

HAVE YOU SOLD YOUR SOUL FOR A POUND OF FLESH? : PART 1

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Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's "Mephistopheles" In "Faust", Shakespeare's "The Merchant Of Venice" And Shylock's Pound Of Flesh, Satan: The False God Of This World, Resist The Devil, How To Be Free From Bondage, Satan's Materialistic Snare, Jesus In The Wilderness, Be On Guard Against Satan, Our Spiritual Warfare, Friendship With The World, Have You Committed Spiritual Adultery?, They Refused To Be Ashamed, Prosperity Preachers: Deceiving And Being Deceived, They Chose The Flesh Pots Of Egypt Over God, Forsaking All For Jesus, Satan's Worldly Temptations And The Snare Of Riches, Remain Spotless Unrebukeable And Blameless Before God

Undoubtedly, many of my readers will be familiar with the evil character "Mephistopheles" from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's dark work, "Faust". Here we encounter a character who is faced with the serious decision of either giving his soul to God, to Gretchen, or to the devilish Mephistopheles. Some of you will also be familiar with Shakespeare's play "The Merchant of Venice", in which the Jewish moneylender, "Shylock", demands his "one pound of flesh" from Antonio in payment for his services. Down through the years, a number of movies have also been made which revolve around this very same theme. But we must ask ourselves: Is there really any truth to such stories? Or is such talk merely a myth, or an allegory to teach us an important lesson regarding how we ought to deal with others in this life?

If we consider that Satan is indeed the false god of this current world, and that he does possess the power to bestow his blessings, whether it is power, money, fame, physical abundance, women, etc., upon those who agree to do his will, then yes, it is possible to sell ourselves to him, and to his wicked agenda. In fact, people do it everyday, and yet may not even realize it.

If you personally think that such thoughts are mere fairy tales, consider the following facts which are taken straight from the KJV Bible. Perhaps you will have second thoughts. In the first group of verses below, we are clearly shown how Satan is the false god of this present world. He is the very spirit of disobedience, whose job it is to spiritually blind people to the truth of God's Word. By so doing, he ensures that instead of becoming freed by the Word of God, they are entrapped in a life of sin, and physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual bondage. Such a wasted, meaningless life can ultimately result in physical -- and more importantly -- in spiritual death, unless a remedy is sought for:

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to THE PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"
Ephesians 2:2, KJV

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, AGAINST SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES."
Ephesians 6:12, KJV

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN, I WILL EXALT MY THRONE ABOVE THE STARS OF GOD: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I WILL ASCEND ABOVE THE HEIGHTS OF THE CLOUDS; I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH."
Isaiah 14:12-14, KJV

"In whom THE GOD OF THIS WORLD hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

Once we accept Satan's worldly bribes, and yield ourselves to that foul serpent, he will soon overpower us, and we in effect become his slaves. That is why the Scriptures warn us to resist that slippery snake with all of our might, to give no place to him, and to not yield ourselves to his worldly

temptations. Consider the following verses and take heed:

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

Romans 6:16, KJV

"Neither give place to the devil."

Ephesians 4:27, KJV

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

James 4:7, KJV

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

God's Word clearly explains to us how to be free. As Jesus told the believing Jews in the verses below, it is through continuing in His Word. Because by continuing in His Word, we will know the Truth; and the Truth -- who is in reality Jesus himself -- will set us free. "Free from what?" you may ask. Free from spiritual darkness and blindness. Free from Satan's lies and deception. Free from his legalistic bondage to the Law. Free from the fear of death. Perhaps not totally free from the Devil's worldly and fleshly temptations, but with a new strength in Christ to better be able to resist them. Consider the following group of verses:

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John 8:31-32, 36, KJV

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"

Luke 4:18, KJV

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Jesus] also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Hebrews 2:14-15, KJV

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Galatians 5:1, KJV

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

Romans 8:15, KJV

"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world . . . But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"

Galatians 4:3, 9, KJV

Exactly how does Satan go about enticing people and blinding them to the truth of God's Word? As we have already seen, it is through offering them power, fame, fortune, and a lot of nice comforting things, so that they become so involved with the temporal, materialistic, fleshly affairs of the world, that they soon forget all about God. Not only that, but they do not even bother to read God's Word, and thus neglect the more important needs of their spirit. Satan thought that he was so shrewd, that he even tried using these very same tactics on Jesus after He had fasted for forty days in the Jordan River Valley. Consider the following verses:

