

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 7 – January 7<sup>th</sup> – Matthew 6:1-24

### Works frequently referenced in these notes on Matthew

- Hagner, Donald A      *Word Biblical Commentary Vols.33a & 33b: Matthew 1-13 & Matthew 14-28*, Word Books, Dallas, 1993 & 1995
- Morris, Leon            *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992

#### Matthew 6:1-18

According to Rabbinic Judaism, the three great pillars of religious life are:

- Prayer – directed towards God;
- Almsgiving – directed towards others;
- Fasting – directed towards oneself.

"These practices do not themselves come under criticism, nor are they regulated, but rather the motivation underlying them is scrutinised." Hagner.

#### Verse 1

Προσέχετε δὲ τὴν δικαιοσύνην ὑμῶν μὴ ποιεῖν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι αὐτοῖς· εἰ δὲ μὴ γε, μισθὸν οὐκ ἔχετε παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ ὑμῶν τῷ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

Verse 1 acts as an introduction to and summary of vv 1-18.

προσεχω pay close attention to, be on guard, watch, watch out

"a verb that has the meaning 'turn (your mind) to' and thus 'give careful attention to,' 'concentrate on.' Jesus is inviting his hearers to concentrate on the central thing when they perform any act of righteousness." Morris.

δικαιοσύνη, ης f righteousness  
ἔμπροσθεν before, in front of  
θεαθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin θεαομαι see, look at, observe

Compare 5:16 in which Jesus commands us to let our light be seen by men. The genuine character of our lives is to be evident to those around us – this is very different from our religious practices being a show to impress others.

γε enclitic particle adding emphasis to the word with which it is associated  
μισθος, ου m pay, wages, reward

"The deed was done in order to secure a reputation, not in order to serve God. Already the doer has secured his reward." Morris.

#### Verse 2

Ὅταν οὖν ποιῆς ἐλεημοσύνην, μὴ σαλπίσσης ἔμπροσθέν σου, ὥσπερ οἱ ὑποκριταὶ ποιοῦσιν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς ρύμαις, ὅπως δοξασθῶσιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν.

ὅταν when, whenever  
ἐλεημοσύνη, ης f giving money to a needy person, money given to a needy person, gift  
σαλπίσης Verb, aor act subj, 2 s σαλπίζω sound a trumpet

Probably intended metaphorically rather than literally – though some suggest that a trumpet may actually have been blown to draw attention to very large gifts.

ὥσπερ as, even as, just as  
ὑποκριτής, ου m hypocrite  
ρύμη, ης f street, alley  
ὅπως (or ὅπως ἄν) that, in order that  
δοξασθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl δοξάζω praise, honour, glorify, exalt  
ἀπέχω receive in full, have back

The phrase ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν "which previously occurred in 5:18 and 26, is found some thirty-two times in Matthew, more than twice as often as in any other Gospel." Hagner.

μισθος, ου m see v.1

"They were not giving, but *buying*. They wanted the praise of men, they paid for it." Davies & Allison.

"In the rabbinic doctrine concerning rewards, almsgiving is promised a high return (see Strack Billerbeck ...). Jesus' remark that those who give alms for the praise of others already have their reward must have had a shocking effect on his hearers." Hagner.

#### Verse 3

σοῦ δὲ ποιῶντος ἐλεημοσύνην μὴ γνώτω ἡ ἀριστερά σου τί ποιεῖ ἡ δεξιά σου,

γνώτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s γινώσκω  
ἀριστερος, α, ον left, left hand  
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξια right hand

**Verse 4**

ὅπως ἤ σου ἢ ἐλεημοσύνη ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ· καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι.

ὅπως see v.2

ἤ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

κρυπτος, η, ον hidden, secret, private

βλεπω see, look

ἀποδίδωμι give, give back, repay

A majority of late MSS (L W Θ TR it sy<sup>s,p,h</sup>) add ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, 'in secret.' Metzger points out that it is the superiority of the Father's reward to human approval that is important, not its public or non-public character.

"To sum up, our Christian giving is to be neither before men (waiting for the clapping to begin), nor even before ourselves (our left hand applauding our right hand's generosity), but before God, who sees the servant heart and rewards us with the discovery that, as Jesus said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Stott.

"God himself is the reward of Christians." Gutzwiller.

**Verse 5**

Καὶ ὅταν προσεύχησθε, οὐκ ἔσεσθε ὡς οἱ ὑποκριταί· ὅτι φιλοῦσιν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς γωνίαις τῶν πλατειῶν ἐστῶτες προσεύχεσθαι, ὅπως φανῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν.

