

FRIENDSHIP THAT LEADS TO INFIDELITY

James 4:4-5

MEN'S CONFERENCE 2011

INTRODUCTION: O.S. Chambers, *“The battle is lost or won in the secret places of the will before God, never first in the external world. The Spirit of God apprehends me and I am obliged to get alone with God and fight the battle out before Him. Until this is done, I lose every time. The battle may take one minute or a year; that will depend on me, not on God; but it must be wrestled out alone before God, and I must resolutely go through the hell of a renunciation before God. Nothing has any power over the man who has fought out the battle before God and won there.*

I must get the thing settled between myself and God in the secret places of my soul where no stranger intermeddles, and then I can go forth with the certainty that the battle is won. The reason the battle is not won is because I try to win it in the external world first. Get alone with God, fight it out before Him, settle the matter there once and for all.

This is the Great Divide in the life; from that point we either go towards a more and more dilatory and useless type of Christian life, or we become more and more ablaze for the glory of God – My Utmost for His Highest.”

I. SPIRITUAL INFIDELITY OF THE SAINTS. 4

Spiritual Infidelity – unfaithful people (Israel)

Whether they turned to pagan gods and idols or simply turned to the world as their supreme love, to do so was to be unfaithful to the Lord and commit spiritual adultery, a figurative name for apostasy.

Problem: You can't serve two masters

- You can no more *spiritually* have two gods than you can *legally* have two spouses (**Matt 6:24**)

Worldliness in a Christian's life must of necessity create disturbance and turmoil because neutrality is impossible where you have a divided allegiance. Can an unfaithful husband hope for harmony in his house, or a disloyal wife peace? James uses marital language.

Our Savior's love for us is likened unto that of a loyal, loving groom for his bride.

Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her."

2 Corinthians 11:2, "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

James exposes the unfaithfulness on the part of some Christians, charging them with spiritual adultery, namely, idolatry and worldliness. "**World**" in **James 4** speaks of a system which is in opposition to God.

“World” defined by Richard Wolff

“The world is human nature sacrificing the spiritual to the material, the future to the present, the unseen and the eternal to that which touches the senses and perishes with time. The world is a mighty flood of thoughts, feelings, principles of action, conventional prejudices, dislikes, attachments which have been gathering around human life for ages, impregnating it, impelling it, molding it, degrading it.”

“World” – refers to the spiritual reality of the man-centered, Satan-directed system of this present world, which is hostile to God and God’s people. It refers to the self-centered, godless value system and mores of fallen mankind.

The goal of the world is self-glory, self-fulfillment, self-indulgence, self-satisfaction, and every other form of self-serving, all of which amounts to hostility toward God.

1 John 2:15-17, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

Luke 16:13, “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You

cannot serve God and mammon."

2 Timothy 4:10, "for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica — Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia."

In II Tim 3:4, "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."

James 1:14, "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed."

James is an *"in your face"* type preacher. James gets in our face that he might get into our hearts.

"Friendship with the world" is at the very least indifferent to God, and at the worst, openly hostile to Him. When one chooses to pursue the pleasures of the world, it would ultimately spawn in the believer's heart the same indifference and hostilities, thereby turning a true Christian into a practical enemy of the God he claims to desire to love.

"friendship" - emotional whereas **agape** is **volitional** Describes intense and deep affections for the evil world system. Used of close, personal relationship. In **John 15:13-19** where the highest volitional love and highest emotional, affectionate love are both willing to give the ultimate sacrifice for those who are loved.

At their highest, both loves involve the bonds of self-sacrifice and of obedience. They also involve personal intimacy.

“Therefore, whoever wants to be a friend”

(Wishes) – connotes more than just a desire or wish to be fulfilled. It carries the stronger idea of choosing one thing over another.

“makes himself” – to appoint, ordain, indicating conscious intent. In his heart, his desire for the *world* supersedes any supposed positive ideas he may have about God.

“He does not have a mental relationship with God, as an impartial bystander or a distant admirer, but is in the fullest sense His enemy.”

J Mc

Friends of the world are controlled by the spirit of the world and have no part with being controlled with the Spirit of God.

