

Devotion 16
You Can't Have It Both Ways

Monday, Week 3

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.
(Matthew 6:24)

When I was a young lad, there was a TV program—a western—that was a take off on the idea of “the fastest draw in the west.” In every episode, an older man who portrayed the father of another adult actor would say, “This here is the second fastest gun in the west...and yer lookin’ at the fastest. No brag, just fact.” “No brag, just fact.” This is how I kind of look at this text. Jesus is saying, “This is the way it is... no ifs, ands, or buts. No one can serve two masters. It simply can’t be done. It’s just the way it is. You cannot serve both God and money.”

But my goodness, have I ever tried to “schwaffel” on this one! Do you know what I mean? “Sacrificial giving? That’s for everyone else. It’s not really possible for me right now. I’ve got responsibilities! Proportional giving? Well, I just don’t think that way! First-fruits giving? How do I know I’ll have enough left at the end? Thoughtful, meaningful, reflective giving? Approaching God in prayer with respect to my use of time, abilities, and money in kingdom work? It’s a nice idea, but it’s just not practical for me! Who knows what the future holds? Joyful, willing giving? How do I do that? I don’t have enough time, abilities and money as it is!” Yes, you know what I mean. We try to “schwaffel.”

Yet, in this text, it is as if Jesus is saying, “What makes you think you are different from anyone else? No one, no one, no one, including you, can serve two masters. *You cannot serve both God and money.*”

So let’s give up trying. Let’s instead focus on Jesus, who didn’t “schwaffel” in the least even though He had to go the way of the cross. Let’s focus on Jesus, Who became poor at the cross so that we might be rich. Let’s focus on Jesus, Who never wavered in His mission to rescue us from sin and hell even though it cost Him His life. Let’s joyfully focus on Jesus and who we are in Him. Let us pray that God, our Heavenly Father, would empower us to cling by faith to Christ alone and live our lives willingly and boldly for Him alone! Let us focus on the promises of God as He would spur us on in this grace of giving. “*You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion*” (2 Cor. 9:11). And again, “*Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you*” (Lk. 6:38).

Have you noticed the toughest place to be in life is when you’re not sure what to do? When you are wavering between one thing and another? By the power of the Holy Spirit as He comes to us through this Word of God, let us put our double mindedness behind us. No one can serve two masters. No one can serve both God and money. So let us serve Christ alone with every cent we have, every moment that we breathe, and every ability we have been given . . . especially in the work of the kingdom!

Prayer: Dearest Jesus, thank You for being single minded about my salvation. Help me to serve You alone with all the riches of body and soul that You have showered down upon me. Amen!