



Titus 2:9-10

Truth #6 - True disciples demonstrate servanthood

Doctrine #6 - The doctrine of Worship (For God alone and heartfelt)

Principle #6 - Circumstances do not determine the believer's worship

The Roman world, at the time of the New Testament being written, was a world filled with the enslavement of people. In the recent, *New English Translation of the Bible* (NET), the translator of Titus, W. Hall Harris, notes - "Many slaves in the Roman world became slaves through Rome's subjugation of conquered nations, kidnapping, or by being born into slave households" but he goes on to point out that the word translated *slave* in Titus is the same word that Paul uses to describe his relationship with Christ in Titus 1:1 - *doulos*. Harris notes that this word did not apply to a prisoner of war, or someone kidnapped, or someone born into a slave household. Rather, a *doulos* was someone who willingly surrendered themselves into slavery to someone they were devoting their lives to. He points out that this word was used to describe Moses (Josh. 14:7), David (Psalm 89:3), Elijah (2Kings 10:10), and the nation of Israel (Isa. 43:10).

1. With this understanding of the word *doulos* (translated as either *servant*, *slave*, or *bondservant*), how did the Gospel change the way that slaves were to regard their relationship with their earthly masters based on Titus 2:9?
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2. Does this exhortation by Paul in Titus 2:9 endorse the practice of slavery?
 - a) Yes, since Paul tells slaves to obey their masters he is therefore giving a divine sanction to buy and own slaves.
 - b) No, because the word he uses, which is translated by some English bibles as ‘slaves’, is actually a word which described the voluntary commitment of one person into the service of another.

The concept of a bondservant was established in Exodus 21:5-6, and then repeated in Deuteronomy 15:15-18.

3. In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, how did he show that the New Covenant revolutionised the way slaves were to be regarded? (Gal. 3:28)
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4. In what way does the apostle Paul’s repeated description of himself as a *slave of Christ* reflect what kind of heart attitude any disciple of Christ should have? (Note Romans 6:16-18)
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5. How does this attitude effect how the believer worships God?
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Far from the New Testament endorsing slavery, in two places (1Tim. 1:10; Revelation 18:13) it described “slave trading” as being among the worst sins possible.

The Doctrine of Worship (Soli Deo Gloria)

The Reformers of the 16th century coined “Five Solas” (‘Five things alone’) to help distinguish their teaching from those who taught that salvation involved faith in Christ *plus* doing whatever church leaders decreed (which included *penance*, *indulgences*, confessing sins to a priest, and attending the weekly ‘Mass’). For the Reformers, Christianity was not about what the believer could *get* from God, but what the believer could *give* to God—and the best thing that the believer could give to God was *worship*. They referred to this as *giving God glory*. But rather than seeing this as just what happened when the church gathered, the Reformers regarded giving God glory as involving *everything* a believer did. In other words, a believer could cook to the glory of God; eat to the glory of God; sleep to the glory of God; play to the glory of God; and work to the glory of God (note First Corinthians 10:31). Giving God glory involves thanking Him, praising Him, acknowledging His provisions and blessings, seeking Him, praying, interceding, and telling others about Him (note Romans 12:1; Ephesians 1:12) .

6. Based on Matthew 22:37-39, what might we claim is essential for authentic worship of God?

We are created to worship God and when a person refuses to worship God they will still worship - *but it will be an act of i _ _ _ _ _ y instead* (note Romans 1:25).

As A Matter of Principle, Circumstances Do Not Determine Our Worship of God

Sometimes life gets difficult and that can make worshiping God difficult.

7. Ponder Hebrews 13:15. How might this shape how we should worship God when our circumstances are difficult?

Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Fill us afresh with Your Holy Spirit. May we be led by Your Spirit into a deeper relationship with You. May we worship You with all of our heart, mind and soul. Please put a song of praise in our mouths to declare Your glory to the world. Even when we don't want to gather with Your people to worship You together, we pray that You would help us to offer You sacrifices of praise in the midst of the congregation so that You will be our focus rather than what ails us. In Jesus' Name we pray,

Amen.