

04-15-12

Series: God's Economy

God's Economy (9)

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Matthew 6:19-24

(Continuation from 04-08-12)

The Doctrine of God's Economy

In the present passage Jesus looks at materialism—particularly in regard to luxuries—from the three perspectives of treasure, vision, and master.

A Single Master ([Matthew 6:24](#))

The third choice relates to allegiance, **to masters**. Just as we cannot have our treasures both in earth and in heaven or our bodies both in light and in darkness, we cannot **serve two masters**.

Kurios (**masters**) is often translated lord, and refers to a slave owner. The idea is not simply that of an employer, of which a person may have several at the same time and work for each of them satisfactorily. Many people today hold two or more jobs. If they work the number of hours they are supposed to and perform their work as expected, they have fulfilled their obligation to their employers, no matter how many they may have. The idea is of **masters** of slaves.

But by definition, a slave owner has total control of the slave. For a slave there is no such thing as partial or part-time obligation to his master. He owes full-time service to a full-time master. He is owned and totally controlled by and obligated to his master. He has nothing left for anyone else. To give anything to anyone else would make his master less than master. It is not simply difficult, but absolutely impossible, to **serve two masters** and fully or faithfully be the obedient slave of each.

Over and over the New Testament speaks of Christ as Lord and Master and of Christians as His bondslaves. Paul tells us that before we were saved we were enslaved to sin, which was our master. But when we trusted in Christ, we became slaves of God and of righteousness ([Romans 6:16-22](#)).

We cannot claim Christ as Lord if our allegiance is to anything or anyone else, including ourselves. And when we know God's will but resist obeying it, we give evidence that our loyalty is other than to Him. We can no more **serve two masters** at the same time than we can walk in two directions at the same time. We will **either... hate the one and love the other, or... hold to one and despise the other**.

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John Calvin said, "Where riches hold the dominion of the heart, God has lost His authority" (*A Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, vol. 1 [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], p. 337). Our treasure is either on earth or in heaven, our spiritual life is both full of light or of darkness, and our master is either **God** or **mammon** (possessions, earthly goods).

The orders of those two **masters** are diametrically opposed and cannot coexist. The one commands us to walk by faith and the other demands we walk by sight. The one calls us to be humble and the other to be proud, the one to set our minds on things above and the other to set them on things below. One calls us to love light, the other to love darkness. The one tells us to look toward things unseen and eternal and the other to look at things seen and temporal.

The person whose **master** is Jesus Christ can say that, when he eats or drinks or does anything else, he does "**all to the glory of God**" ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#)). He can say with David, "**I have set the Lord continually before me**" ([Psalm 16:8](#)), and with Caleb when he was eighty-five years old, "**I followed the Lord my God fully**" ([Joshua 14:8](#)).