

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. Scripture text: **James 2:14-26.**

What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? [15] If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, [16] and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? [17] Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself. [18] But someone may *well* say, "You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." [19] You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. [20] But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? [21] Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? [22] You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; [23] and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. [24] You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone. [25] And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? [26] For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

B. To say one is a "friend of God" is to say more than you might think. And not to be a friend of God is something far more serious than most people realize.

C. Friendship is something very special and very powerful; let's see how.

## II. FRIENDSHIP IS A POWERFUL THING.

A. Friendship is something that should be cherished (Prov. 27:10).

Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.

B. A good friendship is something that is unchangeable (Prov. 17:17).

A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.

C. A friendship can be profitable (Eccl. 4:9,10).

Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. [10] For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.

D. JC tells us of the supreme friendship (Jn. 15:13).

"Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

E. A good friendship knows all and can be trusted (Jn. 15:15).

"No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

F. Jesus was and still is a Friend of sinners (Mt. 11:19).

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

G. God is the Friend of all humankind (Isa. 54:10).

"For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken," Says the LORD who has compassion on you.

H. Loneliness is a very real fear. The cure for this isolation is friendship. The right kind of friends can make all the difference. James speaks of two kinds of friendship.

## III. FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD IS HOSTILITY TOWARD GOD.

A. See Jas. 4:1-4 (esp. 4).

What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? [2] You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. [3] You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. [4] You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

B. James makes a strong statement about those who are friends with the world. The one who is a friend of the world is:

1. A spiritual adulterer. The church is the bride of X, and when those of make up his church do sinful things they are committing adultery against God. The good news is that those who are guilty of adultery, physical or spiritual can be forgiven by the blood of X (1Cor. 6:9-11).  
Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, [10] nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. [11] And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.
  2. Hostile. This means to show ill will, unfriendliness, or be antagonistic. It also means an open act of war. Notice in the overall context of the seriousness of these things. This open rebellion is cured in X (Heb. 12:3).  
For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.
  3. An enemy. An enemy is a person who hates another as to hurt or injure him. This is Satan's work, to take away as many souls as possible and "hurt" God. To be a friend of the world is to put ourselves in league with the devil. The only way to not be an enemy of God is to be cured in X (Rom. 5:8).  
But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- C. Remember the words of Jesus, who said, "There is no middle ground ... " (Mt. 12:30).  
"He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

#### IV. FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD RESULTS IN JUSTIFICATION.

- A. Abraham was called the friend of God. Let us see as to what he did to be called that. It will help us to understand what we must do to also be called a friend of God.
- B. The statement made in Jas. 2:23 comes from Gen. 15 concerning Abraham's having believed in God, and his faith being reckoned to him as righteousness.  
(Jas 2:23) and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God.
  1. The promise is given and Abram believed God (see Gen. 15:1-6).
  2. Abraham attempts to offer Isaac and God stops him. God now knows that Abraham has faith and is justified in God's sight (Gen. 22:9-19).  
(Gen 22:12) And he said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."
  3. Abraham is called God's friend (2Chr. 20:7).  
"Didst Thou not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Thy people Israel, and give it to the descendants of Abraham Thy friend forever?"
  4. Abraham is called God's friend (Isa.41:8).  
"But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend,
- C. Now we see in Jas. 2:21-23 that Abraham was not justified when he just believed, but rather when his belief was accompanied by works (Gen. 15:6; 22:12).  
(Gen 15:6) Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.  
(Gen 22:12) And he said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."
- D. This is James' point: faith without works is dead, and to be called a friend of God we must have faith, and works (good deeds) to accompany that faith. This gives justification in God's sight.
- E. Some examples of good deeds (based on faith):
  1. Initial obedience to God's grace is an obedient faith that teaches us how to live (Eph. 2:8,9 Ti. 2:11-14).  
(Eph 2:8-9) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; [9] not as a result of works, that no one should boast.  
(Ti 2:11-14) For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, [12] instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, [13] looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;

[14] who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

2. Living the Xian life is a response of faith (Rom. 6:17; Gal. 2:20; 2Pet. 1:5-11).

**(Rom 6:17)** But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

**(Gal 2:20)** “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

**(2Pet 1:5-11)** Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge; [6] and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness; [7] and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. [8] For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] For he who lacks these *qualities* is blind *or* short-sighted, having forgotten *his* purification from his former sins. [10] Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; [11] for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

3. Living faithfully means being God's friend throughout life (Mt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10).

**(Mt 10:22)** “And you will be hated by all on account of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

**(Rev 2:10)** “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

## V. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. One cannot say he is a friend of God and a friend of the world at the same time.
- B. Friendship with the world is hostility toward God.
- C. Friendship with God is hostility toward the devil (and the things of the world).
- D. To be a friend of God, respond in obedient faith.
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.