

## **MAKING FRIENDS BY MEANS OF THE MAMMON OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS**

In verse 9 the Lord goes on to say, *“And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.”* To make friends by means of mammon is to help others by the use of money to do things according to God’s leading.

Mammon, that is, money, is of the satanic world. It is unrighteous in its position and existence. The steward in the parable exercised his prudence by his unrighteous act. The Lord teaches us, His believers, to exercise our prudence in the use of unrighteous mammon.

The phrase “the mammon of unrighteousness” indicates that money is not in the realm of God. Money is outside the kingdom of God; it is in the world of Satan. Therefore, money is unrighteous both in position and existence. Actually, as far as God is concerned, money should not exist. In this universe there should not be such a thing as money. If we love money, we love something that should not exist.

In verse 9 the Lord says that if we make friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, when it fails we shall be received into eternal tabernacles. The word “fails” indicates that when the satanic world is over, mammon will be of no use in the kingdom of God. The eternal tabernacles are the eternal habitations into which the prudent believers will be received by those who share the benefit of their prudence. This will be in the coming kingdom age (Luke 14:13-14 ; Matt. 10:42).

## **FAITHFUL IN THE UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON**

In verse 10 the Lord continues, *“He who is faithful in the least is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in the least is unrighteous also in much.”* “Least” refers to mammon, the possessions of this age. “Much” refers to the rich possessions in the next age (see Matt. 25:21 , 23).

In verse 11 the Lord says, *“If therefore you have not become faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will entrust to you the true?”* The “true” refers to the true possessions in the coming kingdom age (see Matt. 24:47).

In verse 12 the Lord goes on to say, *“And if you have not become faithful in that which belongs to another, who will give to you that which is your own?”* It is not God’s intent in His New Testament economy for the New Testament believers to care for material possessions. Though the material things in this world were created by God and belong to Him (1 Chron. 29:14, 16), they have been corrupted by man’s fall (Rom. 8:20-21) and usurped by Satan the evil one (1 John 5:19). Hence, they belong to fallen man and are unrighteous (Luke 16:9). While God does supply the believers with their daily necessities from the material things of this age (Matt. 6:31-33) and commits to them as His stewards a portion of these material goods for their exercise and learning that He may prove them in this age, none of these goods should be considered theirs until the restitution of all things in the next age (Acts 3:21). Not till then will the believers inherit the world (Rom. 4:13) and have an abiding possession (Heb. 10:34) for themselves. In this age they should exercise to be faithful in the temporary material things God has given them so that they may learn faithfulness toward their eternal possession in the coming age.

Verse 13 continues, *“No household servant can serve two lords; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will cleave to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”* In this verse the Greek word for “serve” means “serve as a slave.” Here the Lord indicates that to serve Him requires us to love Him, giving our hearts to Him, and cleave to Him, giving our entire being to Him. Thus we are released from the occupation and usurpation of mammon so that we may serve the Lord wholly and fully. The Lord emphasizes here that to serve Him we must overcome the enticing deceitful mammon of unrighteousness.

In verse 13 we see that mammon is in rivalry with God, competing with Him. Because mammon is in rivalry with God, it is evil. On our part, we cannot serve two lords. We serve either God or mammon. This matter is very serious.

The Lord’s word about money was directed especially to the Pharisees, who were lovers of money (v. 14). They pretended that they loved God and were for Him. But the Lord knew well that they were not lovers of God; they were lovers of money.