

I will read from the sixth chapter of Mathew, the 24th verse:

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

These words were spoken by the Master of men, when he was giving to humanity the eternal principles of understanding which, if accepted and practiced, will lead into an eternal salvation. Whatever the Christ spoke during his short sojourn on earth was wrought with meaning. No idle words were uttered. Each of his words has its part and place in the great scheme which God formulated for the eternal advancement of mankind. These sober words, therefore, warning men against the attempt of serving two masters, must have been given because the men of that time attempted the impossible, to give themselves to two masters when that, according to these words, is an absolute impossibility. It seems at first sight a self-evident proposition that men cannot give a double service at the same time, yet we know that we do not need to turn back the pages of history to find abundant testimonies that men, often wise and intelligent men, attempt to serve the satisfaction of more than one master. Today, even as in the days of Christ, and the days before the coming of Christ on earth, men possessed of many ambitions and failing to understand the full scheming of things have run after many masters and in their attempt to serve the many masters make the fruitless attempt of serving them. Much of the uncertainty of human character, much of the irresponsibility of our social system, much of the contests and conflicts among men can find a full explanation in the statement that men and women, communities and nations, do not give themselves wholly to the service of one master. But in our day, which is the greatest day, undoubtedly, in the history of the world, the day possessed of more power over nature than ever has been

known before; a day presenting a greater hope for the future than any day in the past; a day of the greatest enlightenment; and in this day a question concerning this message of the Savior is first of all is, Does a man need a master?

With many men today it is not a question of serving two masters, but rather, shall a man serve even one master? The recent thought of the world has developed largely on the importance of the individuals. Individualism has become a word with which the great and small. On the pages of every newspaper today we may find the account of events that find their explanation simply in the incessant demands on the part of the men of the age that will be allowed to act unhindered and untrammelled as their individualities may direct. In our educational system we speak proudly about the training of the individual. We say that the God-given gifts possessed by the individual must be allowed full and free development. We plead for individual freedom, so that each one of us may become just as nearly what the Lord intended us to be as possible.

In this great struggle for individualism, the question constantly arises as to whether in this great and enlightened age we should have a man to serve, any master, save it be himself, meaning his gifts and power which have been bestowed upon him by his Creator and developed, in part through his own efforts. It is true that the gospel of Jesus Christ, especially as taught in this Church, gives great respect to the rights of the individual. We do not believe that we were created by God only in a metaphorical sense. The Prophet has clearly explained that in the beginning we are uncreated eternal principles of intelligence, and that all the ages of past eternity have been developing according to our own will and towards the estate which we now occupy. The very key-stone

of the gospel's structure seems to be the law of free agency. From remotest times that revealed history can give it to us, until the great council held in the heavens at which this whole earth's career was decided upon the law of free agency has prevailed. In that great and wonderful council held by the gods, in association with us, the main discussion was whether we be placed on the earth in mortal tabernacles, subject to death and forgetful of the great life of the past, and whether we should be characterized by free agency, or whether we should be like animals, subject only to the will of God. In that great council, Jesus Christ became the Saviour of the world because He held that we should retain free agency, should work out our own salvation and the glory of attaining salvation under the plan should be given to God, the Father.

According to the restored gospel as taught by the Prophet, Joseph Smith, therefore, the individual right and liberty are well cared for, as we know in this Church that coercion is practically unknown and when ever it is practiced it is done so in absolute opposition to the rightful exercise of power. The Priesthood itself, divined as it is, and full of power in all matters pertaining to the Church must be exercised fully and only with proper respect to the individual rights as individuals. We, as individuals, must accept or reject every office of the Church which has any authority over us. There can be no unrighteous domination. There can be no domination that excludes free agency from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. So that this Church, perhaps above all other churches, recognizes individualism and certainly encourages every man to develop his inborn gifts in every way. To this extent Mormonism leads in the great move for individualism now characterising the whole world. Nevertheless, no man declares his full freedom and when a church grants complete freedom, it does not mean that he can go

on without a master. What is a man's master? especially in the sense which the Lord, Jesus Christ, used when he said the beautiful words which I have read you. Unquestionably the meaning is merely that the great law of life to which the acts of man conform may be designated as his master. That principal of action, whatever it may be determines and controls the actions of a man's daily life, that makes his ideals, that establishes his hopes, that law of action is indeed the master of the man, be it one or another, be it expressed or implied, every life conforms to some thought or theory or law in all matters pertaining to life. In this sense, then, all men are subject to masters, and it must here be said with emphasis, that masters of flesh and blood are less insistent upon their right of mastery than are the masters of spirit. The man who is your master is much like you in his heart and the principles of love and charity, as well as the more unholy principles of hate and revenge and prejudice, but the habits of our lives, the strivings of the spirit for ideals, perhaps made by ourselves, often become masters, intollerant of any change, jealous of any competition, and are by far, the most terrible masters to be under.

