

Trinity 15

“No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

Jesus, today, makes clear, what can and cannot be done.

There is no point in arguing and saying, “I can serve both.”

It is the judgment of God, *“You cannot serve God and mammon.”*

This is a warning against replacing the only true God with the God of earthly mammon—including everything that you can sense and feel.

If you trust in these things, you can only hate God.

“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 1:15

What strong words are these. How can Jesus say, *“you hate God”*?

He says this because God and His Word are despised and looked down on in favor of whatever seems to get you ahead.

You can see this even should you happen to obey God’s command for the moment—yet, if your reason is in order to obtain some gain in possessions, reputation or honor, you are despising God and thinking only about the good things that mammon gives.

So, for instance, a man might honor and obey those in authority over him only because of their power to punish him—as soon as that power is diminished, he will do whatever he wants.

Such a man is not loving God and respecting His word and command, but only hating God and serving mammon.

Likewise, a person might be restrained from cheating or stealing from his neighbor only because his reputation will be smudged if caught.

But once he is certain that people will applaud him for his dishonesty—or, at least not notice—he will cheat his neighbor without another thought.

This is because his true god is mammon and not Christ.

This same thing can happen in the church where faithfulness to God’s word is tried only because of a promise to have plenty of members and plenty of money to survive as a congregation.

Where this is the goal, what happens to the word of God when it appears that the results will be just the opposite?

The ten commandments are taken as a set of principles for having a good and happy life and all the good things that the world can offer.

The REAL goal is that God might bless you with good things—mammon.

The tragedy is that in serving mammon, you can only receive blessings as much and as long as this god can supply.

Namely, mammon only lasts to the grave. You can’t take it with you.

And this is ultimately why Jesus so earnestly warns you against serving mammon—for you are an eternal being but mammon is temporal.

Even if your good feeling or good health or happiness could last a thousand years, that isn’t even a drop in the bucket of your total life.

Jesus warns you against worldly pursuits because He wants better for you.

But more than warning you, Jesus takes action.

The only One who never served mammon or despised God, nevertheless took upon Himself the consequences of both.

He pursued the Kingdom of God and the Righteousness of God with all of His life.

And He attained to the Kingdom on the cross. He earned the righteousness of God by His suffering and death.

This is the kingdom and righteousness that He now gives you.

For you, seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness does not mean earning it for yourself—this you can never do.

Rather, it means to receive it from Christ Jesus, our Lord.

To seek what He has and gives is to seek after the One eternal God.

This is the only one God who lasts long enough to supply you for all of your life—that is the one who created you.

The things which He gives are eternal.

This eternal God is the one who is slain from before the creation of the world—before any mammon even existed.

The food which you will eat after church serves only to keep your body alive for a while—the food which you eat here, is eternal food.

For it is the Body and Blood of the eternal God.

All of your striving after mammon—even if you were as successful as Bill Gates or Warren Buffet—is only a small portion of the world.

But the meek inherit the whole earth. Why would you want to trade the glorious birth-right of the sons of God for a bowl of stew?

And do not think for a moment that the God who is willing and able to supply you with the blessings of eternal life can only give you a few scraps here in this life.

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life...if God so clothes the grass of the field is today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you?”

But know that whatever you receive from Him—even now—is far and away greater than anything that mammon can offer.

In this promise you can have certain confidence that even your hunger, sadness and pain—when it comes from the hand of God—is a gift more that money can buy.

Now already, in Christ, your entire life is abundant with God’s richest blessings. AMEN.