

# GOD'S PEOPLE WORK BY GRACE

## COLOSSIANS 3:22-24

*How did you see God working in your life this week? (Romans 1:11, 12)*

BACKGROUND: Slavery in biblical times included all kinds of people and was not race based. Scripture describes slave traders as kidnappers along with whoremongers and murderers. (I Timothy 1:9, 10 (KJV) In I Corinthians 7:21 slaves were encouraged to gain their freedom if possible. Christian slaves, though chattel property, were part of the church family and regarded as brothers and sisters in Christ. (Philemon 16, fn 16)

**WITH SINCERITY OF HEART.** “My God, since You are with me and since by Your will I must occupy myself with external things, please grant me the grace to remain with You, in your presence. Work with me, so that my work might be the very best. Receive as an offering of love both my work and all my affections.” Brother Lawrence, The Practice of the Presence of God, p. 82. (Colossians 3:22, fn 3:22-4:1, Colossians 3:17, fn 3:17, Proverbs 18:9, 24:30-34, 26:13-16, fn 26:13-16, Ecclesiastes 2:24, fn 2:24-26) *Like Brother Lawrence, write a prayer for your daily vocational work as for the Lord, including his major components.*

**WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS.** As you do all your work for the Lord, not only do the best you can, but be the best you can. However, work habitually done by choice at the expense of time for Jesus, family, and leisure cannot be work that is pleasing to the Lord. (Colossians 3:23, fn 3:23, Proverbs 22:29, 23:4, Genesis 2:1-3, fn 2:2, 3, Psalms 127:2, fn 127:2) *In your vocational work how could the Lord's grace help you to be your best and yet have a balanced life?*

**WITH FULL EXPECTATION.** “In Ephesians 6 and Colossians 3 Paul sets forth a simple but profound principle that both ennobles work (for those in danger of viewing it as drudgery) and demythologizes work (for those in danger of making it their identity.) He says all work should be done “as if you were serving the Lord.” Timothy Keller, Every Good Endeavor, p. 213. When this is done you are promised a heavenly reward. (Colossians 3:24 Ephesians 6:7,8, fn 6:6-8, II Corinthians 5:9,10, fn 5:9, 10, Matthew 16:26, 27, fn 16:27) *How could you do your work by grace?*

*How is your relationship with your spouse or others? (I Peter 3:7, Matthew 5:23, 24)  
What sin, if any, do you need to confess? (James 5:16)*