Moreover, it may be stated that all men must have masters. Without a master a man cannot do his work in the world. Without a master he is merely a person who may breath and live, but who has not the power of accomplishment in him. Those in labor, labor to a purpose, whether it be help or unholy labor. Men who indulge in labor of any kind labor with a purpose in view and that purpose indeed becomes their master. The history of the world is replete with instances of the value of possessing masters, whether they be tangible or intangible. Men who have established for themselves high ideals, who have begun noble ambitions, and who have given all their estate to the accomplishment

of these, have become the great men of their age, and they are the men whose names the whole world holds in reverence for their successful and valuable tasks. Similarly, the men who have apparently given themselves to unholy things and low passions and have been void of the common, beautiful principles of humanity, have left upon the pages of history the records of their accomplishments, which are worthy of the masters which they have been under. The men, if any such there have been, who have attempted to go through life without some guiding principle to master them, without some greater intelligence to direct them, have accomplished none of the work of the world. They have passed away and are forgotten, and as far as the world's progress is concerned they have been of no use. It is indispensible that men must have masters. It is no doubt for this reason that the Savior took the pains to leave behind the statement that a man cannot serve two masters, for if he do he will love the one and hate the other. He cannot give unto both of them equal service.

There are men, however, who, even conceding all this, say that it is yet possible to serve two masters. There may be two principles both holy, righteous, both for the good of men, and I may give my service to both. The artist says, "I paint with oil and colors on canvass to produce beautiful paintings, and I also use my chisel on the marble and produce beautiful works of sculpture, and I am serving two masters, both worthy, both delightful to the eye, both of value to human-kind. Indeed, I am serving two masters and to a good purpose."

This view of the matter is simply and naturally a delusion.

Righteousness, virtue, holiness appear in many forms. The many good qualities of which man is possessed are but a part of the complete clothing of the man who dresses himself in full armour of righteousness. The Savior was not in his statement regarding two masters. He had

no intention of saying that a man may do only one thing in life. He referred, rather, to the great underlying scheme of things to which man must adapt himself. Thus the man who paints or the man who sculptures are both artists. Their methods may differ, but they are both engaged in searching out the beautiful in life and nature, and of preserving it for the benefit and enjoyment of their fellow men. The Lord himself in the statement which I have read you makes this meaning clear, for he closes the statement by saying, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." These are the two masters to which our Savior referred, God on the one hand and the opposite of God on the other hand.

Both of these no man can serve with satisfaction to himself or to any one else. "He will love the one and hate the other, or he will hold on to the one and despise the other." Thus to all life are two opposite laws, well described as God and mammon. There are two sides to every object. There are two sides to every question, the positive and the negative, which every man may say or do. If righteousness is in the world then it means that unrighteous, or its opposite may also be found in the world. If there is joy in the world, then its opposite, sorrow, must be in existence also. If there is love in the world, then hate, its opposite, is also present. And so, the more desirable qualities are the ones that we cherish, but we must not forget that there is always a possibility that the others are existing and being active also.

Modern science and modern thoughts agree. One law controls the universe, the order in heaven, our own solar system, with the sun in the center, with its attending planets about each other, in definite revolution, never conflicting with each other, never touching each other, never interferring with each other's progress, means of itself that one law must prevail in our solar system. If two laws prevailed there would be opposition and ultimate destruction. We are gradually coming to the

thought that in the universe there is one instrument, from which all others derive their existence; that there is one great underlying force, from which all the other forces have been derived, and Jesus Christ, if he be read understandingly, declares, without a question that only one possible means has been perfected for the eternal salvation of mankind. One gospel, made in the heavens before this day, for the benefit of this earth and the children who may dwell on this earth, the obedience of which will lead the men and women of this earth into God's presence and into a fullness of eternal progression. There is one God, one only who presides over the affairs of the universe, to whom all others are inferior in power and glory in magnity, to whom we pray in the name of his Son, is Jesus Christ. There is, therefore, in the universe, the opposite to the one great, fundamental law. As the prevailing law would make for order, the opposite would make for disorder. As there is one gospel for all men leading to eternal salvation, so there may be one that leads to destruction. As there is one God, guiding us, so there may be his opposite undermining and destroying all things.

