Ephesians 6:5-8 - 5 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. NASB

A. Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling. - Paul now turns his attention to “slaves” or servants. This is again a continuation of the thought begun in chapter 5:21, “be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.” Here the slaves are to be subject to their masters by responding in obedience to them. “Masters according to the flesh” is to say your earthly masters not your heavenly One. Further, he says this is to be done “with fear and trembling.” This is for the benefit of the slaves as their masters have authority over them to punish them and they would not want to incur their discipline. Righteousness for the slave or servant looks like obedience, submission, and reverence for authority. Surely this instruction in modern terms word speak directly to employer/employee relations.

1 Peter 2:18 - 18 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. NASB

B. 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. – Here Paul points to the genuine heart of the Christian servant. He commands that their obedience come from the heart, sincerely, even “as to Christ.” This shows God’s high and holy standard for reverence to authority. To emphasize this, Paul brings into perspective the fact that in our service we serve God first and men second. Therefore, we should see our obedience to our employers as “God’s will” and desire to fulfill it with a “sincere heart.”

Colossians 3:21-22 - 22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. NASB

C. 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. – The Christian servant or slave should remember that he lives by a higher rule than that of his earthly masters, and this the service to his heavenly master, Christ. They should remember that their life is governed by divine providence and that their lot in life is governed by God. Therefore they are to serve “as to the Lord, and not to men.” This is to say that they remember that they serve God first, and men second. Further that the good hand of Providence will be in the last the hand which renders reward to them. Good service rendered from the heart glorifies God and God will reward each one according to this good work.

Colossians 3:23-24 - 23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. NASB

Ephesians 6:9 - 9 And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. NASB

A. Again Paul turns his attention to yet another Christian, the Christian master. Here he says “do the same things to them” referring to the aforementioned instructions to the slaves. That the Christian master should like wise do his governing “as to the Lord, and
not to men,” that they should serve God first and men second, that they should have good will and sincerity of heart in the relations with their subjects. This he makes clear when he states that “both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him” so that even these Christian masters should have no partiality as well.

Colossians 4:1 - 4:1 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven. NASB

Paul exhorts the masters that they should “give up threatening” and to treat their subjects with impartiality. This has long been the standard of God for ruling over servants. Masters are to treat servants with that good character which is consistent with God Himself.

Leviticus 25:43 - 43'You shall not rule over him with severity, but are to revere your God. NASB