*

God reveals He is our banner of victory in war (Jehovah-Nissi) and tells Moses to build the memorial and “rehearse it in the ears of Joshua”. He declares that Joshua is the conquering hero of the day. So, if anybody comes to you and says you are being “used” in your volunteer work, tell them, “Yes, they are using me!” that’s what they are supposed to do. I said, “Lord, I’m available to You and I want to be used. And the only way He could respond was to use me through somebody. I’m doing what I do as unto the Lord!” This is not just a faith statement, this is a battle cry!

The problem many of us have is that when we do good to our “masters” whether that be an employer (boss man), supervisor, or music minister – we want to reap from the one we have served. I see men “act” like they want to ‘serve’ some of the ministries that come into the prisons and their self-serving greed is unfortunately on display for the babes in Christ to witness that turns them away from serving God period. I pray God’s mercy on those types of ‘servants’ as they will be held accountable for that, and those few extra morsels they were able to appropriate will be the reward they receive. Food usually turns to dung, and their heart is revealed. They of course, cannot see it as such. But can the blind see? In the natural, if I invest in a company, I want to reap from that investment. Of course! But that is earthly gain and once again we bring the world into God’s kingdom. If we don’t feel affirmed, appreciated, and rewarded by the person who has “used” us, then we become upset. But the Bible says that our reward comes from the Lord. Be assured that anything you do that is beautiful and excellent will be repaid by our Lord, whether you are an employee or an employer.

Anyone who is intensively involved in ministry must ultimately conclude that no person can ever repay them for the sacrifices they make. Only God can reward them adequately for the selfless acts they do on behalf of another. And He does reward us! He says repeatedly in His word; *And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. (Hebrews 11:6 ESV), give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38 ESV), But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, v4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:3-4 ESV).*

Reward and recognition will come from the Father, and He will determine the appropriate reward for us to receive. Now if the Father chooses to reward you richly, don’t let anybody make you feel bad about it! Except whatever it is that the Lord provides for you, great or small. Keep giving the same faithful, humble and excellent service regardless of how much he puts in your hand or how much praise you receive. The more the Lord proves that He can trust you with His blessings, the more He will bless you. And along the way, whether you are abased or are abounding, choose to be content and to serve cheerfully. This is an act of faith in God and God alone.

When an army goes into battle, all lives are on the line. The sergeant may be making more money than the privates, even though the privates may be taking a greater risk. Not every paycheck in the military is the same. This is also true in God’s kingdom. Some receive thirty-fold returns, some receive sixty-fold returns, and still others receive hundredfold returns (see Matthew 13:3-8). The rate of return is up to the Father. Our part is to be grateful for whatever He gives us, to expect His reward, to receive it gratefully, and to stop looking at other people to compensate us for what we sacrifice on their behalf.

Our motivation for serving the Lord must never be the material return we are anticipating. Our motivation must be our love for the Lord. Any material return must be our love for the Lord. Any material return is a fringe benefit He allocates to our lives. The real value of what we give is measured back to us in things eternal that cannot be measured on this earth.

The same balance the Lord gives for husbands and wives or parents and children is stated in the relationship that Masters are to have with their servants. Paul writes: *Masters, do the same to them, and stop your*

*threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him. (Ephesians 6:9 ESV).*

Those who are in positions of authority must never take advantage of the people who serve under their leadership. There is no place in God's kingdom for leaders who are domineering, revengeful, or motivated by anger or hatred for any individual or group of people, at any time or under any circumstance.

I personally believe that no person should ever be appointed to leadership until they have learned to follow. A good leader will be a person who was a good follower. They understand the difficulties and challenges of serving someone as unto the Lord. If they have learned to serve people as unto the Lord, when they are at the top of the leadership ladder, they will still follow the leadership of the Lord. In this position, more than ever before they must be able to hear, submit to and obey the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Joshua was a great leader because he was a faithful servant to Moses for many years. He remembered the difficulties of submitting to a flawed human being when he himself became the leader. Anytime a person does not know what it's like to walk in the shoes of another person, the possibility exists for an abuse of power and for abusive behavior. For God to trust us with positions of authority, we must prove first that we know how to control our own desires and lusts for recognition, fame and power. God-appointed leaders never lead by threats or force, but rather, they lead through the compelling combination of love and righteousness.

