

## Friday Reflection: [Serving Two Masters](#)

by Michael Quinn Sullivan

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Who do our public servants actually serve? The evidence of bloated budgets, soaring taxes, and unfulfilled promises makes the case that incumbents serve themselves, and not the citizens. It's time for the citizens to take action.

It's in the Gospel of Matthew where we find Jesus' admonition that, "No one can serve two masters." Practical experiences shows us that no matter how hard we try, it is always true.

And it is especially true in politics.

I find very few instances in which someone ran for office for the sake of being corrupt. No, corruption happens over time as elected officials start seeking the approval of lobbyists and their fellow elected officials, rather than the voters for whom they ostensibly work.

I regularly hear incumbents tell me they have to violate their campaign promises by doing one thing, or by not doing something else, because they "have to work with these people." Those people, of course, being the lobbyists and their fellow lawmakers. They don't want to upset the legislative apple cart, disrupt the congeniality of the process, or risk being unpopular in Austin or Washington.

Because too many of us as citizens treat elections as popularity contests, our elections attract candidates drawn to being thought of as popular in whatever setting they happen to be. They tend to be approval-seekers.

That's probably fine when they are seeking the approval of the citizens. It is less so when they crave the approval of their fellow politicians and the swampy, sewer lobbyists that hang around seats of power.

Here's the rub. Politicians cannot seek both your approval and the approval of the political establishment. The tension of even trying will always result in the citizens seeing their precious liberties sacrificed by the politicians at the altar of contrived congeniality in the crony religion of self-promotion.

For our system of government to work, for liberty to be preserved, politicians must remember they are the citizens' servants. We must expect them to serve the citizens first and only.

And, if we are to save this republic, the citizens should remember it as well.

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