

# Widows and Slaves, Employers and Employees

by Art Katz

---

*The apostolic mindset requires a change of heart and mind, not social change, and is about serving the Lord, not man, with singleness of heart as unto Christ.*

**Scripture:** 1 Timothy 5:3

**Topics:** "Apostolic Mindset", "Service and Submission"

---

## Description

Art Katz emphasizes the apostolic perspective on the roles of widows and slaves, illustrating that true reality is defined by one's relationship with God rather than social status. He explains that a 'real widow' is one who places her hope in God, and similarly, true believers must embody this relationship in their lives. Katz warns against the dangers of viewing life through a purely physical lens, urging the church to recognize the spiritual dimensions of existence. He draws parallels between the dynamics of slaves and masters in the early church and modern employer-employee relationships, advocating for a God-centered approach to service and conduct. Ultimately, he calls for a transformation of heart and mind, where believers find freedom in their circumstances by serving God faithfully.

---

## Transcript

There is a growing awareness on the part of many for apostolic and prophetic foundations. These foundations need to be understood and developed, and the Lord has given us a very precious perspective on that word "apostolic" from an insight on some comments Paul makes on widows and slaves. It seems just a minor note in passing: Paul tending toward some practical matters in giving Timothy guidance for his own conduct and with the church. But as so often is the case, the profoundest insights and observations of the nature of something are given, not in the grandiose, climactic statements, but in some little thing in passing, in what seems relatively trivial in comparison to the weightier objects of concern.

And one can see, in the microcosm of a small note being struck, the real genius of what apostolic is! In 1 Timothy 5, Paul is instructing the church on the subject of widows. It says in verse 3: "Honor widows who are widows indeed." He is expressing his apostolic heart and mindset, all the more profound because he has no awareness that this is going to pass into Scripture. This is just a momentary piece of counsel to a man called Timothy, who's going to be working with the church.

What does Paul mean by "widows who are widows indeed"? Isn't a widow by definition one that has lost her husband through death? Evidently, Paul does not make his determination or his definition on natural factors, and in that we begin to see what the apostolic mind is. It goes beyond the immediate, the physical, and the apparent and makes the issue of widowhood something much more than the absence of a husband. What is a real widow? Because if there is such a thing as a real widow, then what shall we say about real believers, real pastors, real evangelists, real teachers, real husbands, and real wives?

If Paul can make a distinction about widows as real and unreal, then that distinction can be extended to almost every category. And that is precisely the point. There is an apostolic perception of everything that is above and beyond what one understands, and it's into that realm that God wants to draw us. And sometimes it's just a hairline of difference, but that hairline speaks volumes. Now she who is a widow indeed, and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God, and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day.

But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives (vs. 5-6). Adjust your focus so as not to miss a nuance of what Paul is saying here. What makes a widow real is that she has set her hope in God. In other words, every definition of what is real has got to be set in the context of God. If that dimension is missing, then it's no longer reality; it's just physical; it's just natural, social or political. But when God is a factor, then that establishes its authenticity and reality.

A real widow is one who takes God into her consideration. And if that's what makes a widow real, then it must be the same thing that makes a believer real, a teacher real, an apostle real, and a prophet real. True reality is the issue of God. Here's a woman who has been left alone, but how should she occupy herself in the absence of a husband? She has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But the widow who lives for pleasure is the antithesis of the one who hopes in God.

That one is dead, even while she lives. So here we have, not only a definition of widowhood, but also a definition of life. Life is not mere biological activity. Life is relationship to God in significant prayer, supplication and service. If that factor is absent and removed, then that person is dead even while he or she lives, whether a widow, husband, son, or anything. The world thinks that practical activity, and being able to buy and sell is living. But they're dead even while they live.

We too need to see like that. We should not be impressed with the outward, physical show of things. And maybe the whole contest of what reality is and has been from the beginning is a contest between death and life. Death seems to be running the show, and people think that their life is life when it's really death. But we who are in relationship with God in supplications and in prayer and service, and have the Spirit of life, know indeed what life is. And we need to bring the challenge of life to the dead and not to be impressed with their death as if that represents life.

Their view of reality is totally askew. And yet the issue for us, and the issue for the church, is whether Paul's seeing is definitive. Is Paul's way of seeing true seeing? And what is an apostle or a prophet but men who see as God sees? And what is a church built on that foundation but those who see as they see? This is reality, though everything conspires against it. It is out of this seeing that all of Paul's conduct, activity, service and sacrifice flows. It is the foundation of the wellspring of all that he does.