ὅταν see v.2

προσευχομαι pray

ἔσεσθε Verb, fut indic, 2 pl εἶμι

φιλεω love, have deep feeling for

Cf. 23:6.

γωνια, ας f corner

πλατεια, ας f wide street

ἐστῶτες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl ἵστημι stand, stop

"The perfect participle, ἐστῶτες, has the nuance of having taken a position and continuing to stand in it, and this implies the enjoyment of public attention. Standing was the common position for prayer." Hagner.

ὅπως see v.2

φανῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj φαινω shine; midd. and pass. appear, be seen

It was not that they loved prayer but rather that they loved to be seen praying.

"In all this Jesus is not condemning public prayer or praying in a public place; it is praying in such a way as to maximise its effect on other people that he condemns." Morris.

ἀπεχω see v.2

**Verse 6**

σὺ δὲ ὅταν προσεύχη, εἰσελθε εἰς τὸ ταμεῖόν σου καὶ κλείσας τὴν θύραν σου πρόσευξαι τῷ πατρί σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ· καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι.

"σὺ, 'you' (singular), in the strong adversative sentence is emphatic: 'but when *you* pray ...' (cf. the same formula in v 17)." Hagner.

ὅταν see v.2

εἰσελθε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s εἰσερχομαι enter, go in

ταμειον, ον n inner room, private room

κλείσας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s κλειω

shut, shut up, lock

θυρα, ας f door, gate

πρόσευξαι Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 2 s

προσευχομαι

κρυπτος, η, ον see v.3 for this and the

following phrase

"Just as nothing destroys prayer like side-glances at human spectators, so nothing enriches it like a sense of the presence of God." Stott.

"The secret of religion is religion in secret." McNeile.

Again, many MSS, followed by TR, add ἐν τῷ φανερω at the end of the verse. See note on v.4.

**Verse 7**

Προσευχόμενοι δὲ μὴ βατταλογήσητε ὥσπερ οἱ ἔθνηκοί, δοκοῦσιν γὰρ ὅτι ἐν τῇ πολυλογίᾳ αὐτῶν εἰσακουσθήσονται.

προσευχομαι see v.5

βατταλογήσητε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl

βατταλογεω babble, use many words

Suggests a repetition of meaningless syllables or phrases.

ὥσπερ as, even as, just as

ἐθνηκος, η, ον pagan, heathen, Gentile

δοκεω think, suppose

πολυλογια, ας f many words, long prayer

εἰσακουσθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

εἰσακουω hear (of prayer)

"Jesus is not, of course, forbidding long prayer; he himself on occasion could pray all night (Lk 6:12)... It is prayer based on the view that length will persuade God that he discourages." Morris.

**Verse 8**

μὴ οὖν ὁμοιωθῆτε αὐτοῖς, οἶδεν γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὃν χρεῖαν ἔχετε πρὸ τοῦ ὑμᾶς αἰτήσαι αὐτόν.

ὁμοιωθῆτε Verb, aor pass subj, 2 pl ὁμοιω

make like; pass resemble, be like

οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand  
 χρεία, ας f need, want  
 αἰτῆσαι Verb, aor act infin αἰτέω ask, request

### Verses 9-13

"It is comparatively easy to repeat the words of the 'Lord's Prayer' like a parrot (or indeed a heathen 'babbler'). To pray them with sincerity, however, has revolutionary implications for it expresses the priorities of a Christian." Stott.  
 "The one who prays the Lord's prayer prays ... from a perspective of one who is involved in the great redemptive drama that is beginning to unfold in the Gospel narrative itself. The measure of eschatological fulfillment already realised focuses one's thoughts and desires upon the consummation of God's purposes as well as upon the consciousness and importance of present discipleship." Hagner.

### Verse 9

Οὕτως οὖν προσεύχεσθε ὑμεῖς· Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς· ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου,  
 οὕτως and οὕτω thus, in this way

οὕτως suggests Jesus' words are to be used as a *model* for prayer rather than simply repeated in prayer. "Luke ('when you pray, say'), on the other hand, seems to suggest the repetition of the actual words of the prayer (as was already done in the early church)." Hagner.

"Bonnard points out that when God is called 'Father' in the Synoptic Gospels the word is always on the lips of Jesus. This is not a commonplace in ancient religion, but a new understanding of the nature of God Jesus taught his disciples." Morris.  
 Jesus allows his disciples to enter into the same intimacy with God which he himself enjoys, cf. Jn 20:17.

