

Divided Loyalties

Primary Passage: Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Cross References:

1 Kings 18:21

Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long *will* you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a word.

Luke 16:13

No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Gal 1:10

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

James 4:4

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Observation: Those loyalties can be kings, the devil, money, men, or the world

Similar/Related Passages:

“Seek first the Kingdom” Luke 6

The Cure for Anxiety (*Section Header*)

²⁵ “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? ²⁷ And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? ²⁸ And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, ²⁹ yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! ³¹ Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ ³² For the Gentiles eagerly

seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.³³ But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

³⁴“So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Cross References:

Same story in different Gospels

Luke 10: 41: But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things;

Context: Story of Martha and Mary. Mary sits at Jesus’ feet, but Martha is distracted by taking care of business. This is Jesus’ response to her.

Luke 12:11: When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say;

Context: topic header “God Knows and Cares”. Discussing how to respond when facing rulers and authorities.

Phillipians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Note: I love this one.

1 Pet 5:7: casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

Note: Context is within the topic of serving God. ... So, if you are serving him, he will care for your needs, and thus you do not need to worry.

Reflection: Connection to divided loyalties – This passage is a reminder that sometimes people’s loyalties come from lacking a trust that God will provide for one’s needs. Which leads to the following:

See passage below.

1. **Parable of the Sower** – from “Hearing God” sermon series. Pay attention to how you hear him

Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4-15)

⁴When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: ⁵“The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶Other *seed* fell on rocky *soil*, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.

⁷Other *seed* fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. ⁸Other *seed* fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great.” As He said these things, He would call out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

⁹ His disciples *began* questioning Him as to what this parable meant. ¹⁰ And He said, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is* in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND.

¹¹ “Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. ¹² Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rocky *soil are* those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no *firm* root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. ¹⁴ The *seed* which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to maturity. ¹⁵ But the *seed* in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.

Observation: Four Types of Soils (or hearers):

1. By the side of the road – eaten up by the birds (snatched by the devil) – do not believe v.5 & 12
2. Rocky soil – no firm root – but fall away in time of temptation v. 6 & 13
3. Among the thorns – choked by the worries and riches and pleasures of this life v. 7 & 14
4. Good soil – those who have heard in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast and bear fruit with perseverance. V. 8 & 15

Martha and Mary: (Luke10)

³⁸ Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord’s feet, listening to His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up *to Him* and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.” ⁴¹ But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; ⁴² but *only* one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

Cross References:

V38: - Martha

Luke 10:40-42 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, “Lord,...

John 11:39: Jesus *said, “Remove the stone.” Martha, the sister of the deceased, *said to Him, “Lord,... (Note: Context, Jesus is about to call Lazarus out from the dead. Martha is too focused on reality to see what Jesus has in mind.)

V39: - Mary

Luke 10:42: but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken...

V40: - Martha

Luke 10:41: But the Lord answered and said to her, “ Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so..

John 11:5: Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

John 12:3: Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and...

V41: - Martha

Matt 6:25 “ For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or...

V42: - Jesus talking to Martha

Psalm 27:4: One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the ...

John 6:27: Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which...

Luke 10:39: She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord’s feet, listening to His word.

John 11: 45: Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.

John 12:3: Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and...

Reflection: Tied to the idea of “Divided Loyalties”: **Comes from not hearing, believing, and/or responding to God.** Therefore become distracted by the cares of the world.

Is Your Loyalty to the Flesh or the Holy Spirit?

1) You must die to the flesh

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. (1Pet 2:11)

Cross references:

1Pet 4:12: 12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;

Rom 12:1: Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Rom 13:14: But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Gal 5:16: But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

Gal 5:24: Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

James 4:1: What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that...

Reflection: God commands us to win the battle with our flesh.

2) There is a war waging within you –

Rom 8:8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Cross references:

Rom 7:5: For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work...

Reflection: The passage says it all: ‘those who are in the flesh cannot please God.’

5 For those who are according to the flesh **set their minds on the things of the flesh**, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,

Cross References:

Gal 5:19-21: Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Gal 5:22-25: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Gal 6:8: For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Rom 8:13: for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

James 4:4: You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Reflection: An individual driven by the flesh is not aligned with God's will.

Rom 8:12: So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Cross References:

Rom 8:6: For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

Col 3:5: Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Reflection: People who live in the flesh are NOT in alignment with God, and therefore won't hear what God has to say – especially when what God has to say does not agree with their agenda.