"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

Luke 4:5-7, KJV

However, Jesus was no fool. Being the Son of God, who had come from a much better and more glorious place, which made the things of this present Earth pale by comparison, He knew how to resist that foul fiend. And how did Jesus do that? By quoting the Word: It is written, it is written, it is indeed written! As the Apostle John writes in his first Epistle:

"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. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

1 John 2:15-16, KJV

It is that same Word which warns us to beware of the Devil's subtle tricks and worldly offerings, and to not be ignorant of them, lest we once again become entangled in his snare, and become victims under his oppressive yoke of bondage. We are told to watch out, to be sober, to be vigilant, and to stay on guard against his attacks, as we see by these two wonderful verses:

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

1 Peter 5:8, KJV

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

Whether we realize it or not, we are each involved in a very serious spiritual war for our souls. If we are not careful, the Devil will take advantage of us through our ignorance of God's Word. So again, we must study and know God's Word if we are to be properly prepared and equipped to fight the battle. But we are not defenseless. Just like Jesus, we can put on the armor of the Spirit, so that we can fight the good fight of faith, and stand strong against our spiritual adversary. Consider the following group of verses which confirm these important points:

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"
2 Corinthians 10:3-5, KJV

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

Ephesians 6:10-18, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
Hebrews 4:12, KJV

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

1 Timothy 6:12, KJV

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

2 Timothy 2:3-4, KJV

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"

2 Timothy 4:7, KJV

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."
Hebrews 12:4, KJV

While the Devil constantly tempts us with the things of the world, we must come to recognize that being as we are the Children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, just like the Patriarchs and Prophets of old, just like Jesus, and just like the Apostles, Disciples and Saints of the First Century, we are not truly of this world. We are hoping and waiting for a much better place. As such, we must never become friends with the world. So what exactly do the Scriptures teach us about being friends of the world? Is there really any harm or danger in doing this? Oh yes! You bet there is! The following verses make this danger very clear:

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."
James 4:4, KJV

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."
John 15:19, KJV

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."
John 17:14-15, KJV

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."
John 18:36, KJV

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"
2 Corinthians 6:17, KJV

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises,

but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Hebrews 11:13-16, KJV

Clearly then, if it is truly in our hearts to please our Heavenly Father, we must remain separate from the world, as much as lies within us to do so. As the previous group of verses clearly reveals, to do otherwise is in effect to commit spiritual adultery in God's eyes. Why? Because as I explain in other articles such as "Marriage of the Lamb", when we accept Christ, we become married to Him. We are His spiritual bride. As we have already seen, Jesus is not of this world. So, if we love the world and the things of this world more than we love Him, and if we idolize those things and put them before our relationship with Christ, then it is as if we have become the wife of another. That in essence equates to spiritual adultery, my friends.

As I point out in a number of other articles, such as "The Fruits of Disobedience", that is precisely what the ancient Israelites did with the pagan gods. As you may know, those foolish people repeatedly got into a lot of trouble with the Lord as a result of their foolish rebellion. In fact, through His holy Prophet, Jeremiah, God even said that Jerusalem had a whore's forehead because she had forsaken her true husband, that, of course, being the Lord. Consider the following two verses which show how we are symbolically married to Jesus Christ, and that to abandon our relationship with Him is to become a spiritual whore in His sight:

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; THAT YE SHOULD BE MARRIED TO ANOTHER, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Romans 7:4, KJV

"Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou

refusedst to be ashamed."

Jeremiah 3:3, KJV

Isn't that sad? They refused to be ashamed. How much this reminds me of so many modern, popular preachers who preach the false "prosperity gospel", and prance around on stage wearing their finest clothes, and showing off their gold watches, fine necklaces and other fancy jewelry, and then boasting to their audiences that God gave it to them. They are not the least bit ashamed about what they are doing. I really have to wonder to which God they are referring. Need I even tell you what I think? It is obvious to me that they are just so deceived, and they are deceiving many others in the process; and taking their money, of course. I was just reminded of the following two verses:

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

2 Timothy 3:13, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"

2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

As I was thinking on these things, what also came to mind is the Old Testament account where the now-liberated Israelites found themselves out in the hot, dry desert with Moses in the lead. At first they were so happy to be freed from Egyptian bondage and the slave master's whip. But then do you recall what they did next? They began to murmur, whine and complain that they were all going to die out there. "We have no food to eat. Oh, we have no water to drink." But do you know what they actually said, as recorded in the Bible? Consider this:

