



## The Christian Laborer

Work is good. God gave the first man He made work to do (*Genesis 2:15*). At no time has God ever approved of or given His blessings to lazy people who refuse to work. No man can be a true Christian and refuse to do honest work. Paul said plainly, "If any will not work, neither let him eat" (II Thessalonians 3:10).

The New Testament gives plain teaching about the importance of Christians doing honest work. In *I Thessalonians 4:11,12* Christians are commanded to quietly care for their own business and to work with their own hands. They are to do this so they can walk honestly among all people, and so they will be able to provide their own needs. *Ephesians 4:28* teaches that Christians will refuse to steal and will work so they have no need to steal. The work they do will be "good" -- that is honest and produces good things. They also work so they can help those in need. Acts 20:35 also teaches that Christians work in order to help support the weak. II *Thessalonians 3:11, 12* warns that those who refuse to work are walking "disorderly"-- their *lifestyle is* not true Christian *lifestyle*. Also these people will fall into the trap of being busybodies. Busybodies are people who interfere in the lives and business of others instead of taking care of their own affairs. Such people are told to work quietly and eat their own bread. If these people continued to refuse to work and continue to be busybodies, Paul told the church to disfellowship them (*vs.14*).

Many instructions are also given to servants and masters. We are not slaves today as many people were in New Testament times. Yet, when we accept any job for pay, we are selling our time, our energy, and our ability to our employer. In that manner, we do become his servants.

Paul gives the following instructions to servants and masters in *Ephesians 6:5-9*.

1. Obey your master with singleness of heart. Work properly for the man who hired you and do his work well.
2. Do not use eyeservice as menpleasers. Work hard and properly for your employer all the time, not just when he is looking at you.

3. Work for your master (employer) as hard and as honestly as you would work for Christ.
4. Such servants (workers) will receive blessings from God.
5. Masters (employers) are not to abuse their servants (workers), but are to treat them fairly and justly. God, their Master, is watching them. *Colossians 3:22-25* teaches the same things.

*Titus 2:9*, instructs servants to obey their masters (employers) and not to steal (purloin) from their masters. They are to be faithful in their service and their responsibility.

James warns masters (employers) who abuse their servants (workers) and cheat them by not paying them properly. They will be judged and punished by God. (*James 5:4*).

It is true that Christians should try to help the man who has trouble and is unable to help himself. It is also true that every Christian must work honestly and hard to care for his own needs. Work to care for your needs. Do honest work. Work hard for your employer. This is true Christian lifestyle.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. In *II Thessalonians 3:10* what did Paul say about the people who will not work?
2. *I Thessalonians 4:11,12* gives two reasons why Christians should work. What are these reasons?
3. List the things *Ephesians 4:28* teaches about work.
4. What warnings do *II Thessalonians 3:11,12* give?
5. When a man accepts a job for pay, what is the man selling?
6. List the 5 instructions Paul gives in *Ephesians* to servants and masters.
7. What does *Titus 2:9, 10* teach?
8. What warning is found in *James 5:4*?