This is how he sees, and because he sees like that, he speaks like this, he writes like this, he acts like this. That's an apostle. But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives. Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and

especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever (vs. 7-8). Here's another statement of an absolute kind. Paul says, in effect, "I don't care what they profess to believe, or how faithful they are to be in agreement with certain doctrines, or even have had a born-again experience.

If they do not act in a certain way, if that faith does not translate into conduct of a very particular kind towards their own, then it's a non-faith. They are like infidels. They are as good as unbelievers. It's a denial of the faith; it's worse than being unbelieving because it purports to be faith. They are better off in that kind of conduct to be unsaved. It's radical language, and yet these are not the bad-tempered thoughts of a man who's gone strange. These are the definitive, apostolic statements of the chief apostle.

And we need to give very special attention to each one of his comments and observations, for in them we have the very ground of apostolic being. Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saint's feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work (vs. 9-10).

We could use an army of widows like that. They're rare. But refuse to put younger widows on the list (vs. 11a). Evidently the church had a list of widows that were put under the church's care. Maybe they didn't have relatives who could watch over them. But here's another wonderful insight: the churches care for their own. To have a list, to be methodical, to make sure that no one is missed is not unspiritual. Paul is describing who's to be included, and here's that wonderful description: showing hospitality, washing the saints' feet, helping the afflicted, and devoting yourself to being good in every way.

But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge (vs. 11-12). Evidently, these widows had their widowhood made a public declaration and were not going to seek to be married again. That they're now freed, so to speak, to give their lives fully to the purposes of God in washing the feet of the saints and being devoted to their needs.

But within a short period of time, sensual need or interest has made them to contradict their first proclamation, and Paul says, And at the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention (vs. 13). These are definitive insights of what believing actually means. It is a revealing of the apostolic mind that sees beyond and through mere appearances to the reality that needs to be recognized, which is also the statement of how God Himself sees it.

And then Paul turns to the subject of slaves in chapter 6: Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine may not be spoken against. And let those who have believers as their masters not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but let them serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles (vs. 1-2). Well, you can't really fathom how great an issue Paul is touching.

When the Protestant Reformation came, the peasants of Germany took occasion to revolt against their masters and interpreted the reformation as an invitation or an incentive to be in violent revolution against their masters. They were two main categories: peasants and landowners. If you know the history of revolution and the bloodbaths and the devastation that follows any attempt by man to rectify social

institutions through violence, then you would understand that what Paul is touching here is not just the issue of society, but the role of the church itself.

If the church were not guided over this question, it would almost be inevitable that believers would interpret the freedom in Christ as to be free from their masters and to come out from their social predicament. And that the gospel meant to be free and that one no longer needed to heed their masters. That mentality could have set in motion, not only reverberations throughout society, but probably also would have undermined the church itself. It would have made the church into some kind of revolutionary and radical social upheaval by which the faith itself would have become sublimated, and it would have just become a cause for social action.

In fact, that is what has happened to the liberal, social gospel of the 20th century. So this is an issue that is remarkably charged with enormous concern. So what Paul has to say here is not just touching the issue of the relationship between slaves and their masters, but the whole issue of the church itself in how it responds to the kind of wisdom and counsel Paul gives. In Ephesians chapter 6, there are other statements from Paul on the same subject of servants and masters.

You understand the predicament: both are now saved. And shouldn't the servant, who is now saved, demand and expect from his master a new kind of relationship and consideration? Should the master not take it easier on the slave? If he'll not release him from bondage, will he at least take it easier and in other ways show certain considerations that were not to be expected before he and the slave came into the faith? But Paul is saying, "What happens if your master does not give you those considerations, even though he's saved?"

Are you at liberty, then, to become resentful and bitter toward him, all the more because you could call him a hypocrite? Are you still expected to work those many hours and without the compensation that would be fair?" This is no small question, and it's in these social issues that Paul is required to give response, and in it we see so much of the wisdom of the mind of Christ operating through Paul. It is applicable today as it was then. It may not be the issue of slaves to masters, but we're in the issue of being employees to employers.

