

## DO NOT SERVE TWO MASTERS

We live in a world where blending is common. Different types of fruits are crushed to make cocktail juice; in the modern world today, the one who dresses up in mixed colors, with shoes that have striking colors, which are quite different from the dress, is considered to be a fashionable person. Unfortunately, that same understanding has been brought to the whole area of worship and devotion; that we now think we can blend God by serving him alongside other types of masters!

Serving two masters/blending God with other masters was typical of the Israelites. In fact, they didn't know that, He who serves two masters, has to lie to one!

This is the understanding that makes Jesus declare that *"No one can serve two masters...you can't serve God and money"* But I would like to broaden our understanding of a master, to generally focus on anything that we give more allegiance to, something that we are devoted to; that which competes with the Almighty God & grabs our attention & focus on him; & as we reflect on the issue of two masters today, I want us to have a prayer focus even as we move, that God will deliver us from false masters in our lives, (*We aren't just going to say things, but also pray*) that God will visit your foundations and deliver us!. I believe that serving 2 masters is a spiritual foundation issue! & I believe that when God wants to deliver, he visits a foundation, just like in **Acts 16:26**... *"and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened."* My prayer is that we will shift our focus & devotion, from created things, coz they are never meant to bring about ultimate satisfaction; that we will focus on God, as the only master of our lives! The Lord spoke to me on the different aspects concerning serving two masters:

### 1. Serving one or two masters requires making a Choice:

The OT, through its action packed presentation of a true God & his activities, makes powerful statements concerning the issue of who to serve! In quite a number of scriptures, God's people are called to make a choice concerning who to serve. In **Joshua 24:15** the bible says *"If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve..."*

In **Exodus 32:26**, Moses also required the people to choose a master whom they would serve! The bible says *"then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, 'Whoever is for the LORD, come to me!'"* at the end of this story, the Lord sent a

plague to the people as a punishment. You are **free** to choose what you surrender to, what you serve, but you are **not free** from the consequences of that choice.

It is in (**Gen.13**) where we see consequences of a choice made. The bible says, the herdsmen of Lot and of Abram were quarreling because there wasn't enough land to support all their flocks. (*land wrangles started way-back*) Abraham gave Lot a choice of where to settle. Lot surveyed the land and chose to move down into the Jordan valley. Now, that choice was the beginning of Lot's gradual, but steady spiritual decline. First, he looked toward Sodom (*vs10*). Then in *vs 12* he moved his tents near Sodom. Next in *Ch.14*. we find him living in Sodom. Finally, the next thing we hear is that he is sitting in the gate of Sodom. In *Cha.19:1* he was even a city official. The consequences were that He lost his wife, & barely escaped with his own life and his two daughters, and is immediately removed from the OT headlines, hiding in a cave where his daughters made him drunk and committed incest with him. But it all began with Lot's choice to live near Sodom. I believe that the Lord has brought us into a season of choice making, to choose whom we are to serve; each choice will have a consequence! So take either God's way, or take the consequences! \*\*Am giving each one of you an assignment: You isolate one area of your life where you are going to run it your own way; and then another area where you choose & allow God's plan to be your guide. Keep a diary of your progress in the area where you run alone, and the other area where God is your master and come report to me after 6 months!

Man needs to trust God as his master in all his days! But since **Gen 3**; when sin came in, man has always been an insecure being! We feel so much insecure that we would rather trust in so many things than in one! We approach God with an investment mentality, where we invest money in many businesses and not in one business; just in case God disappoints!! Most times, the reason as to why we are not blessed is because we want to deposit our trust in more than one master! We listen too much from too many sources, thinking we will get so much blessings! Make a good choice, choose God & devote your lives solely to him.

## **2. Serving two masters is lack of Patience:**

It is this lack of patience to wait upon one master (*God*) that makes us serve two masters! **Ps.40:1** says, "*I waited patiently for the Lord, and he heard my cry*" David's patience resulted into God hearing his cry!! Sometimes we are like the children of Israel, who even after knowing very well that God had delivered them from Egypt, went ahead and proclaimed a feast to the golden calf because they

were not patient to wait on God (**Exod.32:1**) the chapter opens by saying, *“when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron and said to him, make us gods who shall go before us; as for this Moses the man, that brought us out of Egypt, we don’t know what has become of him”* but you see God, can know and see everything in our minds, even before we think about it! As they were busy forgetting God, with their double standard of doing things, God had already known.

In (**Exod.32:7**) The Lord said to Moses *“go down for the people have acted perversely...”* God, does not only know our secrets! He knows our deepest secrets. You can’t lie to God on what is going on in your heart. You can’t lie to God that you love and serve him; when you have another master! He will know!

Now, Forensic Detectives have something called a **Polygraph Machine**. It’s a lie detector used on people who might lie during questioning. It measures and records the behavior of your body when you are lying, by measuring your blood pressure, pulse, respiration and skin conductivity; & as you give answers which are lies, you will produce physiological responses, that can be differentiated from those associated with telling the truth! God’s lie detector is more sophisticated & far beyond this! It is the one Peter used in **Acts 5:3** when he discovered that Ananias and Sapphira were lying and he said, *“why has Satan so filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep a part of the proceeds of the land?”* These guys were trying to serve two masters, and instead they lost the blessing of the Lord. Serving two masters makes us lose the blessing of the Lord!

