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NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS

By Voyle H. Lewis

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A PICTURE OF THE AUTHOR

As hdm0923.jpg, a picture of Voyle H. Lewis is included with this publication.

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Lewis could not have chosen a subject more pertinent than the one he has selected -- materialism. It's an evil as old as human existence. Lot, Jacob, Saul, and many others mentioned in Bible history succumbed to its insidious and fatal appeal.

The Early Church was not immune to the blandishments of materialism. Paul and other New Testament writers warned of the dangers of worldly encroachment. Today, one's perception would be dull indeed could he not observe the terrible toll of the lure of substance and pursuits that cater to sensual satisfaction. Men and women are so slow to learn that "what is seen passes away; what is unseen is eternal" (II Cor. 4:18, N.E.B.).

Dr. Lewis is not an alarmist. He is not a calamity monger. But he is a realist and sensitive to possible trends in the church. He refuses to close his eyes to scenes that reveal and to cover his ears from disturbing sounds. To do so would be to turn traitor to the church he serves and the God he loves. He knows that there is no magic protection in church membership. He realizes that if the Christian does not insulate himself by frequent renewal of transforming grace, by constant contemplation of his risen Lord, and by daily heart searching and reflection, he may unconsciously take on the coloring and absorb the ideology of the world about him.

Such is the purpose of this book: A long, clear look at this age with its push-button comforts, its status symbols, its compromising conformity; a warning lest those who professedly are "leaving all to follow Jesus" be caught off guard and like Demas, "having loved this present world," become engulfed in the whirlpool of materialism to sink in a sea of self-centeredness and easygoing respectability.

We are sure it is by design that this book is not a tirade, for the tragedy of a tirade is that it engenders resentment and consequently cannot be helpful. Rather it is a sincere and impassioned effort to make the reader conscious of his condition, and that is the first step to healing.

Undoubtedly thousands will thank Dr. Lewis for writing this timely message.

The Publishers

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1

RIGHTEOUSNESS VERSUS MATERIALISM

"No man can serve two masters." This is one of the most profound truths ever uttered. It was spoken by Jesus Christ. He stated it in His famous Sermon on the Mount. Matthew records it

in chapter six, verse twenty-four. It was in this sermon that He gave to His disciples, and the world, His basic belief in life, man, God, sin, judgment, time, and eternity. He presented the God-planned way of life for mankind. The truths He spoke will always stand. Not only because they came from divine lips, but time itself has verified them. History offers to the discerning student irrefutable evidence that what Christ said is true.

Before He uttered this axiom He urged men to invest their treasure in heaven, He told them this is wise, for in heaven their riches are not pilfered by the inevitable thieves of decay and evil. He knew that if men invest in eternal values, the very location of their treasure will determine their real objectives.

He then stated His great truth, "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."

Christ was not without regard for man's finiteness and his physical connection with this world. He made this clear as He continued His master address. He recognized man's need to sustain physical life, But He asserted God's awareness of this as He called attention to man's dependence on God for even "these things . . ." as He offered the simple, yet grand life-pattern in verse thirty-three. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

"No man can serve two masters."

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

The dictionary defines mammon thus: "The personification of riches, wealth and worldly gain." It relates to human greed and avarice. These two meaningful utterances of the Master are very clear. He knew man and knew just as well God's purpose in creating him. He also was aware of the alien, sin-mastered world man dwells in. He identified the two ways of life -- the two ways, so far apart, so diverse in pattern, ideals, ethics, and goals that no man can go both ways. No man can serve God and the world.

Ye can serve God, but you can't serve the world at the same time. Ye can serve the world, but you cannot serve God while so doing. A person cannot live one way for a while and then switch to the other. The ways are too different. They are life-roads of human travel. They are philosophies of life. They are tied in with soul, character, and eternity. The mammon way is downward. It is destructive, It is ruthlessly tyrannical. The God way is upward. It is constructive. It challenges man's best and his all.

Christ made His unchanging declaration long ago. But it is a timeless truth. Today mankind faces this fact. Every person is affected by it. Because it is so vital to every one of us, we must consider it carefully. Let's put that word in capital letters, CAREFULLY, and add HONESTLY, INTELLIGENTLY, and PRAYERFULLY!

