Frenemy?
James 4:4-5, 10 (Matthew 6:24; 1 John 2:15-17; Prov. 23:4, 28:20, 22)

Sermon Outline

A. Are You an Enemy or a Friend? (Vs. 5-6; John 15:13-15):

1. In the NT, the word is generally used of those who neglect God and their duty toward Him and yield themselves to their own lusts and passions (Matt. 12:39; 16:4; Mark 8:38; James 4:4 where the word moichalís stands as a characteristic of infidelity, adulterous or faithless, idolatrous).
   a) The fact that James addresses his readers as adulteresses, after the fashion of the OT prophets who spoke of Israel as the wife of Jehovah (cf. Isa 54:5; Jer 3:20; Ezk 16:23; Hos 9:1, etc.), is strong evidence for both a Jewish author and Jewish readers.[1]

2. Like Israel who worshiped idols rather than God we too by giving ourselves over to the world which is set against God (Ephesians 2:1-2) because it is ruled by Satan (1 John 5:18-19), violate our relationship with God just like a wife or husband do when they step outside the marriage. This is because the church is the bride of Christ.

3. From their past experiences to their present experience they should have by now come to a full understanding, since they are exposed to God’s Word, that friendship with the world is a serious violation of their relationship with God.

4. To have a friendship with the world is to have strongly attracted to all that the world has to offer so that a person obey all its lust.
   a) Maybe with them leaving the religious nature of Jerusalem and like the prodigal son going to an entirely new country that does not have the same rigid religious structure made these believers chase after riches 2:1-7, and worldly wisdom (James 3:13-18).

5. The world is controlled by Satan (1 John 5:18-19) and is designed to be in total opposition to God so that by its very nature it is rebellious against God.
   a) World can refer to the human race, the universe God made, or to a system of values separated from God. In this context it describes a society severed from God and pursuing its own godless agenda (see 1 John 2:15-17). A person cannot be loyal to God and controlled by worldliness at the same time. Christians cannot peacefully coexist with evil.[2]

6. For a believer to have a fondness for the world is to continuously or habitually be at war with God.

7. To be at war with God is a losing battle because God is the Creator and Sustainer of everything in the universe. He is in absolute control of everything that exist.
8. To be a friend of the world is to purposefully and deliberately planning to do what the world believes and to be totally focused on being involved with the things the world produces which opposes the will of God (1 John 2:15-17).

9. It describes that “inner circle” around a king or emperor who are close and know his secrets but will still respect his position as king and follow his orders - a best man at a wedding – this goes as far as sacrificing your life for a friend – this someone you have an affection for.

10. Being a friend of the world is not just purposefully planning to be engaged with what it has to offer it is something of the heart. It is a heart that desires a close and intimate relationship with the world because the person wants to share in its lust and passions and would sacrifice everything to experience all that it has to offer. This is an attitude that is continuously displayed so that it is a daily passion.

11. The world is controlled by Satan (1 John 5:18-19) and is designed to be in total opposition to God so that by its very nature it is rebellious against God.

12. To be a friend of the world is to place oneself in a position of an enemy to God.

13. Because the world is in rebellion against God a person who position themselves against God has set themselves up to be His adversary directly opposed to God’s righteousness.

14. Are we of the constant opinion that we are of superior knowledge than the scriptures have to offer?

15. A reference to the prophetic Scriptures, meaning knowledge contained in writings, within the totality of Scripture giving it authoritativeness.

16. Do we continuously think that the divine authoritative will of God is totally in vain?

17. The Holy Spirit continuously has complete deep displeasure with our desire to become absorb with the way in which the world thinks and our desire to have an intimate relationship with all the passions the world has to offer.

18. The Holy Spirit provides us God’s ability to exercise faith, as He guides us to truth (John 16:13), so that we can have a productive relationship with God (Romans 8:9-17). When the purpose for which the Holy Spirit lives in us (1 Corinthians 6:9) conflicts with our desire to have a passion for the world it causing the Spirit of God to grieved (Ephesians 4:30). This is because we have forsaken God like a husband or wife forsake their wife or husband respectively.

19. Even though we may desire the world (1 Corinthians 3:1-3) the Spirit still remains in us (John 14:16). It is because He has no desire to leave that makes our passion a time that brings grief to Him.

B. A True Friendship with God is Rewarding (Vs. 10):

1. We must bring our heart with its passion and conflicting desires under the authority of God.

   a) We may compare Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; and also 1 Pet. 5:6; yet James speaks of self-humiliation in repentance only, and we should not extend the force of his words beyond that. [3]
2. We must always bear in mind that God is ever present (Acts 17:28) and knows even our thoughts and intentions (Proverbs 20:27; 1 Corinthians 2:11; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

3. He blesses us when we respect His rule over our lives.

4. God honors a person who so trust Him they completely surrender to His will being sanctified (set a part from the world) for His glory and their blessing.

   a) But the heart of James’s letter is found in the quotation of Proverbs 3:34 in James 4:6. The rest of the letter gives specific examples of what “humble” in Proverbs 3:34 means (see “humble,” 4:7; “draw close” 4:8; “bow down,” 4:10; “grief,” 4:9; “weep,” 5:1; “be patient,” 5:7; “confess your sins,” 5:16). The purpose is that God’s grace, not his opposition, may be experienced.[4]

   b) To become humble before God demands a voluntary turning to God (see the words of Jesus in Matthew 23:12). The picture is that of a person who falls prostrate before a powerful oriental ruler, seeking mercy.[5]

5. Friendship with God is a blessed life (John 15:13-15).

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