Note the plural, ἡμῶν. The Christian does not pray in isolation but as part of a community who are also brought to mind in prayer.

οὐρανός, ου m heaven

The phrase "our Father in heaven" reminds us that God is personal, that he has an intimate concern for us and that he has power to help. We should begin prayer by remembering who God is, then all else is placed in perspective:  
 i) God's concerns will be given priority – 'your name,' 'your kingdom,' 'your will'...  
 ii) Our needs will be comprehensively committed to him.

ἁγιασθήτω Verb, aor pass imperat, 3 s  
 ἁγιαζώ sanctify, make holy  
 ὄνομα, τος n name, title, person

"The name of God is virtually indistinguishable from the person of God (cf. for example, Mal 1:6; Isa 29:23; Ezek 36:23; John 12:28; 17:6). Thus God is called upon to vindicate himself. In a Jewish context, this petition refers to God acting in fulfilment of the promises to Israel, and thus to the silencing of the taunts of her enemies. In short, God's name will only be properly honoured when he brings his kingdom and accomplishes his will on earth (cf. [the Jewish prayer] the Qaddish). Thus the first three petitions of the prayer are closely linked, referring essentially to the same salvation-historical reality." Hagner.  
 "We adamantly desire that due honour may be given to it, that is to him whose name it is, in our lives, in the church and in the world." Stott.

### Verse 10

ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου, γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς·

ἐλθέτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s ἐρχομαι

"To pray that his kingdom may 'come' is to pray both that it may grow, as through the church's witness people submit to Jesus, and that soon it will be consummated when Jesus returns in glory to take his power and reign." Stott.

"This refers to the eschatological rule of God ... expected and longed for by the Jewish people... It involves the consummation of God's purposes in history, the fulfilment of the prophetic pictures of perfect bliss (cf. Acts 1:6). The gospel is itself, above all, the announcement that God's promised rule has now begun in and through the work of Jesus the Messiah (see 3:2; 4:17,23), so the disciples are thus encouraged to pray that what has begun in the ministry of Jesus, what they have now begun to participate in, may be experienced in all its fulness (cf. the prayer *Marana tha*, 'our Lord come,' in 1 Cor 16:22; cf. Rev 22:20)." Hagner.

γενηθήτω Verb, aor pass dep imperat, 3 s  
 γίνομαι

θέλημα, ατος n will, wish, desire  
 γη, γης f earth

"This petition is essentially synonymous with the preceding petition (cf. its omission in Luke 11:2)." Hagner.

**Verse 11**

τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν  
σήμερον·

A true understanding of God as our heavenly Father will make us put our own needs in second place to his glory. But it will not mean that we decline to mention our own needs as if we did not want to bother God with such trivia or thought our needs to be unworthy of his attention.

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food  
ἐπιούσιος, ον (of doubtful meaning) for  
today, for the coming day, necessary  
for existence

δὸς Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s δίδωμι  
σημερον today

Prayer for everything necessary for our daily life. Hagner thinks that the eschatological element continues, suggesting that the meaning is 'supply us with bread today as we will be supplied at the eschatological banquet.'

**Verse 12**

καὶ ἄφεσις ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ  
ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·

ἀφιημι cancel, forgive  
ὀφειλημα, τος n debt, wrong, sin

"The concept of sin as 'debt' owed to God has an Aramaic background." Hagner.

ἀφήκαμεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl ἀφιημι

The majority of later MSS (κ<sup>1</sup> D (L) W Δ Θ Γ<sup>13</sup> TR and possibly sy<sup>c</sup> and co) have the present tense (ἀφιομεν or ἀφιεμεν) cf. Lk 11:4. Supporting the aorist are κ<sup>\*</sup> B Z Γ<sup>1</sup> vg<sup>st</sup> sy<sup>p,h</sup>

ὀφειλετης, ου m debtor, one indebted

Morris comments, "This [latter phrase] must surely be taken as aspiration rather than limitation, or none of us would be forgiven." However, his use of the term 'aspiration' is perhaps too light. Cf. vv. 14-15; 5:23-26; 18:23-35.

**Verse 13**

καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκης ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ  
ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

εἰσενέγκης Verb, aor act subj, 2 s εἰσφερω  
bring in, lead in

πειρασμος, ου m period or process of  
testing, temptation

God cannot tempt us with evil (James 1:13). The request is that we might be kept from falling into temptation and is the negative side of the single request of which the following phrase is the positive.