There are two ways of life (and only two). We cannot embrace both. We cannot drift aimlessly in some wasteland between them. We must decide. Materialism or righteousness, God or

the world -- which shall it be? It is a personal decision. It is the most important one a person ever makes. From it stem all other choices.

There are two concepts we must understand clearly.

Materialism -- What is it? What does it mean? The dictionary says: "Materialism is the doctrine that the facts of experience are all to be explained by reference to the reality, activities, and laws of physical or material substance."

To put this in a concise statement: Materialism is a way of life that shuts God out. It places all life's experiences on the physical and earthly level. It leaves no way for God to operate.

Righteousness -- What is it? The dictionary states that it is "the quality or character of being righteous." The word righteous is defined thus: "Conforming in disposition and conduct to a standard of right and justice, morally right." The understanding of this meaningful word and the full revelation of its sweep within the framework given it by Christ are found in redemption. In the "God-serving way" as over against the "mammon-serving way" it is the earnest seeking of the kingdom of God first in us and then among men.

Materialism

Materialism has always been the arch-foe of man's spiritual interests. The pages of history parade its awful wreckage across the years.

Dr. Arnold Toynbee is perhaps today's most widely known exponent of the philosophy of history. He traces the course of many civilizations through time and interprets the rise and fall of each one. He believes that a society or civilization rises by a successful response to a moral or spiritual challenge. He further shows that the breakdown and disintegration of a civilization come, not by destruction from the outside, but by disintegration and decay from within. His works trace this fact through many nations and civilizations that in the past were great but that are no more. They are now striking and certainly unforgettable monuments to the destructive inroads of materialism.

The most sinister force facing us today is materialism. It has won a gruesome victory over many nations. It will win again unless we break its hold. Already the walls are weakening. The basics of civilization are tottering under the onslaughts of materialism. Governments are snarling over surpluses and distribution. The hungry hands of the "have-not's" reach for the hoards of the "material-sated" who glare balefully back.

But materialism is not only a powerful force that destroys empires and gluts itself on the masses. It is a personal enemy. It confronts us all daily. It often encroaches slowly and insidiously. Those plans, habits, goals that leave God out are dangerous. To the extent you succumb to them you are a materialist.

Christ was very clear in stating that there can be no compromise between these two opposing ways of life. His call included leaving all, counting the cost, taking up the cross, to

"follow me." Such has been the standard of the Ten Commandments since they were given to Moses and through him to Israel and the world. No earthly thing or person can ever be given priority over God.

All this doesn't mean that it is hard to go God's way. It helps us settle matters at the start of the wonderful way to heaven. Repentance, resulting in the new birth; then complete consecration, bringing the baptism with the Holy Spirit, brings entire allegiance to God. God first; Christ reigning supreme; the Holy Spirit in control. The way of righteousness, the straight way, the upward way, the beautiful way -- my way every day from now on.

The "God-serving way" and the "materialism-serving way" have always been seen in human existence. The record of the centuries depicts them. The Bible reveals them both.

To assist us in our choice of the way of life, let us consider four dominant expressions of materialism in society and the individual. Following that we should discuss four great expressions of spiritual priority in men and nations.

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2

MATERIALISM THE MASTER

Materialism always reveals its mastery in the predominant engrossment of men in earthly pursuits.

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed" (John 6:27).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15).

For a full understanding of the meaning of all this we should know that "engrossed" means "to be wholly occupied with something . . ." This, then, means that men are occupied in earthly tasks and pursuits to the exclusion of the spiritual.

The wheels never stop. The factories never let up. The fever of men seeking earthly gains never abates. It rages through the minds and bodies of men as they hurry, strive, and lust for more and more.

Of course, factories must produce goods for the use of mankind. Business must carry on. But when it dominates man to the exclusion of the real meaning and purpose of human life, then it becomes materialism, the tyrannical despot. Such malfunction of the material phase of earthly existence destroys a nation. A long time ago when man received from God the Ten Commandments, they were the basis of human conduct, belief, and relationships. They are still in force. They are God's commands to all men. They open the door of greatness to man. They guide

him to God. They ennoble life. They are also a warning to humanity. They serve as a deterrent to evil.

Time has verified them. History tells the story of tragedy which befell those nations which grew careless and disobeyed them. Civilizations which are now nothing but a paragraph or two in a history textbook were destroyed, by their disobedience to this mighty Decalogue.