The application is the same. So, in Ephesians chapter 6, Paul says: 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 (vs. 5). Don't look at your master as just being a piece of flesh and blood. You're not laboring for him; you're really serving the Lord. And more than that, the fact that you are the bondsman and that he's the master is not some precarious accident of fate; it's God's predetermined and sovereign wisdom that you should occupy that role while he occupies his role.

And in that fixed and sovereignly, God-ordained relationship, something is to be worked and revealed of the transcendent nature of the faith that will glorify God. We do not have the liberty to murmur or complain. We don't take upon ourselves the mentality of a victim as if we have something owed us. Our master is not our physical master, but Christ Himself. Paul could speak with this authority because he himself was a bondsman. He's not speaking from some lofty, ethereal height of a man coming out of his Holiday Inn suite and giving the church a few words of wisdom, and then going back to the privilege of that lifestyle.

He himself is in chains--not literal, although at the end of his life, they were literal--but in his entire believing life, he rightly saw himself as a bondsman of Christ. When he spoke therefore to men who actually were socially bondsmen, he could speak to them with an authority that was more than just

incidental. In fact, it was the very issue of making his counsel significant that he himself also was in a state just like them. But he was no more free to do his thing than they were free to do their thing, because they were to regard their physical masters in the same way that Paul regarded his Master, namely, as Christ Himself.

Slaves were therefore to render service to their masters, not as man-pleasers, but as unto the Lord Himself. This is a revolution. As a former Marxist, I know what's radical and I would say, in all of my associations with the so-called "radicalisms" of the past, that they were mere kid's stuff. They were destined for the dung heap and amount to nothing but bloodshed. But this is radical; this is revolutionary, and it doesn't require one iota of social change. All it requires is a change of heart and mind; all it requires is an attitude; all it requires is an apostolic mindset.

Nothing needs to be disturbed in the fabric of society in and of itself. That is the last place you want to begin tearing. But in the given situation, let that man, Paul says in 1 Corinthians, remain in the place wherein he is called. Because in that place is the whole drama and significance of the faith itself. Don't look for some lustrous occasion. In the monotonous regularity of a regular job from eight to five, there is as profound an occasion for the setting forth of the grace of God and the marvel of the faith and the reality of God as anything that any man could do anywhere on the mission field.

It is the Lord who has put you in that place of employment. He's absolutely sovereign; He knows what He's doing. And if you're faithful in that place with that employer under those circumstances in that monotony and even unfairness, to serve the Lord, not as a man-pleaser but as doing something unto the Lord, and be faithful, then He'll promote you. He'll open other doors. We need to regard our situation as coming from the Lord and to serve the Lord and not man with singleness of heart as unto Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

Look at Paul in Acts 16. He was in an actual cell, bound hand and foot, with his back hanging in strips in the most stinking place, where men urinated and defecated. They didn't have outdoor toilets; they did it right where they were or may have had a bucket that spilled over. In all of that filth, in all of that congestion, in all of that gangrene and death, at midnight, the darkest hour, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God. If what he represents is reality and truth, then what we are about is totally phony and fraudulent.

Paul is rejoicing and is able to sing with his back hanging in strips, counting it all honor and privilege to have borne the sufferings of the Lord in obedience to the vision that came. He's a bondsman. How else would he have left Asia, where the churches were being added to daily, to go to a place where no one had ever been before, Philippi, merely because he saw a vision? Paul could be checked from going further in Asia where they were being prospered, and go to a place he's never been before, and what happens when he goes there?

One woman gets saved who was a demoniacal character, making her masters much gain, and for that they were stripped, beaten publicly in the marketplace and thrown into the dingiest of cells to languish unto death. There should have been every justification for complaint. But it was at that point that Paul is rejoicing and giving praise unto God. In that confinement was the freest man on the face of the earth, because to be free in Christ is to be free indeed. This is the ultimate paradox of the faith, that we're slaves, but our slavery makes us free.

We're free from the world; we're free from the invisible taskmaster who cracks his whip. We are free from having to have this car, this housing, this, this, this, and this. You have what the Lord gives; in having food and clothing, therein be content. You're free from envy; you're free from the kinds of things for which men exhaust themselves, who are dead even while they live. And this is real living because it serves the purposes of God; it's moving toward a consummation; it's in the mind and will of God who knows the end from the beginning, and it's unspeakable privilege to be a slave of Christ.

