

MAMMON THE PRINCIPLE OF SELFISHNESS

"No man can serve two masters." – Matt. 6:24.

AMAN may endeavor to serve two masters, or more, but no one can be a satisfactory servant to more than one master. No two interests are so completely one that the service of either would not more or less detract from the service of the other. The Lord explained this matter in His Sermon on the Mount. He tells us that one of the masters to whom He refers in our text is God, the Heavenly Father, and the other is Mammon – selfishness and sin, together with all that is connected with unrighteousness – everything contrary to God and His righteousness.

As a matter of fact, we are born in slavery to Sin. The Scriptures inform us that we were sold into this slavery by the disobedience of our first parents. Sin, therefore, has a hold upon the entire world of mankind. They are all slaves. It is impossible for them to deliver themselves from the thralldom of this slavery; for it is *everywhere* – the world around.

Some are loyal to the interests of evil; but the great majority are at heart disloyal to Mammon, realizing that in serving self they are opposing God. But at the same time, those who serve Mammon, selfishness, get the best in the political sphere, the best in the ecclesiastical sphere, the best in the social sphere, and the best in the financial sphere. Selfishness succeeds at the present time. All human arrangements are along the lines of selfishness. Whoever, then, works along these lines serves himself better than if he were not selfish. Otherwise he would have his fellow-creatures in opposition to him, misunderstanding him, etc.

But Jesus inaugurated a new order of things. He declared that God is ready to receive back to Himself those who forsake sin and

believe on Him. He tells them that He will redeem them; and that as many as will [R5344 : page 333] accept His gracious arrangement will be set free. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

SELFISHNESS CHARACTERISTIC OF SATAN

Most people have selfishness so ingrained in their own natures and so mixed up in all with which they have to do, socially and otherwise, that to the majority of those who heard our Lord the Message seemed foolish. It was foolishness to them that our Lord should *lose* His life, that He should *waste* His life, and *accomplish nothing*. Consequently they thought it a waste of energy for any to become His companions, and they continued to serve Mammon, not knowing that they were serving the Devil.

The Mammon principle, the selfish principle, is of Satan. But he carefully hides his cloven foot, and makes himself to appear as an angel of light. When he is inviting people to take his way, the way of selfishness, he is at the same time misrepresenting God. And all those who take our Lord's way are held up to ridicule; for the Prince of this world has much power. Those who serve him cannot see that any other way would be reasonable or proper. Hence the difference between the children of light and the children of darkness.

Satan sets himself up as an angel of light; but his servants cannot see this, and thus he has them continually at a disadvantage. He says, "You need not serve Mammon; but be moderate in your course. Serve the present things. Do a little on *this* side and a little on *that*." And they say, "We will really in our hearts serve God; but outwardly we must serve Mammon. Otherwise we shall have trouble in continuing to be worldly-wise – if the world sees that we are serving God." Many have attempted this double course. This principle has been manifested all through the Gospel Age. If there had been no cause for Jesus to use these words, we may be sure He would not have used them. Jesus is here telling us that we cannot be

faithful and acceptable servants to the world if we would be loyal to God; and we cannot be satisfactory to God if we give our hearts to Mammon.

The majority of Christian people are in this attitude today. They try to serve God; and yet they try to be worldly-wise, and to shape their conduct and their affairs of the present life in harmony with the present order of Mammon. The Lord would have them know that it is impossible to serve God and Mammon. He has promised to pay wages to those who serve Him. They must know that there can be no *middle* course, so far as God is concerned. Mammon might be willing to give a partial reward for partial service. But so far as Jesus is concerned, our service *must be undivided*.

Whomsoever the Son makes free will be free indeed. In the world they will have tribulation. But they will have the peace which passes all understanding. Others cannot appreciate their blessings, their real condition. If any one should try to serve two masters, his heart would go [R5345 : page 333] out to the one or to the other; for he would more and more detest his condition. If he were liberated by the Son, and fully enlisted in His service, he would come more and more into sympathy with the Divine arrangement, with the Justice, Wisdom and Love exercised by the Heavenly Father in His gracious Plan; and the appreciation of this would more and more fill him, so that he would have no time for worldly things.

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