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17). How true -- terribly true -- proclaims history!

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exod. 20:8), thunders the commandment. Nations and men can never afford to forget or disregard it. There are no valid reasons why anyone should seek ways to bypass this unalterable charge. And yet it is so flagrantly disregarded today that the very breaking of it becomes the norm of human behavior.

Even the Christian society is threatened with laxity and desecration at this point. The steady "pull" of the unregenerate community, the fact that "others do it," tends to make men forget that sin is sin.

However, in the business structure of today's evil world the Christian must live and earn his "bread and butter." From the time he goes to work till he returns to the shelter of his household, he is faced with the fact that anything above and beyond the pursuit of earthly objectives is utterly foreign to his employer and fellow workers. In this environment the Christian must keep his bearings. He must make his own decisions and consider them all in connection with his relationship to God. Whenever it is his lot to make a decision in which the welfare of his own soul is affected, he must choose a course that will not conflict with the laws of God. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

For example, suppose during the week the boss says, "Bill, we have work for you Sunday. It means time and a half for you. What do you say? Do you want it?" Right then the Christian is faced with a decision in which the law of God and the materialism of our day are in conflict. There is no way the person who is going with God can rationalize himself into a voluntary breaking of God's commandment. If he "serves God," he will say to his superior, "Thank you, but I will pass it by. Sunday is the Sabbath day. I could use the extra money, but even more than that I need to go to my church. My family and I need to worship God even more than we need money."

That Christian has made his decision for God. And the Lord will not fail him. Spiritual strength will flow into his soul. His family will be taught the authority of God's command. The results will be positive all around. Materialism will not be his master.

Frequently the Christian will be faced with the necessity for decisions in the making of which he must remind himself that he cannot serve the world when such serving would conflict with God's standards. Serve God and live. Serve the despot of materialism and die.

The second demonstration of materialism is seen in the false belief that the accrument of material possessions brings adequate recompense and satisfaction.

"If riches increase, set not your heart upon them," said the Psalmist in Ps. 62:10.

Paul wrote to Timothy and all of us, "But godliness with contentment is great gain.

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (I Tim. 6:6-10).

A young man called his pastor recently and requested that his name and the name of his wife be taken from the church membership roll. This man and his family had been attending our church for approximately six months and had been members for four months. They had four children, the oldest of which was seven. He hastened to assure the minister that there was nothing wrong with the church, the people, or the treatment they had received. The reason for his request was financial. He said it this way: "Pastor, when we have made all the payments on the things we are paying for, we don't have even one thin dime to put in church. We can't even give the children money for Sunday School. So we have decided that, if we can't pay our share, we won't ride free. We are withdrawing from the church."

The pastor called on them and informed them that our church didn't levy financial charges on people. He urged them to continue to attend anyway. He went over the need of their souls. He reminded them that God and their faith were more important than their possessions. He pleaded with them for the sake of their children to place God and the church above all else.

But in three more Sundays they definitely decided to withdraw. So, taking their children and their payments, with their material possessions, they turned away from God to mammon. Their fatal malady was materialism. They thought that the accrueement of earthly things offered an adequate recompense.

Credit buying lures the unwary into the tolls of a struggle to pay off debts. The family buys too heavily under sales pressure of men ... and the folks next door who have just bought something new. Unexpected expenses come. The wife goes to work. Life is a conflict. Nerves are frayed. The home loses its real meaning in the fever of getting things. Hardship comes, tension, hard feelings, sorrow, sometimes even a broken home. Thus "things" destroy the best in life.

The entire lure of our world's advertising jungle is the appeal to a "better," "easier" worldly existence. The call to education is on the low level of learning in order to earn more for less labor -- to buy more and more and more. So the rat race goes on. The tempo and the tensions increase to the breaking point.

Such a philosophy assumes frightful proportions in the struggle between classes, social circles, and labor groups. The friction of the masses finally leads to bloodshed and the "more and more" becomes "less and less" as a proud and wealthy nation reduces its assets into rubble.

In this false and dismal pattern of human existence, the Christian must choose his way. Even here the rule of God never bends. Ye cannot serve God and the world. But ye can serve God! While the fever of earthly craving rages in the blood of material-mastered men, the "God-serving" man must take time to care for his soul and character, so he may grow into the full stature of the Christian.