Leave the doubt as you may. This is one fundamental thought, that there cannot be many roads that lead to the perfected life. It is said that all roads lead to Rome, and in one sense this is true of the gospel, for all men, stationed wherever they may be may finally find salvation, but when they may come in their journey towards salvation, their walks and talks, their complete lives must be measured alike in the essentials if they are to be in the celestial city of salvation. Before they enter upon the road they must submit in obedience to certain principles. Before they can enter the holy city they must bend to certain requirements ordained by the Maker of the scheme of salvation. This thought derived from the beautiful warning from our Savior relative to two masters seems

somewhat difficult to accept by the world. Of recent days, especially, under the influence of recent thought and the noble desire that all men might dwell together in harmony, has gradually arisen the belief that any church, if properly persevering and accompanied by correct life will lead a man into the fullness of the glory of God. Every righteous life will receive its proper reward. Every good deed will be remembered by the Father in heaven. No kind words will be forgotten on the last day. The law will be that law which controls this earth. Men must obey the one great law that they may complete their salvation.

This then, I conceive as the meaning of the Lord's words when he spoke of the impossibility of giving proper service to two masters. He had in mind the opposite of life, designated by him, God, and mammon. Yet the question at hand deals with a complex nature, full of strength and full of weakness, may we not in a measure serve both. This question is frequently asked by those who desire some of the pleasures of the world which are not good for their bodies or their spirit, and who desire to live out at least a part of the divine ideal implanted within them. Here is a most important question to such people and possibly of very great importance to every man on earth, for none of us is perfect in our lives, and wholly correct in thought. The Savior says so distinctly that if a man attempts to serve two masters, such masters as we have been discussing, he will love one and hate another. No compromise between the two appears to be possible. I am very much afraid that our generation and the generations before this day cannot wholly realize the significance of this statement. Too often the compromising has been attempted trying to bind together the two great opposite laws of the universe. Nevertheless, the statement of the Savior is as a natural consequence of eternal conditions. Service means all that we ordinarily imply when we use the word. Service

does not mean that we assent to the man who may be pleading on the Sabbath day in behalf of a virtuous life. Service does not mean that we should yea and amen to every good word that may be spoken. Service implies and service means that if a man believes in virtue he practice it. Service means that if a man believes in chairity, he give to the poor. Service means that when a man says that he believes in the gospel of Jesus Christ, searches out that gospel and all its principles and attempts to the best of his ability to serve and to put them into actual practice. When a man gives such service then, indeed, is he converted. And true conversion may mean something only to those who have given something to the cause to which they have been identified. Service with their mouths and with their looks are found the world over, but they do not give full service. When a man has become thoroughly converted to a principle, then makes use of that principle, it becomes his service and in that way becomes his master. In public life, waking and sleeping, it follows him, and directs him and in the moment of temptation it stands before him to lead him into a safe and sheltered place. Then when a man has achieved such service, when indeed, he gives full service to the master, then there will be no compromise between the master and its opposite. He loves the master through his service, or he serves the master because he loves it. Then just as sure as he gives service and gives love he will refuse to give service to the opposite and will give all that is in his life. If a man loves virtue, then he will practices virtue, then he will hate vice and never touch it, and if a man loves vice and practices it, then as night follows the day, so he will hate virtue and refuse to practice it. There can be no compromise between the two opposite contenting forces in the world. Mammon can never be harmonized with God. A man must serve the one or the other. He will love the one and hate the other. He will hold on to the one and despise the other. He must not attempt to effect a compromise

between these two great opposite conditions of the world, or it will fail. They may appear successful on the outside, but inwardly, in their hearts, they will be torn with the conviction that they do not live the life that the world believes them to be living, and they will give themselves wholly to eniquity and refuse to be virtuous, or they could give themselves to virtue, then they will hate eniquity, and they will know by the vengeance of their hated, by the health and hope and body and spirit, that they have chosen the better part.

Now, do not misunderstand me. I mean most emphatically that such love and hate are real. There are men and women in this congregation who have fought the great battles of life and who have achieved virtuous lives, and they love virtue and they hate sin, and that love and that hate are as real as the stones we take from the earth and weigh in our hands. This is only when such love and when such hate becomes real that they have a feeling in the world. The love we have for righteousness must be real and the hate must be equally real. Only then, can we serve properly.

