

The Kingdom of God
Lesson 11: No Servant Can Serve Two Masters
LifeWalk Leader Guide

Open/Icebreakers: How long do you keep New Year's Resolutions? Why are they so hard to keep? In our current culture, it may be difficult to relate to the concept of "serving a master." What does it mean to serve a master? What sorts of behaviors and attitudes are involved? Name some of the masters in your life.

Digging In: Luke 16:13-17

1. Verse 13 is said in response to the parable of the Shrewd Dude. What point is Jesus making? What strikes you when you read these words from Jesus? Does this sound extreme? Don't we have many masters? Is Jesus saying we can only serve two masters? Is he saying we can't serve two masters equally?
2. Wealth was commonly believed to be a reward from God, so the Pharisees seemed to deride Jesus' warnings about riches. In what other ways did the Pharisees respond to this parable and these teachings from Jesus? Why would this cause them to sneer? What does Jesus say to them?
3. Jesus says, "What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight." (NIV) In other words, if it's popular, be paranoid. Are there popular things that may be happening today that are detestable in God's sight? Could these things be happening in religious circles? How can we tell the difference between something that is popular just for the sake of being popular and something that can be useful in the Kingdom?

Reflection: (selected quotes from whchurch.org)

A "master" is any person or thing you assume a servant posture toward, have an obligation to serve or have allegiance to. To apply Jesus' teaching here, we need to ask questions like

- Who or what do you assume a servant posture toward?
 - Who or what do you feel you have an obligation to serve?
 - Who or what do you spend most of your time thinking about?
 - Who or what helps define your sense of worth?
 - Who affects your emotions and behaviors the most?
1. Jesus is calling those who follow him to place everything under the reign of God, not to simply put God in the pot with all our other obligations. Whatever allegiances we have are only aspects of our allegiance to God, and whatever is outside His character and will is not something we should have any allegiance to. Jesus is inviting us to a radically centered and integrated life. Talk about ways to put these concepts into practice within your group.
 2. Practically speaking, instead of making "New Years Resolutions" or similar steps, it may be more helpful to simply submit to Jesus moment by moment. Can this approach make a difference? What does it look like?

Prayer: Ask God to help you give your full allegiance to Him and His agenda.