Hagner prefers the sense 'testing,' and suggests again that there may be an eschatological element here or at least that the 'ordinary' testing of the present age is anticipatory of the great final test. "The disciple thus prays not to be led into such a situation, i.e. not to be led into a testing in which his or her faith will not be able to survive."

ῥυσαι Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 2 s

ῥυομαι save, rescue

πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

Either neuter, 'evil', or masculine, 'the evil one'. Morris prefers the former, Hagner the latter.

Many MSS include the longer reading ὅτι σου ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεια καὶ ἡ δυναμις καὶ ἡ δοξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. ἀμήν. But this is omitted by the older MSS. Some suppose it to be a later addition making the prayer more suitable for liturgical use.

**Verse 14**

ἐὰν γὰρ ἀφήτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ  
παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, ἀφήσει καὶ ὑμῖν ὁ πατήρ  
ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος·

ἐάν if

ἀφήτε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl ἀφιημι

The majority of MSS (B L W Θ Γ<sup>13</sup> TR sy<sup>c,h</sup> sa bo<sup>p</sup>) insert τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, 'their sins,' perhaps in imitation of 14a.

παραπτωμα, τος n sin, wrongdoing

"It is not that the act of forgiving merits an eternal reward, but rather it is evidence that the grace of God is at work in the forgiving person and that that same grace will bring him forgiveness in due course." Morris.

**Verse 15**

ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἀφήτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, οὐδὲ ὁ πατήρ  
ὑμῶν ἀφήσει τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν.

"It is clear from these verses that a direct connection exists between God's forgiveness and our forgiveness. But it is a given that God's forgiveness is always prior (cf. 18:23-35). These verses are a forceful way of making the significant point that it is unthinkable – impossible – that we can enjoy God's forgiveness without in turn extending our forgiveness toward others. Paul makes use of this logion in Col 3:13." Hagner.

**Verse 16**

Ὅταν δὲ νηστεύητε, μὴ γίνεσθε ὡς οἱ ὑποκριταὶ σκυθρωποὶ, ἀφανίζουσιν γὰρ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ὅπως φανῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις νηστεύοντες· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν.

ὅταν see v.2

νηστευω fast, go without food

The Pharisees fasted twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays. John the Baptist's disciples fasted often but Jesus' disciples did not – or not as a regular exercise. Fasting is coupled with humbling and with prayer in Scripture (Ex 24:18; 2 Chron 20:1ff; Esth 4:14 etc.).

ὑποκριτης, ου m hypocrite  
σκυθρωπος, η, ον sad, gloomy  
ἀφανίζω ruin, destroy, disfigure

The meaning is literally 'to make invisible,' hence the pun ... ὅπως φανῶσιν

προσωπον, ου n face, appearance

"It is not quite certain what form this disfigurement took, but evidently some act of disfigurement was recognized as a common accompaniment of fasting so that these people not only fasted but appeared to fast." Morris.

ὅπως see v.2

φανῶσιν see v.5

ἀπεχω for this phrase, see v.2

**Verse 17**

σὺ δὲ νηστεύων ἀλειψαί σου τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ τὸ πρόσωπόν σου νίψαι,

ἀλειψαί Verb, aor midd imperat, 2 s ἀλειψω  
anoint

κεφαλη, ης f head

νίψαι Verb, aor midd imperat, 2 s νιπτω  
wash; midd wash oneself

Refers to normal custom of the day: though fasting, they were to appear no different from those not fasting.

**Verse 18**

ὅπως μὴ φανῆς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις νηστεύων ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρὶ σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυφαίῳ· καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυφαίῳ ἀποδώσει σοι

φανῆς Verb, aor pass subj, 2 s φαινω see v.5  
κρυφαιος, α, ον secret, hidden

βλεπω see, look, be able to see

ἀποδιδωμι give, render, give back, repay

A few MSS, followed by the TR, add the words ἐν τῷ φανερωῶ at the end of the verse.

**Verse 19**

Μὴ θησαυρίζετε ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅπου σὴς καὶ βρῶσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται διορύσσουσιν καὶ κλέπτουσιν·

θησαυρίζω store up, save, put aside  
θησαυρος, ου m treasure store, treasure

γη, γης f earth

ὅπου adv. where

σῆς, σῆτος m moth

βρῶσις, εως f food, eating; decay, rust

Could mean corrosion eating at metal, or mice eating away at stored grain. NJB translates 'woodworm.'