Don't buy so many gadgets that you cannot pay God His tithe. Keep your budget sanely related to the necessities of life. Do without some tempting bauble if need be, but don't cheat God. One of the greatest boons to man is the privilege of allying himself to, and investing his life in, the world's most worthy cause -- the redemption of man. In doing this a man is ennobled and blessed. All such Christian acts of service are actually a gift of God to us. Never get so involved in getting things or doing things that you have little time or energy to give in service to God and your church. The church is our precious ally in overcoming the satanic monster of material mastery. Keep first things first.

A family altar is more important than many realize. Use it. Enjoy it. If our children learn the way of "God-service" it will be a result of an intentional, purposeful, persistent program of precept and example set before them by the father and mother who do not accept the false belief that the gaining of earthly goods offers a just recompense. Make the material things you need and use contribute to the Christian way you live. Young people, the real purpose of education is to give you techniques, skills, and knowledge to serve God and your fellow men.

Someone has stated, "One of the greatest curses of materialism is the fact that it only produces men of mediocrity -- men who bow to the expedient, men who sell their community and governmental responsibility to the highest bidder.

"No statesmen are the product or result of materialism."

Wherever the scourge of materialism is permitted to spread its blight -- in government, in economics, in society, in religion, in Christian living, everything dies that is essential to the betterment of posterity and continuing civilization. It takes a strong man to go against the rip-tide of evil, But the one who decides to go with God and make each day contribute to his "God-service" can win.

Serve the flesh and die in the midst of the junk you have struggled for! Serve God and enjoy living abundantly.

The third devastating consequence of materialism is the absolute abolishment of spiritual and moral connotations in life's impulses and motives.

This phase of the life with God shut out may at first seem nebulous. There is in it much destruction that is not apparent to the physical eye, for it occurs within the individual. But its

results are all too plainly etched on the surface. This terrible impact of materialism is a gradual but certain one. In our society, however, the evil is at such an advanced stage that it is readily discernible.

Dr. P. A. Sorokin, well-known sociologist of Harvard, described it vividly and well. He believes that America has pursued the objectives of the sensate order -- the way of flesh gratification -- until we are already in the breakdown of our civilization.

He states that the largest single destructive force in this day is the production of movies upon which the masses feed in theaters and now at home on the television screen. He says that the vast majority of such productions either magnify sex or glorify lawlessness. The way of life which they portray is unreal and destructive. The thought content and low level upon which they operate are devastating.

As long as such standards continue to dominate the motives and set the patterns and influence the styles of today's masses, in Dr. Sorokin's opinion, the inevitable fruit is destruction.

In a recent address J. Edgar Hoover said, "Morality is one of the more perplexing and controversial problems facing our nation. Primarily it is because of individual and collective cowardice upon the part of our society. We do not have the courage to stand in conflict with the mad rush for material wealth, indulgence and social prestige." He went on to state that lack of morality and integrity stems from a false sense of values.

We are not immune to the appeal of the exterior world. The offered stimuli of the deliberate appeal of the sensual do affect life -- especially younger people, who are more susceptible to modification.

When a nation because of debauched tastes has sunk to the level where the largest portion, the influential portion, of art, music, literature, social activities, etc. are no longer uplifting to the soul of man, that nation is in desperate straits indeed. The child, throughout his informative years, is subjected to the instruction and influence of teachers and fashions. His mind is a fertile seedbed for the forming of conclusions and ideas that are a composite product of those facts of life which impinge themselves upon his senses. If in looking at art he finds no appeal to the best within him, no challenge to decide to be a better person, then that art, be it painting, statue, or music, has made no contribution to him. If a nation judges that as beautiful and great which gives no beauty or greatness to the soul of man, then the people have lost even the standard by which to judge real art, inspire new artists, and challenge the viewing public to better living.

Take music for example, modern music that blares from many sources today. We can hear the beautiful strains of a great old composition set to a blatant commercial. What terrible commercialized robbery to besmirch great music with the false claims of a cheap and oftentimes worthless commodity!

The word "love" is one of the most used and abused words in modern love songs. When they who compose such within the dark chambers of materialism are finished, they have taken the

greatest emotion of which man is capable and placed it entirely within the framework of biological desire.

