

## ***Are We Friends of the World or Friends of God?***

"Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God," (James 4:4).

### ***What Does it Mean to be a Friend of the World? (James 4:4)***

I once asked a group of teenagers to write down what they thought it meant to be a friend of the world. I was surprised and gratified that they knew what this meant. A composite of their answers is as follows:

1. Hide the fact that you are a Christian. Let people believe that you are not a Christian. Remember Peter (Matt. 26:69-74).
2. Go along with your friends that do evil (Exodus 23:2; I Cor. 15:33).
3. Cursing, Drinking alcoholic beverages, smoking (Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 23; I Cor. 6:19-20).
4. Listening to dirty jokes; going to sinful movies (Phil. 4:8).
5. Wearing immodest clothing (I Tim. 2:9).
6. Putting things before the church (eg. Ball games, Matt. 6:33).
7. Finding something to do on Sunday besides worship (Heb. 10:24,25; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2)
8. Conforming to the world (Rom. 12:1,2; I John 2:15; Jam. 4:4)
9. Slowly begin accepting what the world does as if it were all right (Heb. 2:1).

### ***What Does it Mean to be a Friend of God, as was Abraham? (James 2:23)***

**1. Believe God.** Abraham did so (James 2:23). We like to have friends whom we can trust. It is impossible for God to lie and Abraham knew it. Therefore, he put his trust in God and did what He said, regardless of what God asked him to do. God called him His friend.

**2. Obey God.** "By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed" (Heb 11:8). It is impossible to be a friend of God without obeying what he says. Have you repented and been baptized for the remission of sins? If not, do you think you can be a friend of God?

**3. Worship God.** Over and over, it is said in Genesis 12-15 that he "builded an altar unto Jehovah." What a privilege it is to worship Jehovah! Abraham did so and he was called the friend of God.

**4. Be assured that God can fulfill His promises.** Abraham was fully assured that what God had promised, he was able also to perform (Rom. 4:21). Just as God fulfilled the promise of a son to Abraham, so God has promised eternal life to all who obey Him. God is able!

**Conclusion:** Choose to be a friend of God and not a friend of the world!

**- by Lynn Headrick**

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## ***What Being Married is Really Like***

Young people sometimes have such rose-tinted glasses about being married that they plan more for the wedding than the marriage! Columnist Dave Barry suggested that the vows to be exchanged should be more realistic as to what married life was going to be like...

*"Are you, John, troubled by the thought that no matter how large your bathroom is, your half will consist of three square inches, and even that will soon be taken over entirely by The invasion Of the Skin Care Products?"*

*"Do you, Mary, honestly think you will ever again be able to watch a TV program without John here scanning all of the other 57 cable channels roughly every 30 seconds in case there's something better on, such as a replay of the 1978 Super Bowl?"*

As married folks we laugh - but we know how true it is that being married is far different than getting married. This is why preachers sometimes advise young Christians who are thinking about marriage to define just what marriage is from the Bible view. It's a real eye opener!

Is marriage defined as being in love? Seems to be more than that. Is it sex? It is more, or perhaps we should say, more basic than that. Is it living together? More basic than that.

It is primarily an agreement or vow. A man and woman are promising to each other and to God that they will be husband and wife - and only to each other throughout their lives. It is this that will keep them together through the changes that life brings, as they find out what marriage is really like.

If the couple understands this then whatever problems come as they are "richer or poorer, in sickness and in health" they will deal with them together, just as they have promised. They will be determined all the more to, "love his wife even as himself and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Ephesians 5:33).

**- by Bob Hines**

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### ***'For the Young People'***

More and more we hear folks deciding to attend a certain 'church' because "there are lots of good activities for the young people". Often it is the sole basis for making this important determination. 'Programs', 'activities', and 'groups' for the young people – that's the drawing card.

And, what activities are these folks searching for? Are we talking here about carefully arranged Bible classes that seek to instill an understanding of God's word in the hearts of our young people? Is it sound teaching from the pulpit and scriptural practice in the way the church does its business so that the young folks can learn respect for Bible authority? Is it love between brethren that manifests itself by each individual demonstrating "hospitality one to another" (1 Pet. 4:9).

Sadly, the answer is no. Instead, the activities that are desired "for the young people" are fun and games – 'youth groups' that sponsor parties, retreats, outings, camps, softball and basketball leagues, etc. "The bigger the better" and 'the more the merrier' seem to be the rule.

Lest anyone misunderstand, let it be known that we love basketball, baseball, camping, parties . . . and fun and food in general! We strongly favor such things being provided as an avenue of 'good, clean fun' for our young folks. But we insist that there is no authority in the Bible for the church to provide such. Let parents who really care see to it that the kids have these needed diversions, and let the church keep to its important authorized work. There's nothing better for our young people than this.

**- by Greg Gwin**