

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adult Sunday School

SERMON ON THE MOUNT (II)

LESSON EIGHT: ONLY ONE MASTER

I. PASSAGE

Matthew 6:24, “²⁴ No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

II. INTRODUCTION

The Lord desires to turn the hearts of His hearers from a spirit of covetousness to a spirit of contentment. He calls us not to make material things the main goal of our life, because earthly treasure is of a perishing nature: where moth, rust, and thieves of various kinds will destroy.

Earthly treasure captures every evil heart inclining towards the thought that more wealth will bring more security and happiness. Can wealth really bring about security and happiness? Anyone who finds satisfaction in wealth actually lived in great fear because he cannot be absolutely sure how long he can continue enjoy himself. There is always a fear within him when the day comes he loses everything, he may even lose the will to live.

We can only follow only one master. We cannot follow two masters. To be under a master means you allow yourselves to be enslaved by him. Whatever he says, you will obey immediately; no questions asked, you simply follow everything he says. What is the chief end of man? It is not the pursuit of wealth, but to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. If wealth, riches and possession of this world, the Mammon, be our master, then God is not our master.

But some might cleverly say, "Can't I have the best of both worlds, God and Money at the same time?" But the Lord's Word in verse 24 is abundantly clear, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

III. GOD MUST BE OUR MASTER

Here Christ demonstrates the impossibility of our human heart being divided between God and the things of this world. In other words, you can only have one Master, either God or Money. He who has his eye partly on God and partly on Money, and desires and endeavors to grasp both worlds, deceives his own soul. Such a one is in danger of losing both, and even if he does not, he will certainly miss the kingdom of God.

A man's heart cannot be divided. If he attempts to love the things of the world as well as to love God, he will certainly fail God, for “the friendship of the world is enmity with God: whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God” (James 4:4). The endeavor to lay up for ourselves both treasures upon earth and treasures in heaven is an utter impossibility, for “*no man can serve two masters.*”

To seek both earthly and heavenly riches together is an attempt to serve two masters, God and mammon. No man can seek them both together at the same time. The proof of this is set forth here by Christ by the effect of such attempts to serve. He says, “For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.”

The conclusion therefore is unmistakable: "... ye cannot serve God and mammon." To "serve God" is the same thing as to "lay up treasures in heaven." A true servant of God will seek the will of God. And he will work towards building up treasures in heaven than on earth. And on the contrary, to "serve mammon" is the same thing as to "lay up treasures on earth" where it is temporal and moth, rust and thieves will destroy.

The force of our Lord's declaration is more apparent in the Greek words than it is here in the English. First, the word "serve" does not signify to do an occasional act of obedience. Obedience, but not complete. For example, we are commanded to love our wives, but we held back when it requires of us a little bit more time and resources to please them. Many a time, our service for God is not with complete obedience. We prefer to serve "by the way," instead of "out of the way." However, the word 'serve' that the Lord used is to be that of a bondservant, a slave, who is the property of his master, always, constantly and entirely subjected to the master's will. This same word "serve" was found in Romans 6:6 which says, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Also in Romans 7:6 "but now we are delivered from the law as a covenant of works, being dead to that wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit." It is service in completeness.

Second, there are two different words in the Greek for "other." One signifies another of the same kind, while the second denotes another of a different kind. When the Lord here declared, "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other," the word "other" is another of a different kind. Therefore, it is evident that no one can be equally devoted to two different and opposing masters.

For example, a soldier may serve his president and at the same time his commanding officer and his senior officers. But the same soldier will definitely not serve the enemy, for they are in opposite camps. No man can be at the same time, the servant of two masters who are hostile to each other, and whose interests are entirely incompatible. In this sense our Lord says, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Thus, our Lord shows the impossibility of any man seeking to serve two opposing masters.

IV. MAMMON MUST BE OUR SERVANT

Mammon in its original meaning denotes "riches," or "the things of this world." As mammon is here opposed to God, we must understand that the mammon is the god of riches which finds its root to the prince of this world. The Lord Jesus in His temptation in the wilderness was shown the kingdom of this world. If He would bow down to Satan and worship him, the kingdom will be his. But the Lord did not set His eyes on the things of this world. He remains faithful and true to His heavenly Father. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

The influence which material wealth exerts upon our minds and affections is very great. It leads us to seek happiness in them and moving us to devote all their time and energy to seek material wealth. This indicates the great power of this prince of the world. And to yield ourselves to that influence is the "service" which we render unto him. Satan rejoices whenever we place God down and seek after the pleasures from the things of this world. That is why we are called to "hate" and "despise" mammon. Such hatred and despising do not mean we throw our money. Money itself is not evil. It is the "love of money" that is evil (see 1 Timothy 6:10).

If mammon is not to be our master, then it must be our servant. Mammon, being our servant means that we will manage and control all our material possessions solely to the glory of our rightful Master, who is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. This is how we love and hold on to our Master in our service for Him. May Christ always be the Master whom we serve in our life, not mammon. Amen.