Sing it and talk it on that low level for a while and finally the God-intended meaning of love is abolished and a generation has lost the spiritual and moral connotations of this indispensable word which should express one of man's most noble and lofty impulses.

Then it is that we have the blind leading the blind into the pits of death. Then men and maids make life's important decision as to marriage on biological, physical desire levels with the inevitable results of sorrow and often divorce.

The spiritual and moral sources, motives, and desires must be maintained in our calculations, decisions, and way of life if we escape a debacle of our own making.

So much of literature we read today is confined within the limits of the material. Where is the literature that has a hero and/or heroine that inspires the reader to greater achievements of morality, virtue, and service that blesses? Where, today, is the understanding conveyed to the reader that this earth span of life is related to eternity with its consequences?

Where is the art that ennobles its viewer? Where is the music that inspires? This is the day of the offbeat. This is the day when there is peddled from the screen the false concept that the greatest profession in the world is the art of posturing. This is the day of the politician, of investigating committees, of graft; for the concepts of life's real purpose are dim in the smoke of our own funeral pyre.

Fortunate indeed is the Christian with his mind enlightened by the fresh and pure truths of the Bible. He is immeasurably helped by the worship of the church, even though he may not fully realize it. The music of the hymns with their challenge is inspiring. The message of the minister with the spiritual exhortations and warnings comes as clean, fresh truth to encourage his weary soul that all week has been resisting the "God-forgetting" commercial world, where he earns his livelihood. The firm handclasp and hearty greeting of "men of like faith" remind him that he is not alone. The touch of God's Holy Spirit enlarges his soul and bolsters his firm determination to serve God -- not mammon.

Take time to believe the truths of God. Lay aside the secular literature; feed on the Word of God each day. Take time to be Christian. Set your eyes on the great goals of life. Teach those entrusted to your care that God is Master of this planet and humanity is accountable to Him.

Do not allow the world to close your mind to God. Don't give the world your hand. Reach for God's hand. He alone can guide. Let Him be thy daily Companion.

We need to be reminded by the writer of an ancient day as his words come across the centuries: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccles. 12:13-14).

The fourth demonstration of materialism's reign is seen in the aggrandizement and attempted beautification of the flesh by physical achievements or adornment.

History provides us with many examples. The Roman Empire, in the last days of its power, is the most familiar. It became a nation which more and more centered around the rule of "King-flesh." The ruins of their once great arenas evidence their wild pursuit of the sensual thrills. Multitudes thronged to see the displays of skill. Passions became more brutal as thousands roared approval of the bloodletting of man and beast. Their idols were those who, in displays of physical strength, outdistanced or outfought all others. Their social orgies leave the student revolted as he reads of their debauches. They feasted till, in discomfort over distended abdomens, they excused themselves to go to the place reserved for regurgitating food, so they might return to gorge again. The pride of Roman dress was the toga, coveted garb of caste and power.

Today's world is the arena where once again flesh preens in pride before the masses. Newspapers devote much space to sports, the heyday of which is the Sabbath. They cover a vast variety, from the paid sports to the individual indulgence of many who forget God and flee from the stresses of their complex lives to find relaxation at the shrine of "flesh" in various diversions.

Man has a body which, of course, is dependent on activity for health. Relaxation, be it in watching or participating in bodily activity, is desirable. But when it takes precedence over spiritual interests, it is evil. When flesh exaltation becomes an end, it is indeed a dismal end.

Man is a soul. Here must rest the major emphasis. But can you imagine a news report devoting time to extolling the moral achievements of man? Nay, it doesn't even relate character with achievement. The participant may be a moral wretch, but he is the idol of the many if he can out-run, out-throw, out-jump, out-punch, or out-play his competitors. Why? Flesh is king!

There are now a multitude of ways in which the commercial interests appeal to the vanity of man. This is the day of cosmetics and jewelry -- all of which, many say, are indispensable to beauty and the admiration of others.

The market is created and inflated by fast changing styles, models, and customs. This is cleverly done by those who sell. The buying public discards that which it purchased last month to buy the latest. The rule of the mob is on. Flesh is on the throne!