ἀφανίζω see v.16

κλεπτης, ου m thief

διορυσσω dig through, break in

κλεπτω steal

Possessions are not to be shunned as unspiritual but valued as given by God (1 Tim 4:3,4; 6:17). What is forbidden is the *selfish* accumulation of goods and extravagant and luxurious living (Lk 12:15), particularly when others are in need. Jesus condemns a *heart* tied to the things of this world. A Spanish proverb states, "There are no pockets in a shroud."

**Verse 20**

θησαυρίζετε δὲ ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐν οὐρανῷ, ὅπου οὔτε σὴς οὔτε βρῶσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται οὐ διορύσσουσιν οὐδὲ κλέπτουσιν·

οὐρανος, ου m heaven

οὔτε not, nor (οὔτε ... οὔτε neither ... nor)

"It seems ... to refer to such things as these: the development of a Christlike character (since all we can take to heaven is in ourselves); the increase of faith, hope and charity, all of which (Paul said) 'abide'; growth in the knowledge of Christ whom one day we will see face to face; the active endeavour (by prayer and witness) to introduce others to Christ, so that they too may inherit eternal life; and the use of our money for Christian causes, which is the only investment whose dividends are everlasting." Stott.

**Verse 21**

ὅπου γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ θησαυρός σου, ἐκεῖ ἔσται καὶ ἡ καρδία σου.

The majority of MSS read the plural ὑμῶν to agree with the plural of vv 19-20 as well as the parallel in Lk 12:34. The singular is found in 8 B lat co *et al.*

ἐκεῖ there, in that place, to that place

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

"Jesus points out that the place we choose for our treasures tells us something about ourselves." Morris.

**Verses 22-23**

Stott thinks that the 'eye' here stands for the heart. He writes, "The argument seems to go like this: just as our eye affects our whole body, so our ambition (where we fix our eyes and heart) affects our whole life. Just as a seeing eye gives light to the body, so a noble and singleminded ambition to serve God and man adds meaning to life and throws light on everything we do. Again, just as blindness leads to darkness, so an ignoble and selfish ambition (e.g. to lay up treasures for ourselves on earth) plunges us into moral darkness. It makes us intolerant, inhuman, ruthless and deprives life of all ultimate significance."

**Verse 22**

Ὁ λύχνος τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ ὀφθαλμός. ἐὰν οὖν ἢ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου ἀπλοῦς, ὅλον τὸ σῶμά σου φωτεινὸν ἔσται·

λυχνος, ου m lamp

σωμα, τος n body

ἐὰν if

ἢ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

ἀπλους, η, ον sound, healthy

The word implies 'wholeness' or 'singleness of purpose'. It is used elsewhere to mean 'generous' or 'wholehearted'.

όλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

φωτεινος, η, ον full of light

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

**Verse 23**

ἐὰν δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου πονηρὸς ἢ, ὅλον τὸ σῶμά σου σκοτεινὸν ἔσται. εἰ οὖν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἐν σοὶ σκότος ἐστίν, τὸ σκότος πόσον.

πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

ἢ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

σκοτεινος, η, ον dark, in darkness

"life not focused on God's claim and command is lost in spiritual darkness." Morris.

φως, φωτος n light

σκοτος, ους n darkness, evil

ποσος, η, ον how much(?), how many(?)

**Verse 24**

Οὐδεὶς δύναται δυσὶ κυρίοις δουλεύειν· ἢ γὰρ τὸν ἓνα μισήσει καὶ τὸν ἕτερον ἀγαπήσει, ἢ ἐνὸς ἀνθέξεται καὶ τοῦ ἑτέρου καταφρονήσει. οὐ δύνασθε θεῷ δουλεύειν καὶ μαμωνᾷ.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two

δουλευω serve, be a slave

ἢ or, (ἢ ... ἢ either ... or)

εις, μια, ἐν gen ἐνος, μιας, ἐνος one

μισεω hate, despise, be indifferent to

This does not mean hatred as we commonly use the term but only putting in second place, cf. Luke 14:26.

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

ἀγαπαω love, show love for

ἀνθέξεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s

ἀντεχομαι be loyal to, hold firmly to

καταφρονεω despise, treat with contempt

μαμωνας, α m money, wealth, property

"Would-be compromisers misunderstand his teaching, for they miss the picture of slave and slave-owner which lies behind his words. As McNeile puts it, 'Men can work for two employers, but no slave can be the property of two owners,' for 'single ownership and full time service are of the essence of slavery.' So anybody who divides his allegiance between God and mammon has already given in to mammon, since God can only be served with an entire and exclusive devotion. This is simply because he is God: 'I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other.' (Is 42:8; 48:11). To try to share him with other loyalties is to have opted for idolatry." Stott.