What about those who find themselves in a situation where the master is abusive? Should they rebel? No. Paul states clearly that servants should obey their masters "with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart (Ephesians 6:5). Is that a vulnerable position? Yes! But the person who chooses to remain submissive will be vindicated by God. Joshua learned this when he witnessed the deliverance of Israel from Pharaoh. God will remove any leader who consistently abuses His children.

It is dangerous to rebel against authority. Moreover, you can obey outwardly and still have an un-submissive heart, which is still rebellion in God's eyes. Remember, God is interested in the heart, because if He has your heart, He has you. On the other hand, you can submit in your heart and refuse to obey if your employer request you do something against the Word of God. But you must remain submissive to the one in authority while you respectfully refuse to obey. Why? Maintaining a submissive heart and attitude is simply staying in fellowship with the Lord and doing His will. If you do not remain submissive inwardly, God will have to deal with your rebellious heart and chastisement will occur not only for the abuser but for you.

Obviously, if the abuse is placing you in danger, physically, emotionally, or spiritually, you must pray about quitting. Rest assured, however, eventually God will remove the abusive leader. I have seen God remove people from leadership in all kinds of ways. When Pharaoh abused the children of Israel and refused to repent, God drowned him. I have also seen Him rescue the abused in all kinds of ways. He removed the Israelites from the abuse of Pharaoh with signs, wonders and miracles.

Again, I cannot emphasize this strongly enough; it is a dangerous thing for those in authority to abuse a child of God. When a child of God is abused, the Lord will hear and respond to their distress. He will send a strong deliverer to set them free!

Just as soldiers must obey their commander, every believer is called to obey the Lord – and not occasionally, but continually. We do not obey only when the circumstances seem right or when we like the person in authority, but we must obey all those in authority over us as if we were obeying the Lord Himself. Peter taught us a hard truth in his first epistle: *Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, <sup>v14</sup> or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. (1 Peter 2:13-14 ESV).*

We are to submit to the laws of men as though God Himself had written them. We are to submit to all those in authority over us because God has set them in these positions. To rebel against them is to rebel against God.

And if they require anything ungodly or unscriptural of us, we are to disobey outwardly but remain submissive inwardly. In this way our hearts stay pure before the Lord and our obedience to Him is complete.

Unfortunately, most of us probably rebel more for selfish reasons than scriptural convictions. We're in a hurry so we break the speed limit. Our boss is an insensitive tyrant and doesn't pay us what we are worth, so we add an hour here and there to our over time. We believe that income tax is unconstitutional and oppressive, so we don't report the cash we received for doing odd jobs.

This rebellion and lawlessness is too common in the local church. We don't like the songs the choir director chooses so we quit the choir, even though God has called us there to learn submission to the director. So, then we get involved in outreach, but the director of outreach is disorganized. We get so frustrated with their lack of administrative ability that we eventually quit that too. The truth is we will go from one endeavor to another until we learn to submit to authority, stop complaining, and do all things as unto the Lord. We will never be content until we master our selfish whims, put aside our personal agendas, and simply obey God by serving those He has set in authority over us.

When God places us under authority that is not pleasant or does not operate as we would operate, we know He is working on our level of submission to authority! (Think prison!) He is preparing us for battle! He is showing us how to lay down our lives! If we are able to be like Jesus here on this earth, we must learn obedience to the point of sacrificing ourselves and our flesh. Jesus poured His life out for us on this earth in obedience to the Father, and His example is the model we are to follow. We are to pour out our life for others in obedience to God.

If we are set in authority over others, we must pour our lives out in obedience to God more than ever. God will impart an anointing for us to lead, instruct, and set an example, but we must be even more sensitive and submissive to the Holy Spirit, carrying out our responsibilities with fear and trembling. Our leadership must bear the hallmarks of both the confidence and humility of Christ.

Obedience enables us to be all God designed us to be. It frees our potential and releases our ministries. But most importantly, when we learn obedience, we learn the foundation for waging war and winning. The enemy will face a formidable fighting force when our army of Christian soldiers obey those in authority and our officers model Jesus Christ to those they lead. We will be of one mind, one heart, and one spirit, and nothing will cause us to break rank. The gates of hell shall not prevail against God's obedient church!

If you haven't signed up. I suggest doing so!

He's coming soon!

## **Chief**

*If you want to know more about CHIEF Ministries or would like to be a part of this, please go to [www.chiefministries.com](http://www.chiefministries.com) and [www.chiefshouse.org](http://www.chiefshouse.org)*

*Christ's*

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