But as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will, render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free (vs. 6b-8). If you are the master, you are a master as unto the Lord, and therefore you're going to be treating your bondslaves differently-not because you're required by social legislation, but because you're in a relationship with One who is a master over you.

And you want to extend to those who are under you the same kind of grace that has come from above to you. God has an answer; Christ is the answer, but not in some kind of formulaic way. It's a mode of being. If people could see it, we would not need revolutions; we don't need social upheavals because there's nothing more terrible than for a servant to become a ruler (Proverbs). I would rather take my chances with the nobility that is already in rule, than some guttersnipe who has come up from the bottom, full of grievance and resentment and is able to pull a trigger.

And he's now going to call the shots over me and over the nation? For a servant to take on rulership by force is something not to be desired. The way that the world is constituted, that God made the world with kings, with the rulers and the ruled, with the masters and slaves, is another way of understanding reality. There's a greater issue at stake than man tearing up in order to obtain "freedom." More lives were lost in America between North and South over the issue of slavery than in any foreign war in which we've ever been engaged.

And the fabric was torn in such a way that has not been repaired to this day. And what has been the result, even of the Civil Rights movement, though it was pacifistic and did not employ physical violence, but what of its language and its spirit and temper? What comes out of these things when you tear and the dawn breaks? Are men happier? Are their lives more real? Is there greater justice in what they have obtained and won through those means? But if we had remained in the condition in which God has set us, and believed that God Himself in His sovereignty has established it, and that there's something to be wrought and displayed there of a kind that will glorify Him and bring answer to men, only then will there be peace.

Only then will there be a benevolent benefit. We see in present Israel something of the same thing through usurping, through force, through manipulation, through intimidation and threat. It's a Jacob people taking the Land through the exertion of themselves rather than waiting to receive it as inheritance and as gift under the conditions that God intended that were covenantal. We would have seen another Israel altogether. We would not be seeing blood spilled in these Palestinian cities.

We would not be seeing these "Days of Rage" and vehemence and bitterness that come when men are exacerbated by the demands of others upon themselves. Hatred begets hatred. Violence brings retribution and more. It's a downward spiraling. It's death, death, and death. But there is a way that brings life. God is the Creator, and life is respected and revered because of Him. And though there are seeming injustices and things that need to be borne, the saints are tried and perfected in those very things.

To be a God-pleaser and not a man-pleaser is not just some superficial, outward accommodation. It's the deepest expression of an inward work of God. It cannot be feigned. If you're going to be a God-pleaser, it's not merely making an adjustment. It's got to come out of the deepest, inward working of God; or else it's phony. So, Paul is saying what we should do, but he doesn't spell out what this will require in our relationship with God. And it is as much available to a slave as it is to the master.

Our ability to perfect and develop a relationship with God that would enable us not to be a man-pleaser is available as much to the man in chains as to the man with the whip. Nothing externally has to be altered; and yet within that framework, if we take the word of Paul seriously and seek its fulfillment, we will bring about the most radical transformation in society itself-and that bloodlessly. The believer will not necessarily receive the reward of the Lord in this life. His good service as a God-pleaser and not a man-pleaser is not necessarily going to bring an immediate benefit now.

And if he's going to look for that in the possible change that is going to come from his master or his boss, then he's going to be disappointed. But the man who is a God-pleaser does not look for immediate gratification. He'll receive of the Lord when the Lord comes and brings His reward with Him, and gives to every man according to his works. This is an appeal to those who have an eschatological mindset of expectation. They do not demand or need instant gratification and payoff now, for they know that there's a payoff coming.

And when it comes, it is eternal and enduring and beyond description, for "eye has not seen and ear has not heard what God has laid up for those who love Him." And that motive and that belief can enable a man to plug away, day after day, in dreary monotony and injustice. He need not gripe or complain but rejoice, for he knows the greater reward that will be his. He lives in anticipation of that reward, or else this kind of counsel is meaningless and totally impracticable. This kind of service cannot be performed unless it is set in its eschatological framework of expectation.

And an apostle is one who has brought eternity into time. He talks about "this present world," which implies that there is another. This present thing is passing and momentary. The one that's coming is the real and enduring one, and for which this is a time of preparation. And you can find that preparation for your eternal reward as much as a slave as you can as a master. In fact, you may find in eternity you have more privilege, more honor, more distinction, and more oversight over cities than your master.