When we get saved, one of the things that make people lose the blessing of God, is this issue of looking back at the former master they used to serve. In **Exodus 14**, the Israelites looked back and saw the Egyptians their former master pursuing them, but God told them to move forward. At that point, they were about to give up because of focusing on the former master, and his advances, instead of being patient and allowing their new/ true master God, to take over. In **Exod. 14:15** *“The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward”* As soon as they went forward, the blessing of the Lord was on them.

The issue of looking back at what the former master is doing is a serious matter if we are to make God our master and serve him faithfully!! Jesus said in (**Luke 9:62**) *“No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God”* As long as you obey your Master’s instruction to go forward, His blessing will be upon you! It shall come to pass that the Lord will set you on high

above everything in your life, marriages, jobs, businesses you will experience abundance! You will delight in the abundance of peace in every aspect of your life, coz of your obedience to move forward!

Today deny the former master and move forward!, Lift your hand up and say Father! I refuse the former master, *his influence, his desires and his whispers...Give me patience to hear the whispers of the true master, in my marriage, at my workplace, in my spiritual life....let me walk with you alone...Teach me to be patient...in the name of Jesus.*

Serving one master, our God gives you peace! Each time he appears, he treats you as **VVIP**! (*One April morning 2002; My experience way back in 2002 when he came to speak with me*) he gave me a charge to serve Him, I have had peace! This is because his yoke is light.

In **Matt.11:29** he said, “*Take my yoke upon you... For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*” While the other masters load it over you, for him he bears your burden! He is a burden bearer!

When you are patient with him and you take his yoke, he takes away your worries, and makes you a warrior!

The difference between worried believers and warrior believers is this: worried believers, spend their time worrying over life's situations; while warrior believers spend their time calling upon the weapons of warfare, which have divine power to destroy strongholds! They know that their master once said, “*Is there anything too hard for me*”?

Lift your hand up and say, “Father! Make me a warrior believer!!”

Warrior believers understand that if one devotes their life to other masters other than God, they can get you drowned into the sea, but the Lord our master, according to (**Matt.14:22-33**) walks on water: & becoz he walks on water, he is the **bridge** through which one can cross deep waters of life! Any other master outside God cannot be trusted, because they are unfaithful and unreliable! As a master full of love, God looks upon you with compassion! He sees your misery! In **Exod. 3:7** he says, “*I have surely seen the misery of my people who are in Egypt...I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them!*” This is in line with **Jer.15:15** “*LORD, remember me and visit me*”

3. **Serving two masters is as a result of Wavering between 2 opinions:** In the OT the issue of serving two masters, falls within the context of serving the true God, vs. idols! In **1 Kings 18**, is the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal. This story shows us that serving two masters, comes as a result of wavering between two opinions.

*Vs. says (21) "Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him..."*

The Hebrew word "**waver**" in its literal sense, suggests someone who is staggering, unable to catch his balance, and as a result, failing to accomplish anything, because his mind is divided. The person in such a circumstance cannot get a grip on life. The children of Israel were wavering back and forth.

They tried to mix/ blend the true God and pagan idols, which suggests a divided mind. When Jesus said *"No man can serve two masters; for . . . he will hate the one and love the other"* he knew exactly his audience! The problem with serving two masters is that if the one master that you hate is still a part of your mind, wavering between two opinions becomes a tool to serve both of them!

How long will you waver between two opinions! How many sermons do you want to hear before getting saved? How many more Sundays must roll away wasted? How many warnings, sicknesses, graves must be dug for your family before you will be impressed that Jesus is Lord and master??? How long will you waver between the opinion of a bottle of beer, and God! How long will you be in this undecided, unhappy state? Paul says in **2 Cor.6:14** *"darkness and light have no relationship"*

Elijah here, is indicating a double focused mind. A mind that just staggers, this way and that way!! *"If the Lord is God to you, serve him!"* Let your conduct of your devotion be consistent with your opinion. Have one heart that you give to one master. St Paul says, in **1 Cor.10:20** *"You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons"* The reason people serve two masters is not only because of a divided heart. Some regret that probably their choice of serving the Lord, wasn't the best! In psychology there is what we call **Post Decisional Dissonance**, it's a form of regret, a worry that perhaps we didn't make the best choice about certain things; that after we have made a decision, we will feel dissonance regarding the possibility of it being wrong. That's why the congregation of Israel

each time there was a problem along the way, they would say, *"Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?... it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."* Here, the Israelites, had reached a stage of being "comfortable" with the sufferings of Egypt. You know, a comfortable place can be either oppressive or non-oppressive. But to a man without faith, even if it's oppressive, he will think it's better to stay right there. To him trusting in God is taking a risk! *(Priest told to consider charms to scare the Parish Council, & preach well)* Because of lack of faith in God, we always don't want him to touch our "comfortable" place. Even when God wants to take us higher, like he wanted with Israelites!

Stop making a conclusion for God, when he is transitioning you... God does not start an essay only to ask you to conclude it for him. He is in the business of finishing what he started. Allow your so called "comfortable" places to vanish and God will bring you lasting comfortability.

Today the Lord says, choose to serve one master God and settle with him. Do not waver! Do not look for other options! Anything outside of God is limited and therefore insecure.

God created us for Himself; He has put within the human heart a place that only He the King of Kings, the Ancient of days, can fill. That is why St Augustine said, *"Lord, You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you."*

Outside of God, there is nothing that can truly satisfy. The world is littered with the broken and shattered lives of people, because they lived for something other than God.