"And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Exodus 16:3, KJV

My point is this: While the Israelites complained that they wanted to return to Egypt, all of the filthy-rich prosperity preachers have never even left the "spiritual Egypt" of the

world to begin with. They are still stuck there. They have given up very little -- if anything at all -- in order to serve the Lord. They are still enjoying the materialistic flesh pots of Egypt, and claiming that it is God's blessing. What hypocrisy! What spiritual blindness! They are obviously clueless when it comes to Jesus' message regarding forsaking all in order to follow Him. For those of you who may not be really familiar with the Lord's discipleship requirements, consider the following sample verses. Part of His doctrine clearly included forsaking worldly wealth:

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

Matthew 13:22, KJV

"The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God . . . And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

Matthew 19:20-24, 29, KJV

". . . Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Mark 10:24-25, KJV

"And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go

and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:57-62, KJV

"And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Luke 12:16-21, KJV

"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, KJV

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. SO LIKEWISE, WHOSOEVER HE BE OF YOU THAT FORSAKETH NOT ALL THAT HE HATH, HE CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit

for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Luke 14:26-35, KJV

"And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."

Matthew 8:19-22, KJV

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

Matthew 10:36-38, KJV

It becomes rather obvious then that the affluent lifestyle which all of those prosperity preachers lead, is totally contrary to what is actually contained in the Scriptures. They are as different as night and day. So who are you going to believe? The deceptive prosperity preachers, or God and His holy Word? So what about the worldly riches and the many other nice, comforting things which Satan is just so ready to offer to us? You know what I am talking about. All of those things which distract us from the Lord and His Word. The Scriptures also warn us quite plainly to beware of such temptations. As we have just seen by way of the sad example of the prosperity preachers, worldly wealth can very easily become a snare to us, and a distraction, as we can clearly determine by the following group of verses:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also . . . 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."

Matthew 6:19-21, 24, KJV

"No servant 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."
Luke 16:13, KJV

"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."
1 Corinthians 7:31, KJV

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."
2 Corinthians 4:18, KJV

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."
Colossians 3:1-2, KJV

"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. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."
1 Timothy 6:6-12, KJV

As both the Apostles Peter and Paul plainly state in the following group of verses, our duty to God is to resist the materialistic temptations of this present world, and to remain harmless, without spot, unrebukeable and blameless before the Lord. For if we backslide and foolishly fall back into the world after we have been freed from it, our latter state is worse than the first. Consider what they wrote and be warned:

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;
Philippians 2:15, KJV

"I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:"

1 Timothy 6:13-14, KJV

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

2 Peter 3:14, KJV

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

2 Peter 2:20-22, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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HAVE YOU SOLD YOUR SOUL FOR A POUND OF FLESH? : PART 2

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Backsliding And The Muck Of This World, Snake Oil Prosperity Preachers, Learn To See Things The Way That God Sees Them, False Apostles And Deceitful Workers, Filthy Lucre And Sin Of Monetizing Our Faith, Satan Cannot Own Us Because Jesus Already Owns Us, Jesus Paid For Our Sins With His Blood Or Pound Of Flesh, Fiery Fate Of Satan And Unrepentant Sinners, Choose Life Or Death And Blessing Or Curse, Modern Apostasy And Atheists And Mockers, Let The Blind Lead The Blind, The Two Paths, Jesus Christ Bore The Burden Of Our Sins, Your Way Or God's Way, Sinners With No Righteousness Of Our Own

Continuing our discussion from part one, isn't that just amazing? Do you realize how very sneaky, and how very subtle the Devil can be? Those last verses from the Apostle Peter's second Epistle clearly say "the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." If we backslide into the world, we are like a dog which has turned to its own vomit, or like a pig which has been washed, jumping right back into the mire. We were once cleansed by God's Word, and now we are as filthy as ever again. Other people can't even see our spiritual light underneath all of that muck. Forget about a bushel. We are covered in worldly mud which has quenched our flame. Consider these two wonderful verses:

"He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."