You were his slave in this earth, but because you bore that social station with Christian dignity and patience and forbearance as coming from the hand of the Lord, and served the Lord in that place without resentment, without disappointment in anticipation, that when that future comes, your reward and distinction and honor will much exceed the man who ruled over you. Paul sees eternity; he sees the reward that is to come, and therefore he can counsel men who are in the most unappreciated, despicable places of servitude and say, "Don't bolt; don't get violent; don't do your master in, but patiently take that as the place that God has assigned.

And in that place, show to your employer even greater service, and your reward will be the greater in the Lord's coming." And, masters, do the same thing to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him (vs. 9). This is a little side note to the men who are masters; that they need also to reckon on who their Master is. Finally, (brethren KJV) be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. (vs. 10) Don't let that pass without due appreciation.

Paul is speaking both to slaves and to masters, and they're both his brothers. Talk about freedom in Christ, talk about rising above class distinctions and race distinctions and all of the kinds of things that make men to feel inferior or cut out or shut out. Paul says, brethren. It doesn't matter what your social station is. Whether you're a master or a slave is not your determination but His. But here's the one thing that encloses us all: you're my brethren. This is no phony social liberal showing that he has sympathy for the poor; this is deeper.

This is my brethren. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (vs. 11-12). Your master is not the enemy. There are greater issues beyond flesh and blood, namely, the principalities and powers of darkness. Even though you're a slave, you have full opportunity to put on this armor.

This is not just for your master because he has a greater social privilege. All of this provision to fight the fight of faith-which is not with weapons that are carnal but spiritual-is as much your privilege as his. You put on the breastplate of righteousness (v.14) as a slave by conducting yourself without resentment and bitterness to the man who is over you. That is righteousness and this "shield of faith" (v. 16) will save you from the fiery darts of the enemy. Those fiery darts will likely come in this form: "You fool, you don't have to suffer this.

This guy is just a phony-baloney believer. Look at the pretense; what has he ever done since he's come to the faith that has changed your situation one iota? Where has he ever given you greater consideration? Where has he given you a day off? An hour off? Paul's counsel is just to make you subjected and servile and keep the system going. He's a false apostle. You have every right to throw off these shackles; and you're a free man in Christ now. You don't have to take this guff!"

But Paul says, "Take up the shield of faith. That's the fiery dart; that's the accusation of an enemy who knows exactly what to finger and what to appeal to." Put up the shield of faith and don't let those darts get to you. Stay with the counsel that you got from God's own man. And you have access to every defense and all of the shield of faith and the armor and the breastplate of righteousness as anyone. The fact that you're a slave does not prohibit you from putting on the full armor of God.

And then Paul says, And pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel (v. 19). Paul is proclaiming a revolution without blood. It is more than a little formula for "how to get saved." Paul is touching the deepest issues of life and society with the genius of a gospel that has come down from heaven. It's a mystery, but yet it can save men from violence, from death, from misspent living, and from social causes.

Who should know that better than we of the twentieth century of what false causes have meant for mankind? I believe Stalin annihilated twenty million middle-class peasants in order to standardize the whole of Russian agriculture in a system. But the individual, middle-class farmers who had histories of traditions were seen as a threat to that and therefore annihilated. Blood, nothing but blood. And what is Russia in agriculture? My God, if they can get a loaf of bread, they're grateful.

It is a system that continually fails because systems must necessarily fail when the organic thing that has been wrought over the process of time through generations of skill, devotion to the soil, attention and love for animals, is destroyed overnight by men with systems! Paul's gospel is a revolution! And that's why he

says, "Pray for me; I'm not just preaching a little formula for salvation. My word is the word from heaven on how men ought to live! And for that I need utterance."

For which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (v. 20). He could not address the situation except that he himself was also in bonds. If he were speaking in any other place, as we've said before, of social privilege, his words would fall limply to the floor. But because his social condition was worse physically and naturally than those whom he was addressing, his word to them had greater credibility and power. He had no place to lay his head; he was hated and despised, beaten and left for dead; he had no certain future, known and unknown; he was a man in bonds.

His life was not his own. It was not for him to say where he was to go or what he was to do or even know what to speak. He was a slave indeed! And he rejoiced in it and exhibited the freedom in Christ that was itself a liberating message. Just his coming as one in chains was an encouragement and an illumination for those in physical chains and servitude. So that even in that condition, the grace of God can come, and beyond that, great reward for your ability to bear it as Paul bore it in this present world.

