

1 Timothy

I. Introduction

A. **1 Timothy 5:24-25, 6:1-2** . . . The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their sins follow after. [25] Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed. [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. [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. Teach and preach these principles.

B. Pray

II. Neither sins nor good deeds can be hidden from public view forever.

A. [24] The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their sins follow after. [25] Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed.

1. The truths in these two verses only make sense if you believe in God, accept the Bible as the word of God, and believe what the Bible says about a final judgment for all mankind – including Christians. Otherwise, the alternative is to believe that some people get away with their evil deeds, while others are never recognized and thanked for their good deeds.
2. The implication of these two verses is that no one's sins or good deeds can be hidden from public view forever. If they are not made evident in this life, they will be made evident at the final judgment. In other words, our life-span on earth is not the only opportunity for the truth about us to be revealed for all to see.
3. This truth is supported by a number of scriptures. For example:
 - a. **Proverbs 10:9**, "He who walks in integrity walks securely (*with God*), but he who perverts his ways will be found out."
 - b. **Matthew 10:26**, "Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known."

- c. **2 Corinthians 5:10**, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”
- B. Assuming you believe in a final judgment for God’s people, the question becomes, why is it important to remind us that no one’s sins or good deeds can be hidden from public view forever?
1. Given the preceding context of discerning who is a widow indeed, who should care for the widows, who should and who shouldn’t be an elder, and which elders are to be given double honor, it is probable the reason for reminding us of this is the challenge within a church of knowing each other well enough to make such decisions wisely.
 2. And the reason this is a challenge is because of the problem of hypocrisy and pride on the part of those who hide their sin, and the problem of humility on the part of those who are not seeking recognition for doing good to others.
 - a. In the church, the problem of hypocrisy and pride among those who hide their wrong doing in order to look better than they are is that it leads to shallow relationships. And it is hard to know other believers well enough to discern their spiritual condition when your relationship with them is shallow.
 - b. The problem of humility among those who quietly do good is not a problem for them, but for the rest of us. And the problem is that believers like this are easily overlooked when the church is seeking godly, biblically qualified leaders and teachers.
 3. With these two problems in mind, I want to talk about the problem of wanting to be seen as being better than we are. And there are several ways in which we endeavor to make this happen.
 - a. One of the ways we do this is to keep our ungodly desires and activities, fears, anxiety, anger, conflicts at home, ill-will toward a neighbor or work associate, and other such things as these, out of the view of other Christians so they will think better of us than we are.
 - b. Another way we do this is when we are with other Christians, we manage our words and behavior in order to present ourselves more as we want to be seen than as we are in the rest of life.
 - c. A third way we do this is to limit what we reveal about ourselves so that the Christians around us only know as much about us as will keep us looking as good as we want to look in their sight.

4. These three efforts are examples of hypocrisy and pride that, even in small amounts or seemingly insignificant ways, damages our spiritual health, degrades the spiritual health of the church, hinders the spiritual growth of the church as a whole, **AND** keeps relationships among believers shallow.
 - a. So once again, we promote shallow relationships within the church when we hide parts of our true selves in order to look better than we are, and when our conversations are most often limited to topics with minimal or no spiritual value.
 - b. We accept and perpetuate shallow relationships as if they are the norm when we forgo the kind of thoughtful conversations and careful listening that opens the door to knowing one another more deeply, that is, closer to who we really are.
 - c. Either way, whether limiting what we reveal about ourselves to look better or accepting casual conversation as the norm, we promote shallow relationships – which in the church limits the help and support we can give each other when facing temptations, enduring trials and tribulation, exhibiting ungodly attitudes, feeling discouraged, need help for working at changing, or when we begin to stray from the narrow path.
 5. This does not mean we must reveal every detail about some sin or failure or foolish choice or fear-based decision or angry moment. This does not mean every conversation has to be about spiritual things or a discussion about our spiritual condition or need for help.
 - a. But shouldn't some of them be?
 - b. It's true, there are settings where it is not realistic for more meaningful conversation to happen. Yet it is my experience that there are settings where it could happen. When in such settings, are you part of helping it happen?
- C. The other problem I mentioned is the problem of humility among those who quietly do good. And as I said, it is not a problem for them, but for the rest of us.
1. Without question, we need humility to serve others with the kind of godly attitude that drives loving, compassionate, patient, and even merciful service.
 2. We need humility when seeking the good and serving the needs of others if we are going to do so free of pride and selfish motives, such as wanting or needing recognition for what we have done.