Psalms 40:2, KJV

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

John 15:3, KJV

But when you look at those prosperity preachers up there on the stage, you don't see that at all, do you? You don't get the impression that something is seriously wrong with them. You don't see the filth of the world all over them. Of course you don't. You don't see someone who is totally backslidden from the Lord and living a dishonest, vain life in the flesh. You see, that is because you are looking at them with your

eyes of the flesh, instead of with your eyes of the spirit. I am reminded of what the Lord said to the Prophet Samuel when He sent him to anoint David as the next king of Israel:

"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7, KJV

Oh no. Those snakes in fact tell you the exact opposite of the truth. They stand up there in their squeaky clean suits, and they tell you that they are doing just fine. They are doing great. After all, just look at how they are dressed. Look at their expensive jewelry. Look at that fine car they drive. "This is God's blessing!" they all say. And then they throw out their hook: "You can have this too! Just give me your money, and God will bless you too!" Sadly, many people become just as deceived as those snake oil preachers, and so they throw them their money, and they give them their pound of flesh. I am sorry to inform you, but you've been had!

So, instead of being mesmerized by all of the bright lights and their convincing stage performance; and instead of being taken in by their crafty words which promise you wealth; you need to ask God to show them to you as they really are, and as He really sees them. If you need a clue, then consider the following powerful verses:

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

2 Corinthians 11:13-15, KJV

As I just said, those snake oil prosperity preachers tell you the exact opposite of the truth, both about themselves, as well as about what is contained in God's Words regarding their shameful behavior. As a matter of fact, and in case you are not already aware of it, both Jesus and the Apostles totally condemned fleecing God's sheep like that for the sake of acquiring personal monetary gain. As I point out in a number of other articles, the Apostles referred to such a

practice as "filthy lucre". Furthermore, we all know how the Lord entered the Temple courtyard with a whip and angrily proceeded to overturn the tables of the moneychangers, and others who sold their merchandise there. Consider the following group of verses and be warned:

"And through COVETOUSNESS shall they WITH FEIGNED WORDS MAKE MERCHANDISE OF YOU: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."
2 Peter 2:3, KJV

"Not given to wine, no striker, NOT GREEDY OF FILTHY LUCRE; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous . . . Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;"
1 Timothy 3:3, 8, KJV

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, NOT GIVEN TO FILTHY LUCRE . . . Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."
Titus 1:7, 11, KJV

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; NOT FOR FILTHY LUCRE, but of a ready mind;"
1 Peter 5:2, KJV

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for YE DEVOUR WIDOWS' HOUSES, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."
Matthew 23:14, KJV

"And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: WHICH DEVOUR WIDOWS' HOUSES, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation."
Mark 12:38-40, KJV

"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; WHICH DEVOUR

WIDOWS' HOUSES, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation."

Luke 20:46-47, KJV

"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Matthew 21:12-13, KJV

"And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

John 2:13-16, KJV

"And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Mark 11:15-17, KJV

In light of the preponderance of Scriptural evidence which I have presented here, I hope that you clearly see that Satan IS indeed the god of this present world, and he CAN tempt us with worldly pleasures, in order to try to seduce us, and to win our allegiance and obedience to his will. By this stage in our lesson, you should not doubt this point whatsoever; unless, of course, you purposely wish to deceive yourself.

But, in spite of that Evil One's machinations, do you know what? If you are a predestinated child of God, then Satan cannot possibly own you. Yes, he can still tempt you, but he cannot own you. Do you know why? Because the Bible plainly tells us that we are already owned, and we have already been

purchased at a very great price. That price is the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, who gave His life for the sins of the world. Jesus paid Satan his pound of flesh the day He died on the Cross for you and me. Thus, Jesus alone has the right to be our Master; and as we learned in part one, we cannot have two masters. Here again are some good verses to validate these points:

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men."

1 Corinthians 7:23, KJV

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:28, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

1 Timothy 2:5-6, KJV

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8, KJV

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;"

1 Corinthians 15:3, KJV

"Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:"

Galatians 1:3,4, KJV

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

1 Timothy 1:15, KJV

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"

Hebrews 1:3, KJV

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Hebrews 9:28, KJV

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

1 Peter 2:24, KJV

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

1 John 1:7, KJV

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 John 2:2, KJV

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin."