Into this flesh-sated mess comes the Word of God. It offers to man the rule of the spirit. It promotes the beauty of the soul. It offers the adornment of a "meek and quiet spirit." It offers the peaceful heart, so the human countenance may develop in comeliness. It offers the rest of faith. The counters where these priceless soul needs are offered are not lined with the masses, but their value is great and their worth has been tested by many whose beautiful lives are an everlasting testimonial to the worth and beauty of the Christian, "God-serving way."

The Church and the Christian must withstand this stampede to the fleshpots. Christian simplicity as becometh godliness, modesty as becometh virtue, moderation as becometh the soul-rule must be the fashion of the redeemed.

Those who have a vacuum within, those of the little soul, those who long for the world and yet want the benefits of God's care -- those are the ones who are dangerous within the ranks of the Visible Church. They cry that it is all right to bend a little, to go a little further, to cheapen the standards, to look a bit more daring, to attire more lavishly. Those, indeed, are materialists in the making, as they cater to the folks on the go.

I like the clear, simple statements of our Manual, which so clearly sets forth Bible standards in relation to our day as it says:

"To be identified with the visible Church is the blessed privilege and sacred duty of all who are saved from their sins, and are seeking completeness in Christ Jesus... they shall show evidence... by a godly walk ... they shall evidence this... By avoiding evil of every kind, including... Profaning of the Lord's day... The indulging of pride in dress or behavior. Our people are to dress with the Christian simplicity and modesty that become holiness... Songs, literature, and entertainments not to the glory of God."

On the positive side our Manual states that we should give evidence of salvation by doing that which is enjoined in the Word of God."

How beautiful and simple the way of "God-serving"! How terrible and confusing the way of "world-serving"! Serve God and live-serve flesh and die!

These then are the four dominant traits of world or flesh mastery. They are set forth in the Bible, in both the Old and the New Testaments. They are written on the pages of the ages for us all to read.

They are evidenced in this the day of moral decay, the day of struggle and strife, the day of conformity and compromise. The day of the flesh is here. We exist under its tyrannical scepter. But ye can serve God!

Now we turn our attention to four dominant manifestations of "God-service," the beautiful rule of the redeemed spirit.

* * * * *

3

THE "GOD-SERVING" LIFE

"No man can serve two masters."

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." -- Jesus Christ

The life Christ proclaims is one of Spirit control over the flesh and the world, In the very first book of the Bible we read, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). The plan of God in making man was that he be a "living soul" who could respond to God as the Creator intended, Only in sin did the flesh and death take over.

Therefore, in the light of this truth, salvation is the bringing of man through the new birth and the baptism of the Holy Spirit into the blessed state of soul mastery -- Spirit control over the material world and its sinful dominance.

The "God-serving" person lives under the authority of the Spirit over flesh, which results in a life motivated and directed by the Spirit.

In sanctification there is no rebellion of the redeemed soul against the Holy Spirit. The intent of the Spirit-filled man is to obey God and live a life of service as God shall direct.

This is essential in order to know life's real meaning and purpose. God has a plan for everyone, and only as that plan is accepted and lived can a person be successful. Through the years after the incoming of the Holy Spirit the individual must translate his consecration vows into the reality of daily living for Christ. This is the living example of "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

Christ presents the "God-serving way" to the world in His sermon preached on the mount. No one can live that sermon's truths without the control of the Spirit. We understand this as the rule of God's Holy Spirit over the body of man as well as his soul.

There have been men who ruled their own flesh by will power and the strength of their own spirits. But we are speaking of being possessed by God's Holy Spirit. This includes the rule of our own wills over our own bodies and over materialism.

The soul motivated by the Holy Spirit has the power to accomplish the worthwhile things. This is the only life of worthwhile achievement, as we live in a world awry and astray from God because of evil. God grants us the power to "have dominion." This was His stated intention for man in the new creation, But the Fall ruined this. In redemption, God restores man to His fellowship and gives him conquering grace. This truth is well stated in I John 5:4: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

This is not a book on theology, but on living the "God-serving" life. So we will not pursue the theological implications further, except to say that those who erroneously preach that a person can be justified in God's sight, but must live in sin daily, have robbed God of His great challenge for men, They have deprived the individual of real victory over sin, They have taken away a Bible standard of the Christian life, They have doomed civilization to destruction by flesh rule, and have given the lie to the clear words of Christ. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

But on the other hand we who preach the gospel of the victorious Christ who can save from all sin must not only defend our creed by word, but demonstrate it by our lives -- lives of conquest over evil, lives of fervent service for Him.

