

20160207 Living Beyond Personal Interest Review

Last time spoke- started with the question ...

Does my heart marvel when it comes to God and the work of God in my life?

Marvel- be filled w/wonder and astonishment.

Ended with the picture in Lk 7 of Jesus marveling over the faith of a Roman soldier.

Does my life give God something to marvel over?

I believe we need to be a people filled w/hope ...

Rom 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Abound- exceeding

If we do not ... expectations- abundance

elect the right person for president

fix the economy

stop the erosion of our religious freedoms-

it is not the end of the world.

We need to model for- world to see- that God is- in control/can be trusted w/outcome of life.

Get involved in the political system, get involved

in culture, but never fix your hope there,

fix your hope on Jesus Christ.

Introduction

This morning- Living Beyond Personal Interest

Rom 14:7-8

⁷For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself;

⁸for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord ...

I want to explore the idea of living beyond

personal interest- living for God and for others.

1 Tim 6:1-2

¹All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against.

²Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved ...

Comments on Slavery in the Roman Empire

My intent is not to talk about slavery but the principle that Paul addresses in these verses. Unlike recent history, slavery in the Roman Empire was not based solely on race/ethnicity. Many slaves- prisoners of war/result of birth. Anyone, regardless of race-could become a slave. Slavery did mean- complete loss of rights- it terminated marriage/family/individual rights.

Looking at the verses in detail ...

1 Tim 6:1 All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against.

Yoke- Paul recognized slavery was a heavy yoke, but what can we learn by how he dealt with it?

Their own masters- Paul personalizes the word- how do you respond to your unjust masters- employer, teacher, parent, government, etc. How do I personally handle injustices in my life?

It is interesting that Paul does not ...

>address- rightness/wrongness of slavery

>command believers- overthrow slavery

Rather, he urges them to demonstrate God's love and kindness within the institution of slavery.

God is calling us to be Christ like in our personal circumstances.

So often the way we want to be Christ like in our personal circumstances is to get out of them.

If I am a slave, I am not to speak against my master, but honor him, not because it is right for me to be a slave, but for the name of Christ and the sake of the gospel message.

Paul is exhorting slaves to live for a higher cause. In the same way how do we respond to situations in our life that we might consider unjust?

We would rather complain about the unjust circumstances than deal w/our response.

Think about what Paul is saying ...

If a slave became a Christian and dishonored his master/became undependable, then it could be said that Christianity made men worse than before they received Christ.

It would empower people to blasphemy Christ because of the behavior of a Christian slave.

This is why we should conduct ourselves well in unjust circumstances, to prevent the world from speaking evil of Christ because of us.

My personal circumstances or injustices are to be subjected to the greater purpose of furthering the Kingdom of God in the earth today.

I am to live my life for the glory of God before I
live it for my own personal comfort/gain.

Now Paul does say ...

>if you can be free, be free,

>masters be kind to your slaves,

>do not abuse the use of power.

But here he is addressing the heart of the person
in an unjust situation/how they should respond.

Eph 6:5-7

**⁵Slaves, be obedient to those who are
your masters according to the flesh, with
fear and trembling, in the sincerity of
your heart, as to Christ;**

**⁶not by way of eyeservice, as men-
pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing
the will of God from the heart.**

**⁷With good will render service, as to the
Lord, and not to men ...**

Being under Christ's authority does not mean we
can dishonor people or civil authority, simply
because it is unjust/unfair.

Rather, believers should display the kindness and
humility of God in all circumstances.

I am not saying we cannot speak out against
injustices- evil must be addressed- but ...

>the motive of our heart and

>how we do it ... does matter.

Peter takes this principle even farther ...

1 Peter 2:18-20

**¹⁸Servants, be submissive to your
masters with all respect, not only to
those who are good and gentle, but also
to those who are unreasonable.**

19For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.

20For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

We are called to a higher standard than the world. We might consider this in our use of social media.

Our use of social media should always be subordinate to the principles of scripture and the testimony of Christ.

Something happens at church/treated unfairly, offended-do you vent-frustrations-social media
Is it appropriate to take a situation before a larger group of people who have no way to resolve the issue but feel completely free to comment after hearing your side.

1 Tim 6:2 Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved.

Background: Christian slaves/masters would find themselves in the same congregations.

Some slaves would say- we are now equal in Christ and I do not need to obey my master. Paul- all the more reason- be respectful/obedient- because- a believer benefits from your service.

Note: Christian masters are not always perfect.

Again, we are to live beyond our own personal interests, and live for the sake of the Gospel.

Our perspective is no longer worldly or natural, but we have an eternal, long range view of life.

The Bigger Picture

1 Cor 7:20-22

²⁰Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called.

²¹Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.

²²For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

Before we are anyone's slave-1st slaves of Christ
-this relationship directs our response to life.

The Yoke of Christ

Paul acknowledged slavery as a heavy yoke.

Mat 11:28-30

²⁸"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

²⁹"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

³⁰"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Yoke- u-shaped frame- place over- animal's head
The yoke would be used so the animal could be directed and made useful for service.

How does this apply to us as Christians- what does Christ yoke look like for us?

Does it mean that we are yoked to Christ both to receive direction and well as for service?

We are saved to enjoy a relationship w/our God- but also we are saved to obey/serve Him.

We will be yoked to something in this life.

Jn 8:34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

We will be yoked to heavens rule or earthly rule- whether our own unbridled appetites/affections
Something/someone will be a master in our lives.

The Lord's yoke is light because it gives us free access to a holy and just God. It does not mean it is without obligation or constraint.

We are in essence constraining ourselves to ...

>holy behavior,

>purposes of God- obedience/service,

>properly order- affections/thoughts.

Just as Christ came to serve and to accomplish the Father's will, so too should we as believers

Conclusion

1 Pet 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

How much of our lives, our time, our resources, our energy, are spent on ourselves?

The greatest tragedy is not death, but living life without an eternal, long range view.

Looking again- Rom 14 ...

Rom 14:7-9

⁷For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself;

⁸for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

May God truly be our Lord- not just in song and word, but also in deed and action.

Additional Information

1 Cor 6:7 Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?

2 Corinthians 5:13–14 (NASB95)

¹³For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you.

¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;

Five common drives in people's lives ...

1. Guilt

Guilt-driven people are manipulated by their memories- allow their past to control- future. They believe past mistakes are bigger than God.

2. Resentment

Instead of releasing past pain/hurt through forgiveness they live rehearsing it over/over.

3. Fear

Fear-driven people often miss great opportunities because their fears.

4. Materialism

Their desire to acquire becomes their reason for living.

If I only have this or that my life will be better off. The problem is that when they get this and that there is always another this and that.

5. Need for approval

They allow- expectations of others to control their lives- driven peer pressure/what others think.