QUESTION: Who, or what, has our fondest affections? Is it God, or the world?

Colossians 3:2, “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”

“mind” – affection

Isaac Watts, “Am I A Soldier of the Cross?”

3 stanza: “Is this vile world a friend of grace,
To help me on to God?”

G. Campbell Morgan, “Christians are not to catch the spirit of the world, but correct the spirit of the world.”

v.4 speaks loudly of **DIVIDED LOYALTIES**

II. SCRIPTURAL JEALOUSY OF THE SPIRIT. 5

“vain” – no purpose; speaks in an empty way; without reason, not meaning what it says

“The Spirit He made to dwell in us earnestly desires with jealousy for you”

James is saying that the whole tenor of Scripture teaches us that the Holy Spirit who lives within the believer jealously desires to completely possess that believer and control his life.

The Holy Spirit, indwelling us, is longing after something, namely, to make us wholly Christ’s, to bring us to the place where we have no divided allegiance. The Holy Spirit has

just one envy, one desire, one longing, that is, our entire devotion to Jesus Christ

The Spirit which He sent to live in us wants us for Himself alone.”

“yearns jealously” – even when we sin and disobey by seeking our pleasures in friendship with the world, we are greatly loved, for jealousy is an essential element of true love. We are brides of Christ, and the Holy Spirit does not want us to go somewhere else to have our needs met. He desires that we find our great pleasure and satisfaction in Him alone!

This jealous Spirit is inside us. When we sin, He is pained. He is personally and passionately and lovingly jealous for our affection.

1 Thessalonians 5:19, “Do not quench the Spirit.”

Ephesians 4:30, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

ILL. Oil Spill

Touching distant shores, can’t be contained, can’t measure impact (damage), can’t measure amount be dispensed

Spirit Life – oil is symbol of Spirit

III. SUSTAINING GRACE OF OUR SAVIOR. 6

“more grace” – greater grace; more abundant grace.
There is saving grace, and here we have sustaining grace;
God’s gracious favor and help. It takes **“greater grace”**
for a person to be able to submit.

2 Corinthians 12:9, “And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. NKJV

Hebrews 4:16, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Romans 5:20b, “But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more”

John 1:16, “And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.”

“grace following grace” or **“grace heaped upon grace”**

It is grace, God’s gracious supply to live as we ought in a fallen world. Augustine put it this way, *“God gives what He demands.”*

“Whatever our condition or situation, He always ‘gives us more grace.’ He gives grace to overcome personal weaknesses. If to your alarm you find that you are repeatedly succumbing to a burning pursuit of hedonism,

God will give you more grace if you ask. If you are a victim of an imploding self-centeredness which repeatedly sucks you into its nothingness, and you want deliverance, there is grace for the asking.

Perhaps your life has insurmountable obstacles: death of a loved one, a shattering divorce, a terminal disease, bitter ashes of failure; there is more grace.”

Kent Hughes

This is grace to do the impossible. If God is calling you to sell all and go to the ends of the earth to share the gospel or to take up a social crusade, there will always be more grace.

Annie Johnson Flint wrote:

*He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater;
He sendeth more grace when the labours increase;
To added afflictions He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials His multiplied peace.
When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done:
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun.
His love has not limits, His grace has no measure,
His power has no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.*

“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble”

He sets Himself against the haughty; to be lined-up against someone,
to be arrayed in battle against.

Barclay notes 3 things about pride:

- 1. It does not know its own need**
- 2. It cherishes its own independence**
- 3. It does not recognize its own sin**

Those who proudly turn from God and choose to be friends

of the world must face God’s opposition. The world with its more immediate rewards ministers to their pride, and its wisdom can foster human egos or often advance their ambitions. God , however, ministers His grace to the humble.

Psalms 138:6

**“Though the LORD is on high,
Yet He regards the lowly;
But the proud He knows from afar.”**

“gives grace to the humble” – present tense;
continually gives grace; He gives undeserved favor to lowly people. The humble are special objects of God’s concern and He enriches them spiritually.

- **The Gravity of Pride**
- **The Gravity of Grace**