1 John 3:5, KJV

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:10, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"

Revelation 1:5, KJV

So you see, Jesus has already paid the price; not only for our sins, but also to make us HIS property. We belong to Him now; and that certainly beats belonging to Satan, does it not? Of course, if you really prefer to follow that serpent, and rebel against God's Will for you life, then you should

not be too surprised if you meet the same fate as well. It is not a pretty picture. Consider the following verses:

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

Revelation 20:10, KJV

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Revelation 20:14-15, KJV

"For our God is a consuming fire . . . It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Hebrews 12:29, 10:31, KJV

In the words of the ancient Patriarch and conquering hero of Israel, Joshua, the moral of the story, and the decision we each have to make is basically this: We either serve God, or else we serve Satan and the false gods of this world. Moses and the Prophet Jeremiah delivered very similar messages to the people as well. We either choose blessing or curse. We either choose life or death. Consider the following group of verses:

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Joshua 24:15, KJV

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."

Deuteronomy 11:26-28, KJV

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his

commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Deuteronomy 30:15-20, KJV

"And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey."

Jeremiah 21:8-9, KJV

In spite of this sober warning from God's Word, some foolish people will continue to scoff at messages such as this. These haughty souls obviously prefer their spiritual blindness and worldly comfort. In fact, they even take a certain amount of delight -- and yes, even pride -- in ridiculing those people who, out of their love for the lost, try to help bring them to the Light. The more we endeavor to help such atheists and Sadly, this modern-day Apostasy, or falling away from Biblical truth, perfectly mirrors certain things which were stated almost two thousand years ago, by Jesus Himself, as well as by two of the Lord's closest followers; Peter and Paul. Consider the following verses:

". . . Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

Luke 18:8, KJV

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man

of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;"

2 Thessalonians 2:3, KJV

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

2 Peter 3:3-4, KJV

Jesus' enemies of old were the very same way. They were so blinded to the truth, by their own choice, that they could not even sense the grave spiritual danger in which they found themselves. They consciously resisted the Light of Jesus Christ, and walked in spiritual darkness. Thus, they are described in the following way in three of the Gospels:

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

John 3:19-20, KJV

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

Matthew 13:10-16, KJV

"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if

the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."
Matthew 15:14, KJV

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! . . . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."
Matthew 23:16, 24, KJV

"And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other."
Mark 3:5, KJV

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."
John 9:39-41, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."
John 12:37-41, KJV

As we saw a moment ago, that ditch or pit is very hot indeed. It is a terrible Lake of Fire; and as Jesus also tells us in the verses below, the path leading to it is a very broad one. A lot of people walk down that path due to their ignorance, their pride, and the spiritual blindness of their hearts. I can just picture them slowly trudging down that wretched road similar to sad, dumb, brute beasts which are weighed down by their worldly power, by their wealth, by their fame, and especially by their sins and unbelief:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Matthew 7:13-14, KJV

Why is this so? Quite simply, it is because they never took heed to Jesus' words when He tells us to cast our burdens of sin upon Him. After all, He alone was foreordained to bear the weight of the sins of the world. Instead, they want to live their lives their own way. They want to struggle with their problems on their own. They want to prove that they can manage on their own. Likewise, they want to believe that they can be good and righteous, without any help from God. However, it is all just vain, self-righteous works of the flesh which don't really amount to anything in the end. As Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30, KJV

Following are some additional verses which clearly reveal that we have no righteousness of our own. We are all sinners by default. As such, no matter how hard we try to be good, no matter what works we perform, we will still fall short of God's required standard:

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and ALL OUR RIGHTEOUSNESSES ARE AS FILTHY RAGS; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."
Isaiah 64:6, KJV

"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

Psalms 130:3, KJV

"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:"

Malachi 3:2, KJV

"As it is written, THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, no, not one . . .
But now the righteousness of God without the law is
manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;
Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus
Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is
no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the
glory of God;"

Romans 3:10, 21-23, KJV

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel
is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that
they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For
they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and GOING ABOUT
TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESSs, have not submitted
themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the
end of the law for righteousness to every one that
believeth."

Romans 10:1-4, KJV

"And be found in him, NOT HAVING MINE OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS,
which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of
Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"

Philippians 3:9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but
ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY HE SAVED US, by the washing of
regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

"FOR BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED through faith; and that not of
yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any
man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

Please go to part three for the conclusion of this series.