Karl Marx's classic work, *Das Kapital*, which was the invitation to social revolution and bloodshed began with, "Workers of the world, throw off your chains. You have nothing to lose but your chains." So we have two gospels, both coming from Jews. The world says, "Throw off your chains; you don't have to take this! You can be free!" But, free for what? That freedom is worse slavery than what you were under, and its end is violence and death. God says, "Keep your chains." Paul says, "I myself am also in chains, but I kiss them, and I thank God for them, for in His great sovereignty He has determined my call."

I'm not an apostle by my own choosing, and you're not a carpenter or a bookkeeper or working in the supermarket or department store by accident. You're in that place and in that call as much as I am in mine, and in that very place, there is as much possibility for the showing forth of the grandeur of God and the grace of God and the wisdom of God as in any other place. That's why you're there. You're not there to make a living; that's a secondary thing. You're there to represent God, to be a witness unto Him."

You'll bear up with the circumstances, because more is at stake than your success and your professional honor. What's at stake is what you display before men in your patient, day-by-day as a real expression of God." In I Corinthians 7, Paul adds, "Were you called while a slave? (v. 21a)" You may despise your calling, you may not recognize it as a calling, and you're living there only as a flunky, only as a vocation, only as a job. Well, no wonder it's dreary because you're not seeing it in the magnitude of what it in fact is as God sees it.

You're not seeing it apostolically. You're seeing it humanly. Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. For he was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave. You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. Brethren, let each man remain with God (vs. 21-24a) Paul is saying here that this thing in which you're called is not only an opportunity to make God known and to obtain eternal reward, but in that very situation is transformation itself for you.

You can be transformed right in that situation by merely a change of mind and a change of attitude. If you recognize that it's a call, and submit to it as I'm submitting to my call, Paul says, use it that you might be made free. Don't see yourself as a victim and moan and groan about not having had the advantage of education or skin color. Use it! Take that situation and be transformed by that very same thing in the attitude that you bring to it, which is heavenly. It'll free you!

You're going to come out another person. You're going to come out larger than life. This is where apostles are formed in the narrow place of constriction where we're chafed. No, submit there for the place of restriction is the place of enlargement (Watchman Nee). You'll be transformed by it. If we submit to it as coming from God, we'll become freed by it. We ourselves will be transformed in that confinement and will come to a place of apostolic stature. We'll have such a depth, such a breadth of being, such a godliness, such a righteousness.

It is made in the place of contraction. Paul says, "Use your situation. You're not victim to anything if you recognize that God's the Author of it, and you receive it as your call. The issue of whether you're a free man or a slave doesn't matter. Remain in that calling, and in it is the prospect of transformation that you might be made free. For to be free in Christ is to be free indeed. Paul was averting a disaster for the church in keeping people who were in bondage from throwing off their chains.

You have everything to lose when you throw them off! But submit to the place wherein you were called, and in that, use it rather to be transformed and to find the freedom with or without chains that cannot be bought for money. And it will avert social catastrophes and bloodshed and violence. In the Civil War, there were families on both sides suffering death at each other's hands over "rectifying social issues" that God Himself had allowed. The USA would be another nation today if we had allowed God to work out the issue of slavery and freedom.

The greatest fictional character in all of American literature, strange to say, the one phrase that no black person wants to be accused of is "Uncle Tom." When I read Uncle Tom's Cabin in American literature, I was astonished. This figure, Uncle Tom, who bore stripes and suffered indignation and brutality because of his Christ-likeness, never once sought to be free of his master, though he could have! He was mighty in his personal strength and could have broken loose, but he submitted to it-even unto death.

Right here you have a picture of Christ in a black man, a slave. So, there's probably greater potential for America in a black people who will submit to their conditions rather than violently seeking to free themselves from it, and that's true for any of us. What seems the most discouraging for a people oppressed under minority conditions, and having to face a servitude of unjust conditions, is also the potential for the Kingdom of God to be the greatest. It is precisely there in what can be displayed for those that receive it as their calling, coming from God, that the solution of God can be found by His Spirit in that place and are themselves transformed as well as transforming others. This is the Gospel. Amen.

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/art-katz/widows-and-slaves-employers-and-employees/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**