

We come this afternoon to the third and final comparison—having seen two treasures (vv19-21), two eyes (vv22-23)—we come to two masters (v24)—now before we come to this verse let me remind you of its intimate relation to what preceded—in many ways it is the pinnacle of the passage—a passage designed to underscore the radical difference between two kinds of people—there are those who have their treasure on earth others who have their treasure in heaven—there are those full of light and there are those full of darkness—so too—there are those who serve God and others who serve mammon—but what is exceedingly clear—you can not do both...

Now if there was ever a text that needs to be published throughout this country it's Matt.6:24—a nation suffocating by its own prosperity—that exalts an entertainment industry intoxicated with mammon and materialism—professional athletes making millions—and others [who profess to be Christian]—are teaching the more you serve God the more mammon you'll get—brethren—what we often refer to as the prosperity gospel is growing in popularity and is in fact the fastest growing movement in places like Africa—and it simply denies the teaching of our text—“you cannot serve God and mammon...”

- I. We can only have one master
- II. We can only serve one master
- III. Closing thoughts

I. We can only have one master

1. Our Savior plainly says—“no man can serve two masters...you cannot serve God and mammon...”—a slave by definition is indebted to a single master...
2. The word our Savior uses “serve” refers to—“service rendered to a master by a slave—it simply means—“to be a slave...”
3. The word rendered “master” means—“a master or owner”—and refers to—“one who has legal authority or control over another...”
4. Thus no slave can serve two masters—it is an impossibility—a slave is bound to his master as long as he has authority over him...
5. Our Savior says the options are two—God or mammon—the word properly refers to possessions, wealth, or riches...
6. It is an old Syriac word brought into the NT un-translated—our Savior uses it in our text in a personified sense as the god of mammon...
7. John Gill—“The word ‘mammon’ is a Syriac word, and signifies money, wealth, riches, substance, and everything that comes under the name of worldly goods...”
8. Our Savior basically means the same thing by earthly treasure in v19—all created things especially money or riches...
9. Thus our Savior is teaching us—that each one of us without exception—has a single master—God or mammon...
10. Notice [1] man by nature is a slave of mammon—he is enslaved to the possessions and pleasures of this world...
11. Man by nature is bound to this world—he is in and of the world—he is a worldlian—this is his native sphere—this is his master...
12. Now here I have to clarify—that while native man is a slave of mammon—he is foremostly a slave of the god of mammon...
13. Satan uses mammon as a means to hold his citizens captive—for example, this what he attempted with our Savior...
14. Matt.4:8-10—“again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to Him, All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me. 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve'...”
15. Thus by nature man is a slave to Satan—who uses sin and the things of the world as shackles to ensnare poor souls...

16. For example—think of a fisherman who uses various baits to ensnare a fish—he may have a dozen different baits to entice his prey...
17. So too—Satan also is a fisher of men—who uses various lures to ensnare various people—but ultimately they are bound to him...
18. We could basically categorize these various baits into two types—those that prey on our sinful lusts and those that prey on our pleasures...
19. Tit.3:3—“for we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another...”
20. Here is a sober description of all men by nature—“for we ourselves were also once foolish”—we were no different than the rest...
21. Notice the phrase—“serving various lusts and pleasures”—the word “serving” is the same in our text—“no man can serve two masters...”
22. The word literally means “enslaved”—thus the NAS and NIV—“enslaved to various lusts and pleasures...”
23. We were—“enslaved to various lusts and pleasures”—that is various kinds—not every man was enslaved by the same lusts or pleasures...
24. Yet—we can trace back their origination to that crafty fisherman—who uses sin and the world as a means to keep them enslaved...
25. Thus our Savior could speak of mammon as a master—“you cannot serve [be enslaved to] both God and mammon...”
26. Thus all men by nature serve the god of mammon—they come out from the womb—bowing to their own native passions and pleasures...
27. It makes no difference if they come from a poor or rich family—a wealthy or impoverished nation—mammon is our native deity...
28. This of course can be tragically illustrated—in that most lotto tickets are sold in the poorest neighborhoods and societies...
29. Every time I go to by local gas station—it saddens me exceedingly—to see the poor spend their money on two things—liquor and lotto tickets...
30. Or else think of many of the children within these neighborhoods—who look to sports and music as their only means to make it rich...
31. Why is this—but because they are bowing to their master mammon—they are enslaved to various lusts and pleasures...
32. Notice [2] by grace we are slaves of God in Christ—a Christian has been delivered from Satan and now enslaved to the Savior...
33. Rom.1:1—“Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ...” Jas.1:1—“James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” 2Pet.1:1—“Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ...” Jude 1:1—“Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ, and brother of James...”
34. Rom.6:17-18—“but God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness...”
35. V22—“but now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life...”
36. Notice [a] we were slaves of sin, but [b] are now slaves of righteousness and God—every man is a slave to one of these masters...

## II. We can only serve one master

1. This follows upon the first point—if we can only have one master—then of necessity we can only serve one master...
2. Our Savior provides two reasons—“for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other...”
3. Notice two words—“love” and “loyal”—these are the two closely related reasons a slave cannot not serve two masters...

