

"CHOOSE YE THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE"

"No man can serve two masters...Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." – Matthew 6:24.

THE THOUGHT which our Lord apparently wished to impress upon His disciples was that there is a principle involved in service – that no one can possibly render full service to two opposing interests, two opposing masters; for the one would surely be neglected in the interest of the other. There would be more or less of a preference shown. After making a general observation regarding the impossibility of serving two masters, the Lord applied this principle, saying, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon" – God and selfishness, righteousness and unrighteousness. Man was originally God's servant. It was natural for him to appreciate the Divine character and arrangements and to render willing service. But mankind were deceived as they got under the control of the great Adversary, being influenced by the powers of evil, the chief effects of which have been ignorance, superstition and selfishness.

One of the deplorable conditions of the present time is that from birth selfishness is almost *forced* upon one. Man learns to give his time, his influence, for selfish purposes and projects. He fails to see that God is the One who should be served at any cost. But men were born and shapen in iniquity. They are servants of Sin, slaves of Sin. But our Lord Jesus pointed out that through the knowledge of Himself and compliance with His terms of discipleship, there came a release from this slavery, an opportunity to pass over to the side of righteousness.

However, an opportunity to take a stand for right came before our Lord's day. As a knowledge of God was granted to any people, they had an opportunity to assert themselves on the side of right.

At the time when the Law Covenant was given, God set forth the principles of righteousness in that Law. The whole nation of Israel accepted God as their Savior, and entered into a Covenant with Him that they would be His loyal people. Yet after they had done this, the influences of evil in their flesh became manifest. They sought to be the servants of God and at the same time of self, dividing their interests between God's affairs and the affairs of self.

A WORTHY EXAMPLE SET

Jesus pointed out this particular fact, and told the people of His day that it was impossible to perform this half-hearted service – they could not serve two masters, for nobody would be pleased. If they were to serve Mammon, serve the Present Order of things, then they could not be pleasing to God. If they wished to serve God, serve righteousness, to whatever extent they did this they would be displeasing to the world; they must be servants of either the one or the other; the two services combined would be impossible.

The example of our Lord Jesus when He came to earth, was in harmony with this position; for He fully renounced the world and made absolute consecration of His life to God and His service. Thus He set us an example. All who have the same spirit should walk in His steps. This was in accordance with the Jewish Law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength." Any one who kept this Law would not be serving self; for his service would be *all for God*.

Those who are following in the Master's footsteps are all for God, or, as we sometimes sing, "All for Jesus." As we follow the example of Jesus, and walk as He walked, we are rendering whole-hearted service to *God*. The result of serving this Master will be a great reward. "Him hath God highly exalted, and given Him a name above every name." And the Church has been invited to

follow Him. So we should serve God in everything, with all our heart, mind, soul, strength. This is our commission. This we are to do to the point of sacrificing all earthly interests and of laying down our lives for the brethren. This course, followed faithfully to the end, will bring us to the same reward that Jesus received – glory, honor, immortality.

RENDERING UNTO CAESAR HIS OWN

It may be asked how this text comports with the Apostle's suggestion that one who was bound when he received the Truth should not seek to be free. (1 Corinthians 7:20-22.) These words of St. Paul express the thought that when the Truth finds us it does not necessarily change our earthly relationships; that if a man were a slave, for instance, and the Truth of God reached him, he should not rebel against his earthly master. He is not to think of this new relationship to God as changing [R5666 : page 110] the color of his skin or his earthly relationship. The Apostle is speaking of the body and not the heart when he says, "Seek not to be loosed." Our bodies may be enslaved for one reason or another. It might be a bondage like that of olden times – captured service. Or it might be that we had become the servants of those who were willing to pay for our services. While we are not to do anything contrary to the Divine Law or to our consciences, yet we are to serve our earthly masters faithfully. They have purchased our time, or a large measure of it; and we must render to them conscientiously all that is theirs by contract. If one is a servant in a military way, or in any other way, he should be *faithful*.

This will not interfere with one's service to God; for our Lord has instructed us to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Whoever is faithful in this is doing the will of his Heavenly Master. There would be no conflict, but full harmony. The only conflict would be if the master on earth should wish us to do something contrary to the commands of our Master in

Heaven. We are to suffer anything rather than do what our Heavenly Lord would not approve, and thus defile our consciences.

Looking into the future, we see that the present master, ruler, of this Old Order is soon to be bound, that he may deceive the nations no more for a thousand years, and that the new Ruler, the new Master of the world, is to be The Christ – Jesus and His Church. We ask ourselves how this principle will apply then. The answer is that there will be only the one Master to obey. There will be no rendering unto Caesar then. All will be made fully aware that this Master is the only one who has the power, the right to command. The knowledge of God's glory shall fill the whole earth – the knowledge of God's Righteousness, the knowledge of God's Power, the knowledge of God's Wisdom, the knowledge of God's Love. Whatever He commands is the right thing, as every one will then learn and fully understand. **[R5667 : page 110]**

THE SCRIPTURALLY "WICKED"

In the Scriptures Satan is represented as the deceiver of mankind. He puts light for darkness and darkness for light. God's proposition through Christ is that during the thousand years of the Millennial Reign, the whole world will be brought to the true knowledge of God, an *accurate* knowledge. Deception will be no longer permitted. The world will see what righteousness really is, what its rewards really are, and how desirable it is. As a consequence, the majority will then, we think, be glad to give heed to the one Master. The exceptions are represented as having the same disposition as Satan; and whoever will have that disposition will be destroyed. When a person comes to know the right and when the right is made reasonable, and possible for him, and he then prefers to do wrong rather than right, let him die the death. This will be the sentence. Such will be counted "the wicked," the incorrigible.

The word "wicked" from the Scriptural standpoint, means those who do wrong *intentionally*. So all the wicked, knowing the wrong to be wrong, and doing it wilfully and purposely, shall die the Second Death. In due time none shall be left alive except those who serve the one true Master. The difficulty with mankind at present is ignorance, which God has not yet lifted from the world. He has permitted the ignorance and darkness of the present time that the world may learn its lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and be the better prepared for the lessons that are to follow. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them." But these blinded minds shall soon have the obstructions removed that they may see.

Those who have become children of the light, who have accepted the Lord Jesus and become His disciples, and who now see clearly the Divine will and Plan, have much more responsibility than those who have never seen. We also have greater prospects of blessing – not only the present joy, comfort, peace and knowledge, but additionally the hope of making our "calling and election sure," of attaining to joint-heirship with the Master. God will leave the scattering of the darkness for Christ to do. God has let the world go on its way, meantime providing the Savior, the Deliverer – The Christ – who will soon take control of the whole world. He will cause the light, the Truth, to shine out, to flood the earth with knowledge and blessing. Then with the true light shining everywhere, there will be no excuse for anybody who will not walk in it; each one must then choose finally whether or not he will serve the true Master.