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HAVE YOU SOLD YOUR SOUL FOR A POUND OF FLESH? : PART 3

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Their Wealth Will Be A Testimony Against Them, Gain The World But Lose Your Soul, We Brought Nothing Into This World, Old Testament Warnings Regarding Accumulating Excessive Wealth, Moses Forsook The Riches Of Egypt, Abraham Forsook The Land Of The Chaldees, Closing Remarks, Suggesting Reading List

Continuing our discussion, as we learned in part one, another big reason why so many people travel down the broad way and through the wide gate to their own destruction, is because they are simply unwilling to pay the price of following the Lord. They are unwilling to give up their wealth. They are unwilling to sacrifice what they have gained through their own hard work. For some people, it is simply too big of a price to pay. They are living on top of the world -- Satan's world, mind you -- and they have absolutely no intentions of giving it up. They will even go to war, and kill thousands or millions of innocents, just to keep what they have acquired. After all, the poor and the oppressed are just their cannon fodder, and pawns on the chessboard, viewed to be used as they please.

However, as I point out in such articles as "Going Down the Highway of Life", someday the physical affluence and worldly comfort which is so greatly enjoyed by the rich elitists will be a damning testimony against them, just as it was for the sad, young rich man who was unable to forsake all in order to follow Jesus all the way. Let me share those two verses with you again, along with some very powerful verses that were written by the Apostle James:

"But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I

say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Matthew 19:22-24, KJV

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."

James 5:1-7, KJV

So what will you do? The choice is really up to you. You can continue to serve Satan and his materialistic, flesh-driven world; or else you can serve your Heavenly Father and gain Eternal Rewards. As Bob Dylan once sang about twenty-five years ago " Now it may be the Devil, and it may be the Lord, but you gotta serve somebody." Jesus and the Apostle Paul both summed up our situation quite well when they said the following:

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:36-38, KJV

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

1 Timothy 6:7, KJV

So you see, piling up wealth in this current world is simply an act of futility. It is dust in the wind. While in this series I have concentrated on sharing with you verses which are found in the New Testament, you should know that the Old Testament carries the very same message regarding the vanity of accumulating worldly wealth. Following are just a few select verses for your consideration:

"And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Job 1:21, KJV

"When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat. Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven. Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words."

Proverbs 23:1-8, KJV

"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand."

Ecclesiastes 5:13-15, KJV

Despite the fact that he held power and was surrounded by the wealth of mighty Egypt, we know that when the right time arrived, dear Moses made the right choice. He was willing to leave it all behind in order to follow God's highest calling for his life. The Patriarch Abraham too was willing to leave behind familiar surroundings, in order to obey God. We would all be wise to follow their shining examples of obedience and faith. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is written of these two Patriarchs:

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable."

Hebrews 11:8-12, KJV

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

Hebrews 11:23-27, KJV

I truly hope that if God calls you to such a purpose, you too will choose to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that you will not fail Him. I pray that this series will cause you to seriously ponder the path you have chosen to follow in this life; because as we have clearly seen, not all paths lead to the same destination, regardless of what the modern, false, ecumenical teachers of the world erroneously teach. Not all religions are the same. Remember; there is only one Mediator between God and man: Jesus Christ; Yeshua the Anointed One.

On a final note, allow me to mention that while the language which is used in this series is rather strong, and while the Bible verses which are shared here are cutting, very direct and to-the-point, the primary intention of this series is not to criticize anyone, other than the wicked deceivers who have been exposed herein. In other words, I fully recognize the

need of many of my Christian brethren to hold secular jobs. You have families to support, bills to be paid, many needs to be met. Even though I am now getting old, over the course of my life, I likewise held a variety of secular jobs in order to support myself, and those for whom I was responsible. In your case, the main thing to consider here is that you work decently and honestly, and that you are a positive testimony of your faith in the process.

In short, this series is directed more to those people who have gone beyond actual need, and who have made the pursuit of power, fame and fortune -- oft times at the expense of others -- their sole purpose in life. They have made these things their gods.

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. If you have enjoyed reading it, please consider sharing its URL with your online friends. Likewise, if you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or any other social network, I would also appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which contain topics which are related to this series. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics website:

Abundant Life Doctrine: Scripturally Exposed!
Backsliding, Divine Chastisement and the Divine Agreement
Going Down the Highway
Marriage of the Lamb
Money-Making Bible Hucksters and Mammon
One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews
The Fruits of Disobedience
The Heavenly Vision: Have You Got It?
What About the Poor?

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