4. Notice [1] a master expects supreme affections—“for either he will hate the one and love the other...”—his chief affections must be settled upon a single object...
5. Now at this point—someone may object—surely a master isn’t going to assume that he have his slave’s affection or love...
6. What slave ever loved his master—I mean—doesn’t a person become a slave against his will—thus wouldn’t he hate his master?...
7. Well—at this point we must keep in mind that the Scriptures describes man as a willing slave—a slave that serves his master heartily...
8. Jn.8:44—“you are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do...”—they were not enslaved against their will...
9. Thus a slave in the biblical sense—is willfully enslaved—serving their master with their whole person—heart, mind, soul, and strength...
10. And so our Savior says—“either he will hate the one and love the other”—but you cannot hate both or love both...
11. Now by hate—our Savior is simply underscoring the fact—that the Lord demands our supreme and chief affections...
12. Lk.14:26—“if anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple...”
13. Our Savior here makes clear—that to be a follower of Him [to be His slave]—He demands our chief affections...
14. To put it plainly—He is not willing to have a halfhearted slave—He will be served only in a hearty and joyous manner...
15. Martin Luther—“God cannot allow us to have another Lord besides himself. He is a jealous God, as he says, and cannot suffer us to serve him and his enemy. Only mine, he says, or not at all...”
16. Notice [2] a master expects supreme allegiance, Matt.6:24—“or else he will be loyal to the one and despite the other...”
17. The word rendered “loyal” (NKJV)—literally means—“to hold or cling to”—it refers—“to a close devotion or allegiance...”
18. A slave serves his master by obedience—by doing what he is commanded to do—the slave has resigned his will to that of the master...
19. He no longer belongs to himself—he belongs to his master—and thus—whatever his master says—he does...
20. Martin Luther—“What does it mean to serve God? The answer is, doing what he has commanded...In other words, if I am serving my master, I am doing what my master requires...”
21. Matt.8:9—“for I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my slave, Do this and he does it...”
22. This is the proper posture [attitude] of a slave—the master speaks and he obeys—whatever the master says the slave does...
23. Every day—he presents himself to the master to hear his instruction—he presents himself to the master to hear his will...
24. So to with us—every morning we get out of bed and we look to the word of our Master—our will is resigned to His will...
25. Rom.6:16—“do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness...”
26. Again we find two masters—sin or obedience—and depending on which of these we are presenting ourselves to—this is our master...
27. But one thing is very clear—we cannot present ourselves to both—we cannot present ourselves to sin and obedience...
28. Thus our Savior teaches us—we cannot serve both God and mammon—these are in total opposition one to another...
29. Everything God commands, mammon contradicts—and everything that mammon commands, God forbids...
30. Matthew Henry—“*God says, My son, give me thy heart. Mammon says, No, give it me. God says, Be content with such things as ye have. Mammon says, Grasp at all that ever thou canst...God says, Defraud*

not, never lie, be honest and just in all thy dealings. *Mammon* says, Cheat thine own Father, if thou canst gain by it. *God* says, Be charitable. *Mammon* says, Hold thy own: this giving undoes us all. *God* says, *Be anxious for nothing.* *Mammon* says, Be anxious for every thing. *God* says, *Keep holy thy sabbath-day.* *Mammon* says, Make use of that day as well as any other for the world...”

### III. Closing thoughts

#### A. How are we made slaves of God?

1. How is a slave of sin, Satan, and the world—made to be a slave of Christ and righteousness—how does a man exchange masters...
2. Notice [1] a man must turn from his old master—he must have his eyes open to see the true nature of his evil master...
3. Before anyone ever turns from his native master [mammon] he must first have his eyes opened—he must see the true nature of his present master...
4. Acts 26:18—“to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me...”
5. Notice [a] the need to have the eyes opened—only then will a man see his present condition—only then will we see our native bondage...
6. Notice [b] the results of having our eyes opened—“in order to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God...”
7. Notice [2] a man must bow before his new master—he must see in Christ a willing and powerful Master who can deliver us from our former master...
8. Josh.24:14-15—“now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD...”

#### B. Why should we be slaves of God?

1. In finishing our Savior’s teaching on laying up treasure on earth and serving mammon—I want to suggest three reasons for you to serve God as your master...
2. Notice [1] He is a good master—this is essential to get—Christ is a good master while Satan is an evil master...
3. Christ will have your eternal welfare in view—while Satan will only use you to your eternal destruction and ruin...
4. Notice [2] He is a merciful master—Christ is a merciful and gracious Lord—He deals with His slaves in a gracious manner...
5. Ps.123:1-2—“unto you I lift up my eyes, O you who dwell in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, until He has mercy on us...”
6. Notice [3] He is a benevolent master—that is—He is not stingy or reluctant—He gives to His slaves abundantly all things to enjoy...
7. 1Tim.6:17—“command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy...”
8. What a blessed Master is Christ—He gives us richly all things to enjoy—He gives us our daily bread as well daily forgiveness...
9. He would have His slaves always rejoicing—He not only provides for His slaves but does so that they might enjoy it...
10. This is our beloved Master—this is the God of the Holy Scriptures—this is the Master you and I should serve...