

## WHO IS YOUR MASTER?

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We must clearly decide whom we will serve Jesus said, "NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS: FOR EITHER HE WILL HATE THE ONE, AND LOVE THE OTHER; OR ELSE HE WILL HOLD TO ONE, AND DESPISE THE OTHER. YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON" (**Matthew 6:24**). So many people, (including members of the New Testament church) have just enough religion to make them miserable. A spiritual struggle is going on inside them constantly. They have some spiritual Inclinations and desires, they want to be "respectably religious" but they also want to remain attached to carnal pursuits. They know better, but they will not do better. Every week they have to decide afresh whether to get up and come to Bible school and worship Sunday morning or do something they would like better. They never think about attending other meetings of the church.

The Laodiceans did not want to abandon Christ totally, but neither were they ready to serve Him. They dwelt in that muddy, murky, shallow religious swamp of sickening "lukewarmness" (**Revelation 3:15-16**). The Lord set it out plainly to them: "Get in or get out; get on or get off; get hot or get cold. Quit playing at the task of being religious without working toward the goal of being spiritual." Jesus has more respect for the sincere atheist than for the half-hearted, hypocritical disciple. Tragically both are lost.

Some of the leaders among God's people also need to decide whom they serve. Some preachers who will preach a strong sermon in a lectureship far from home may preach weak generalities at home. They dare not preach with such power to the homefolks. Such preachers want to be thought of as "conservative" by faithful brethren but they continue to lend their encouragement to questionable practices and/or weaken the brethren at home by their silence. They announce activities of apostate churches and encourage people to attend them, giving such programs and their planners undeserved credibility. They print articles by unsound men in their bulletins and invite such men for Gospel meetings ("His article taught the Truth, "He won't teach any error while he's here") when they should be marking and avoiding them (**Romans 16:17-18**)

A host of brethren who once faithfully taught and practiced the New Testament doctrine of fellowship have altered their practice in recent years, if not what they teach orally on the subject. Some of these may still teach it loudly and strictly to young preacher students in schools of preaching. However, they destroy their words by their work, when they, without hesitation, occupy the same pulpit at a lectureship and engage in the warmest sort of camaraderie (e.g., hand shakes, back slaps, eating fellowship meals, giving high praise for his lecture, etc.) with a brother who is well known (and well documented) for his impenitent errors. I suppose the most dimwitted might be able to figure that the practice of these brethren reveals the hypocrisy of their teaching, even as it reveals that the Lord of glory is not their master.

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Some colleges and schools of preaching like to advertise their conservatism while continuing to harbor doctrinally soft teachers and showcase an ever broader circle of fellowship in their guest lecturers. A school that is conservative does not need to advertise its “conservatism.” If it is not conservative, a million-dollar advertising program and all of the claims that it is will not make it so. Observers may clearly perceive its doctrinal status (whether conservative or liberal) through the product it produces in the classroom, the speakers in its lectureship and other training programs, and the fellowship alliances of its teachers/administrators through the year. Such things reveal who their master really is.

One reason there is so much confusion in the pew nowadays is because of the vacillation seen in our elders, preachers, editors, and school people. We all need to hear the challenge of old: “WHO IS ON THE LORDS SIDE?” (**Exodus 32:26**). We are either for the Lord or we are against Him (**Matthew 12:30**). “NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS” (**6:24**).