

EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES

I Peter 2:18-20

God requires submission from servants toward their masters

God requires submission from employees toward their bosses

I. THE REGULATED (18a)

A. SERVANTS

1. Indentured household servants
2. Aware of the obligations associated with their relationship and committed to keeping them

B. MASTERS ARE NOT ADDRESSED HERE

- But see Ephesians 6:9 and Colossians 4:1

II. THE REQUIREMENTS (18b)

A. BE SUBMISSIVE TO MASTER

1. Voluntary put yourself under the authority of another
2. Keeping our obligations speaks well of the gospel's impact

B. BE RESPECTFUL TO MASTERS

1. Being careful not to speak arrogantly about freedom or a new master
2. Maintaining a wholesome regard for the master's position - See I Tim. 6:1
3. Being courteous > Not expressing bitterness or delivering gossip

C. BE CONSISTENT WITH MASTERS

1. Submission and respect are required no matter the character of the master
2. Our salvation provides us with supernatural resources to do this

III. THE RECIPIENTS (18c)

A. GOOD AND GENTLE MASTERS

- Those who are upright and beneficial

B. BAD AND UNREASONABLE MASTERS

1. These are literally the crooked ones - See James 5:4
2. They are unpredictable

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IV. **THE REWARD** (19-20)

A. COMMENDATION AS REWARD

1. This finds favor with God - See verses 19a and 20d
2. This is a gracious thing (ESV)
 - a. Delightful and attractive to God
 - b. This makes God smile!
 - c. See Colossians 3:23-24
3. It pleases God to see Christians faithfully accept and deal with adversity
 - Read Matthew 5:10

B. CANCELLATION OF REWARD (20a)

- This gets no credit!
1. There is no reward for enduring harsh treatment because of your sin
 2. Anything mixed with our own sinfulness will not be impressive to God

C. CONDITIONS FOR REWARD (19-20)

- This gets credit
1. The right motivation: Submitting for the sake of conscience toward God (19b)
 - a. This is more than a consciousness or awareness that God is watching and directing us
 - b. A conscience that is sensitive to God
 - Being careful not to become desensitized to God's expectations
 - A fear of sinning against one's conscience - See I Cor. 8:7-11 and 10:27-29
 2. A patient endurance (19c & 20c)
 - a. Bearing up under sorrows (19c)
 - b. Patiently enduring harsh treatment
 - c. Leaving the justice to God - Romans 12:17-19
 3. Suffering unjustly (19d, 20b)
 - a. Doing right and suffering for it
 - b. Biblical examples
 - Jacob in Genesis 28:15-28, Joseph in Genesis 39 and Hebrew slaves in Exodus 1
 - c. Suffering for the sake of righteousness is a blessing - See I Peter 3:14

V. **SOME REFLECTIONS**

- A. We are not owned by others and therefore it is fine to seek a better employer and boss
- B. Keep in mind that even submission to a good boss can be challenging
- C. Never lose sight of the value of a good conscience toward God

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- D. Remember that what counts for credit with God may be very different than what men consider valuable
- E. Be sympathetic with those seeking to live Christianly with bad bosses
- F. We should not be seeking undeserved punishment
- G. If you need your job and cannot voice your legitimate grievances over various mistreatments for fear of being fired, know that God considers you a hero!

CONCLUSION:

God provides us with employee guidelines so that in our workplace we will be a testimony for Him.