

Titus 2:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

Analysis

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters—δούλους (doulous, slaves) describes involuntary servitude, not mere employment. ὑποτάσσεσθαι (hypotassesthai, to submit/be subject to) is present infinitive: continuous submission. ἰδίοις δεσπόταις (idiois despotais, their own masters)—δεσπότης (despotēs, master/lord) implies absolute authority. **And to please them well in all things** (εὐαρέστους εἶναι ἐν πᾶσιν, euarestous einai en pasin, to be well-pleasing in all things)—sacrificial service, not bare minimum.

Not answering again (μὴ ἀντιλέγοντας, mē antilegontas)—ἀντιλέγω (antilegō, to speak against/contradict/argue back). Slaves had no legal recourse; arguing invited punishment. Christianity didn't immediately abolish slavery but planted gospel seeds (Philemon) that eventually destroyed it. Meanwhile, Christian slaves demonstrated gospel transformation through counter-cultural service.

Historical Context

Roman slavery's brutality is hard to overstate: masters owned slaves' bodies absolutely. Paul's instruction isn't endorsement but pastoral wisdom for vulnerable believers. Immediate revolution would be crushed; patient gospel witness gradually undermined slavery's foundation. The "Servile Wars" showed armed slave revolts invited massive retaliation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do you serve in your employment—as unto Christ or merely when supervised?
2. Do you obey and honor imperfect authority structures God has placed you under, or do you constantly resist and complain?
3. How does the gospel transform your attitude toward difficult bosses, unfair treatment, or unrewarding labor?

Interlinear Text

δούλους	ἰδίῳ	δεσπόταις	ὑποτάσσεσθαι	ἐν	πᾶσιν
Exhort servants	unto their own	masters	to be obedient	in	all
G1401	G2398	G1203	G5293	G1722	G3956
εὐαρέστους	εἶναι	μὴ	ἀντιλέγοντας		
please them well	and to	things not	answering again		
G2101	G1511	G3361	G483		

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