Thus, we see that the words of the Savior may be elaborated into something that effects every life in relation to ultimate happiness. It is important because men of today, as I said sometime ago, often attempt to serve these two masters. It may be a time that they do so unconsciously. On the streets of every city, on every farm and almost in every household there is someone, who unconsciously is attempting the hopeless task of reconciling God and mammon. Our lives have become complex in these latter days. The world has grown; the knowledge of men has increased wonderfully; God has been good to his people; life today is not what it was a few years ago. The possibilities of happiness are great, and I believe thoroughly that the world as a whole is becoming better; that the men are purer; that their love for their fellow-men is more real; that their strivings are more insistent for righteousness than ever before in the history of the

world. Yet, there cannot be a denying of the fact that even today these better men, these better women, if it be possible than those of the earlier day, are, in too many cases, attempting to serve both God and mammon. How true is not that to the missionaries of our Church who time and time again lead honest souls who become converted to the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who do not possess the strength of character to enter the Church and to become possessed of the blessings of the Church because by so doing they lose standing in their communities, lose perhaps, the love of their close friends, and go back upon themselves to work out their lives alone with God. On the other hand, we know also in this Church of thousands of honest souls, having become converted to the Church who have taken their faith in their own hands and joining issue with God, have been forsaking in many cases families and earthly ambitions that they might serve the dictation of their own conscience. But even we belonging to the Church, we who have received the greatest gift in the power of God, who through his abounding grace have been enabled to see the truth and to give our lives, we too frequently are also attempting to serve both God and mammon. We too are attempting a compromise between the two contenting forces in the universe. Men are great only as they give themselves to one great thing. Men achieve greatness only by that method. Men who divide themselves between two masters cannot achieve that perfected salvation that will come to them who give themselves wholly and without reservation to the one great cause. We men have ambitions of various kinds. We hope for wealth, for power, fame and for many other things. Power, fame, stand in front of us within our reach it appears, and most desirable, and we reach for them, and they move on; we follow, and we care not where the path leads us. Often the pursuit will bring us into dark paths, into dangers, and often we find ourselves in the midst of filth and evil in the

pursuit of these intangible and rather worthless professions of mankind.

There are men who are so engrossed in their search of wealth that when the simple word requires them to give one tenth of their income to the Lord, they shiver, and they give their little contribution, their small fraction of what the Lord requires of them, and they do not know that by so doing they are attempting to serve God and mammon and that they are not succeeding, and that they are inviting unhappiness unto themselves by contending that the gospel stood by them, and yet it is the best, and yet they will not give unto the Lord the small portion that he requires of them. I am afraid that among the rich of our Church, those who the Lord have blessed bountifully, the giving of full tithing is a rarer accomplishment than with those who the Lord has not blessed with material wealth, but has reserved for them other and perhaps greater blessings. Then we have men who love power, and those members of the Church who look upon worldly positions with a covetous eye because they feel that in those positions they will have power over their fellow-men. To attain that power, in order to accomplish the positions, they do unkind things to their neighbors; they tell untruths, and by devious ways they try to attain the high state in this world, but they are attempting to serve two masters, God and mammon, and are not serving well. The serving will be imprinted upon their characters and their lives because of the imprudent acts. There are men no doubt in this Church to whom fame seems to be the most desirable gift in the world, to be known by many men, to have their name heralded abroad, and they, to accomplish this fame compromise themselves with the truth which has been given them. They pilfer an idea, they forget a friend, they make use of the tedious and treacherous methods somewhere else in order that they may attain fame, and then, after attaining it, often they fail to understand that having attempted to serve two masters, they do not follow the injunction of the Savior that teaches.

There is perhaps no need to linger longer upon these pregnant words of the Savior of the world. No doubt every one of us understands them. In theory we know that a man cannot serve God and mammon. It is impossible to give full, valuable service to two masters. The two masters are of opposite character. We all know that there is one law, one God, one far off end to which the whole creation moves. I believe in the spirit of the gospel. It is a simple system, easily understood, and to those who use the knowledge right, easily obeyed. The gospel is for the poor, not only of this world's goods, but those who are poor in spirit. For not only those who can accomplish great tasks, but for those who cast themselves in their weakness on God for help. For the humble, not only those who go and with bowed heads before the men of the world because they feel themselves inferior in station but the men who in humility go before the almighty God and say to him, "Thou art the Master; I to obey".

The gospel is for such of us, and when we make ourselves poor in spirit, in that sense, before the Lord, and weep, then it shall be difficult for us to serve two masters. It is the hope of us, as every true Latter-day Saint that the heart of every member of this Church and in time of every person who lives may be so in touch with the divine fire as to give himself to the things of God and forget wholly the things of mammon. Then in very deed shall there be no possibility that men shall give themselves unto the service of two masters, and trying to compromise the opposite forces that are contending throughout the universe. That men ever will keep to the good, will forget the evil, that men will never give themselves to base things, but always will walk into the sunshine of eternal goodness.