



# VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

## Weekly Bible Study - 25:11:2009

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### **STUDY 32: FRIENDSHIP – A GREAT CHOICE WITH ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES**

James 4:4-5

In a dramatic move, James threw down the gauntlet **“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?”** (James 4:4-5).

By so doing, James laid out very plainly the great choice that lay before every believer as well as their associated eternal consequences. It is sobering to think that a choice of friends could also imply a choice of destiny! In a world of rapidly changing values and fashions, God's unchanging standard of non-conformity to the world remains. It is obvious from scriptures that friendship with the world results in compromise and Spiritual pollution that destroys relationship with God. Jesus in His prayers (John 17:14-16) clearly pointed out that believers are in the world but not of the world. A heavenly minded believer steers clear from friendship with the world and also all that could lead to it (I John 2:12-17; Romans 12:1,2; I Corinthians 10:23,24,31-33; Titus 2:6-14; Isaiah 3:16-24; I Timothy 2:8,9; I Peter 3:3-5).

#### **INROADS TO FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD** James 4:4; I John 2:15-17

**“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?”** (James 4:4). The use of the words adulterers and adulteresses are significant in relation to the theme of worldliness. Just as in the physical, people can be lured into adultery through indecent exposure and uncontrolled / wandering eyes and heart; in the same vein, people can be lured into friendship with the world through similar channels as borne out in John's admonition to believers - **“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever”** (I John 2:15-17). Three potential inroads that must be avoided to overcome the temptation of falling into friendship with the world pointed out in this scripture include:

1. The lust of the flesh
2. The lust of the eyes, and
3. The pride of life.

Just like physical appearance and heart condition have much to do in temptations to physical adultery, so also do these play significant roles in friendship with the world. Even though the Bible does not specify special dress codes for Christians yet it clearly teaches modesty, decency and patterns that do not promote lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes or pride of life (which are reflections of the systems of the world) as basic standards for Christian conduct in appearance (I Timothy 2:9,10; I Peter 3:1-6; Isaiah 3:16-24).

**Your Spiritual Welfare Is Our Concern**

**IMPACT OF FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD** James 4:4; Matthew 13:20-22

**“... the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”** (John 4:4). James could not be clearer that affiliation with the world results in alienation from God! The damage is significant, deep and spiritual. The heart of the world is hardened against God and his Word. The ways of the world are laced with thorns and briars. Therefore, straying into the way of the world is not a pleasure trip for the believer. Jesus, in His parable of the sower presented a graphic picture of the impact of friendship with the world on a believer - **“But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful”** (Matthew 13:20-22).

**INDICATORS OF FREEDOM FROM THE WORLD** James 4:4,5; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

**“... whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?”** (James 4:4-5). According to James, friendship with God is an indicator that a person has chosen to be alienated from the world. Other indicators include:

1. Deadness to the flesh and cleansing affections and desires from those of the world (Colossians 3:1-10)
2. Shunning worldly pleasures, carnal festivities, reveling, worldly music and entertainment (Romans 12:1,2; Luke 15:13; Galatians 5:21)
3. Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:12)
4. Separation from the world (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Numbers 33:51-56)
5. Not cleaving to worldly possessions (Mark 10:17-30).