



Reimagining Grumbling: A Devotional for Working Men

Inspired by Galatians 1:10 (ESV)

“For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

This verse struck me because I often find myself disliking my job. At times, I grumble or complain or justify pulling back on my effort. I’ll remind myself to be thankful for God’s grace in even having the job, and His mercy in allowing me to continue working it. After all, this job is one I committed to, and through it, God has provided skills that serve my ministry, financial support for my family, and even the freedom to lead them and pursue the work He’s called me to. But if I’m honest, grumbling is often my first reaction; thankfulness, my second.

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.” (Philippians 2:14–15, ESV)

This command challenges me every day. If I’m constantly working for human approval, I will never be fulfilled, because man cannot offer what only God can. The verse in Galatians is clear: if my motivation is to please people, I cannot be a servant of Christ. This isn’t limited to ministry. It encompasses our everyday work—our jobs, our service, our calling—whatever task God has appointed us to do.

Colossians 3:22–24 explains how identity in Christ manifests in these moments:

“Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”

Let’s break that down...

1. Bondservants:

We are not our own—Jesus bought us. Our identity is not tied to our job title but to our redemption.

“Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.” (1 Peter 1:18–19)

“But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.” (Romans 6:22)



2. Eye-service and people-pleasing:

We are not to work only when watched or for the approval of others.

“Not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man.” (Ephesians 6:6–7)

3. Sincerity of heart:

What flows from our hearts will shape our work.

“The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:45)

“I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.” (Psalm 119:11)

4. Fear of the Lord:

Our reverence for God should shape our attitude. Not a fear of punishment, but of disappointing the One we love and revere—like a boy who fears letting down his father.

(These verses tell of God's character and why you should honor, have reverence, and awe.)

Proverbs 19:23	Psalms 34:9	Psalms 111:10	Proverbs 1:7	Proverbs 9:10
Proverbs 10:27	Proverbs 14:26	Proverbs 14:27	Proverbs 15:16	Proverbs 15:33
Proverbs 16:6	Proverbs 22:4	Ecclesiastes 12:13	Deuteronomy 10:12	Joshua 24:14
1 Samuel 12:24	2 Chronicles 19:7	Nehemiah 5:9	Psalms 19:9	Psalms 33:8

We'll end this section with one verse in full, to settle the point in our hearts:

“Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!” Psalms 33:8

5. Hope in our inheritance:

This hope reshapes our motivation and lifts us above grumbling.

“In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.” (Ephesians 1:11–14)



And what is that inheritance?

This future hope allows us to endure today's struggles, including the dissatisfaction we sometimes feel at work.

"...and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:6–7)

"So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God." (Galatians 4:7)

Conclusion: Enduring the Unjust with Grace

You don't endure unjust labor because your boss deserves it. Work as you are free in Christ. You give respect to the unjust because you know what it is to receive what *you* didn't deserve: mercy, grace, and eternal life through the atoning work of Christ.

"Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God." (1 Peter 2:16–20)

Closing Prayer: Ephesians 3:14–21

"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."