- a. However, when we want or need recognition for doing good, we are not doing good from the motivation of love, but from the motivation of prideful self-interest.
 - b. Jesus warned us about this in **Matthew 6:1-4**, “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. [2] So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. [3] But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, [4] so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.
 - c. The reality is, pride is self-focused – which is why it seeks or even demands recognition.
 - d. Humility is God and others focused – which is why it does not seek or even want human recognition for good deeds done. Knowing that God knows, is enough – which means nothing more is needed, and nothing more is wanted.
3. The rest of us, however, ought to take note of those among us who humbly and quietly serve, because if we don’t, we may overlook them when seeking godly advice, or seeking help with defeating pride in our own lives, or when we need biblically qualified leaders and teachers to serve the church.
 4. Let me end this part with three questions.
 - a. How well are you willing to be known?
 - b. How well do you know the others in our church? And what you know about others, is it from personal interaction or hearsay?
 - c. Is it possible we show more concern and are quicker to talk about each other’s physical ailments than each other’s spiritual ailments, or how to apply God’s word to the challenging situations in our lives?

III. Those in authority over us are to be treated with honor.

- A. [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.
 1. Here in chapter 6, vs 1, Paul is addressing the Christian slave.
 - a. Slavery, even in its best forms is degrading, because regardless of the quality of one’s master, be he kind or cruel, to be a slave

is to be owned as if you are a piece of property which your master can do with as he pleases.

- b. And to be a slave is to be ruled – as if you are an animal with no will or desires or interests of its own.
2. However, in the church, believers were being taught to treat each other with equality and respect – without regard to one’s status or kind of work or position in the world. Paul affirms this in several places. Here are two:
 - a. **Galatians 3:28**, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
 - b. **Colossians 3:10-11**, “The new self is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him – [11] a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.
3. And yet, in spite of what was or is happening within the church, the relationship between slaves and their owners is often adversarial. Imagine being a Christian slave who is ill-treated in the home of your master, yet when you go to church, you are treated with equality and respect. That could prompt you to show disdain and disrespect to your owner.
4. Therefore, Christian slaves are exhorted to regard their own masters **as worthy** of all honor.
 - a. **To regard** in this sense is to treat your master (*or your boss, or any other authority*) as worthy of all honor – for two reasons.
 - b. **First**, because you realize that how you treat your master will affect his view of God and the teachings of Christianity.
 - c. **Second**, because you value the reputation of God and His teachings, and therefore you do not want to do anything that would unnecessarily harm their reputation.
5. If we apply this principle to all of us, then the important message in this verse is that regardless of our circumstances or who has authority over us, we are to live the Christian life in such a way as to make God, the Christian life, and the Christian message look good so that no one will have a justifiable reason to speak against them.

B. The Bible addresses the relationship between slaves and their masters in several places: Ephesians 6:5-8, Colossians 3:22–4:1, Titus 2:9-10, Philemon 8–21, 1 Peter 2:18-21. We will not look at all of them, but as

we consider some of them, I am urging you to think about where and how you can apply the truths and principles in these scriptures to your values, attitudes, and behaviors in order to make God, the Christian life, and the Christian message look better than you already do.

1. **Ephesians 6:5–8**, “Slaves, 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; [6] not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. [7] With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, [8] knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.”
2. **Titus 2:9-10**, “Urge slaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, [10] not pilfering (*taking what isn't yours*), but showing all good faith so that they will adorn (*beautify, make glorious*) the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.”
3. **1 Peter 2:18-20**, “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. [19] For this finds favor (*with God*), if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. [20] For 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.”
4. For us Christians, our attitude and behavior toward those in authority over us is of utmost importance in relation to making God, the Christian life, and the Christian message look good.

IV. Conclusion

- A. Think back over your life as a Christian. Have you expressed an attitude or behaved in front of or toward an authority in a way that made God, the Christian life, and the teachings of scripture look bad?
- B. Finally, failure to respectfully submit to our earthly authorities – at least in most situations – begins with a failure to submit to God and our Lord Jesus Christ?