The remaining three manifestations of the "God-serving" life will further explain and relate it to our daily activity.

The second manifestation of the dominance of the Spirit is seen in the ability to live by the standards of right and wrong as ordered and patterned by Christ.

I put this into my prayer when, as a lad years ago, I sought God's forgiveness in repentance. I got peace when I promised Him, "Lord, I will not do anything You don't want me to do. I will not indulge in conversations I do not want You to hear. I will not go anywhere I cannot take You with me."

When I had prayed thus, rest came to my troubled heart. Why? It was because I had not only asked forgiveness for my sins, but I had vowed to relate my living, from then on, to Christ's ethics of earthly existence. My theology was meager, but my heart was sincere.

We find a clear understanding of what it means to be a Christian in the call of Christ to Peter and Andrew in Matt. 4:19, "Follow me." This is the Christ life. It is the Sermon on the Mount in action. It is the "God-serving way," conquering the world.

Christ came not so much to show us how to die as how to live. He preached and demonstrated to us the way we must live if we choose the "God-serving way."

"Ethics," says Mr. Webster, "is the study and philosophy of human conduct, with emphasis on the determination of right and wrong. The basic principles of right action." The basic principles of "right action" are offered by Christ and the Bible. This basic ethic in regard to a man and his God is stated thus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind..." And in regard to our fellow man -- "and thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27).

This is the ethic of love, of beauty, and of Christian duty. Here is the very foundation of society, of human dignity, of peace and welfare among men. It is possible and profitable to apply this grand rule of life to our own daily existence. Try it today. Apply it to your work. Show it in your actions to those with whom you associate. See what a marvelous blessing will come to your own soul, what strength to your jaded spirit, what a new glow will come to your Christian faith. In the "God-serving" ethic -- there is victory!

Man's earthly span of years is related to his eternal destiny. As such it takes on immeasurable importance. Jesus spoke of the thieves of earth such as "moth and rust" which break in and steal. He urges that we lay up treasures in eternity, and He pledges that we will possess and enjoy them throughout the ages if we pursue this course to the end. Is it not then intelligent and imperative that we live by Bible ethics? To do otherwise is madness indeed.

The accomplishment of this way of life is left up to each one of us. A close walk with God is vital. We must keep a daily contact with God, so His Spirit can lead us.

His commandments have been already given for us to obey. Obey them we must if we win the Christian crown at the end of the journey.

Don't break the Sabbath day. The commandment is simple but powerful. Remember the Sabbath day -- keep it holy. Sure, the grocery store is open on Sunday, but do your buying during the week. You could wait until Sunday to buy gas, but do it Saturday evening -- even if you have to get in the car and drive down to the service station. Do it on Saturday, but not on Sunday.

Jesus gave us enlightenment here -- only as a desperate "ox in the pit" emergency are we to do those things on Sunday unforeseen the day before.

I know a minister who on his vacation, "because," he said, "we had only a few days," spent the Sabbath day in sight-seeing. No worship of God! It became known when his daughter inadvertently mentioned they had seen certain famous sights on Sunday. Not only had he desecrated the Sabbath, but what of the example set before his children? Never at any time deviate from the ethics set forth by Christ.

Often we hear people say they made their consecration and gave all to God at the altar. They speak of it as an event passed, but in reality at the time of the baptism with the Holy Spirit they only made their vows. It will take a lifetime to live them, by changing them from fervently spoken promises into daily "God-serving."

"Others are letting down and getting by," someone says. But they are not really getting by! The plane I was riding landed in a blinding snowstorm at Denver, Colorado. We touched the runway, but after rolling for a while I felt the rough jolting of the great ship. We were off the runway, bumping and lurching out across the field. Luckily the pilot got the plane stopped before tragedy. As we were unloading in the mud, I asked him how we had happened to leave the runway. He replied that a thirty-mile-an-hour side wind was blowing, the runway was slick, and the rolling ship was gradually blown to one side till we were in the mud. In daily living the side winds of evil human influence will blow, but hold to the course.

Go to church Sunday. Accept your responsibility in your church. It's God's way of assisting you to fulfill your vows. It's His goodness to you in letting you lay up treasures in heaven. Go the second mile. Forgive again, Have family altar. Read the Bible. Pray. Speak a word to the neighbor about Christ. Live as Christ commands.

The third glorious evidence of spiritual rule is the decisions of life made in the light of, and in favor of, spiritual values.

Life is made up of many decisions. Man is not a robot with no choice but to obey commands. Life is ours for the destroying or the making. Even the Christian who has made the great decision to go with God must make many more to keep that first major one in force.

As you start with God, settle it once and for all that your decisions will all be made in the light of their effect upon your soul and your relationship with God. Make each decision always in favor of spiritual values.

Where shall I live? Now there is a basic decision. Do you have a choice? If so, make it in favor of your soul and God. I know a man who turned down an offer of a job because it would place his family far away from a church where they could worship. He was a wise man. He got less money but he gained far more. He could make it with less finance, but he and his family could not make it without the church.

There are people in this world who risk their lives to live in a place they desire. A man, his wife and daughter were rowing furiously in a boat to escape from communism to West Germany. They were in the shipping channel between East and West Germany. If it had not been for a Danish ferryboat that came between them and a German police boat, while they were being accepted on board a West German freighter, they would have been slain. Where they lived meant a lot to them.

Whom are you going to marry? This indeed is an important decision. Upon it hangs much of your life. Make up your mind that it must be a person of the Christian faith who wants the same objectives in life as you do -- namely, to live the "God-serving" life. Many a life is ruined, and much grief is often the consequence, because this decision is not made in favor of spiritual values.

Make spiritual welfare the reference point of your earthly existence. Keep the spiritual compass needle of your life pointed at this "north star" of true guidance over the journey.

Shall we go visiting relatives or friends this Sunday? The decision is already obvious. Not if it takes us away from our worship of God. Not if it hurts our spiritual welfare.

I know a family who made their church attendance secondary to attending places and events that were not harmful in themselves if done on other days than the Sabbath. As a consequence their children had no real respect for Sunday and worship. They drifted far from God. The father and mother who refused to heed the admonition of the minister and their own consciences awoke from their spiritual stupor too late. Their children were lost.

Shall we change our standards because there are many doing, going, or dressing a certain way? Not if by so doing we deviate from Christ's way. The alarming influence of "others are doing it" can hardly be overestimated. Most of the advertisers use this potent weapon to lure the customer to the purchase of their products.

No person who wants life's real goals and purposes to be his can afford to make his decisions on the basis of mob rule. He must make decisions, both big and little, in the light of, and in favor of, spiritual values. Let this be the basic approach to the day-by-day choices, and there will be no remorse in the day of consequences.

The fourth evidence of the reign of the Spirit is active, deliberate, and visible participation in the advancement of Christianity among men.

There is no way to remain passive in this day. The world is choosing sides. The revolution is on. The forces of destruction are unleashed in all their fury. Man is on the march today. Which side are you on? "God's side," you reply. Then act like it. God is an active God. He has a cause to advance. He has a great investment in redemption. He hates evil. God loves souls. This is a crusade! The war is on! The fight rages! Time is running out! Follow Christ to victory.

You have loved ones to save. You have vows to fulfill. You have a church to assist. You have a world to reach. You have a God to serve. You have a life to live. You have a soul to rescue. There is a heaven to win.

Wake up! Get up! Stand up! March out in step with the righteous men and women of God who seek the lost.

Speak up! Tell others. Hand out a tract. Carry your Bible. Return thanks for your meals in public, in private.

Go to the evangelistic campaign. Take someone. Go to prayer meeting. Join in the altar service. Sing in the choir. Teach in the Sunday school. Do something every day for God, for Christ, for the Holy Spirit, for the church, for souls. Do it well. Keep it up. Give God your best.

Active, deliberate, wholehearted participation in the advancement of God's kingdom is the great deterrent on earth to materialism.

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CONCLUSION

So spake the Master long ago. His words still ring along the corridors of time.

"No man can serve two masters."

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God."

May God guide us all, that through us the church can lift its mighty voice and free man from the terrible bondage of materialism until in the joy of sins forgiven many may find freedom of soul, and in that freedom live.

Hear Him as He says, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

We serve Thee forever, O God!

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THE END