

RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP

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James 4:4 – *Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God?*



BREAKING WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD

We cannot serve both God and Mammon. We cannot serve both God and the world. **We cannot be filled with the Spirit of God if we are filled with the spirit of the world.** The Scriptures are very clear regarding our relationship with the world.

First, the world is under temporary governance of the devil. God gave complete dominion over the world to Adam, but Adam handed it to Satan when he and Eve chose to believe him instead of believing God. But Jesus took back that authority at the cross. He defeated the works of the devil and the devil lost his dominion over man. **He still has power but he has no authority to use it.**

The problem is that there are only few among us who believe this powerful Scriptural truth. The devil harasses us, we succumb to the harassment, and we, therefore, assume that he has the right to do what he loves to do. He does not!!

James 4:4-*You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is*

hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

We all know this Scripture and we have convinced ourselves that we are not falling into that trap, but in fact, we are falling into that trap. We must be in the world, and because we are, we choose to participate in most of what the world offers. But the Scripture is clear: **If we choose friendship with the world, we have chosen hatred toward God.**

James goes on to say: *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you (James 4:7).* Why does he say “submit yourselves, then, to God”? It is because he knows that if you have become friends with the world, you have become unsubmitted to God. You cannot resist the devil and expect him to flee unless you first submit yourselves to God. Divorce yourselves from the spirit of the world. It will only destroy you.

All of our wisdom, all of our understanding, all of our counsel must come from the Holy Spirit of God. There is nothing in

this world that brings life. It only brings death.

Paul, in Galatians 1:15-16 states clearly that when the Lord appeared to him and called him by His grace, he consulted no man; he did not confer with flesh and blood. He, instead, went into the desert and communed with God. Only the Lord can bring life. Only the Lord can separate us from that devious spirit of the world.

Rom. 12:2-*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

God has made it clear. We must divorce ourselves from the world. **We must be a world nonconformist.** Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world. What is the pattern of this world? It is everything that we see and hear. And every bit of it is anti-Godly. **Nothing that this world offers can draw you closer to the Lord.**

The Scripture is clear. When we stop conforming to the pattern of this world, God, Himself, will transform us by the renewing of our mind. What a wonderful promise. Not only that, but He then promises that, with that renewing, we will know

the perfect will of God, His good, pleasing and perfect will.

But the world is enticing. Of course it is. It is controlled (though temporarily and without proper authority) by the prince of the air, the devil. Do you honestly think that there is anything that the devil has his hands on that can benefit you? No! Everything that he touches is demonic. **Everything that he touches will draw you to hell. Everything that he touches will keep you from Heaven.**

FINDING OUR LIFE

You *must* break from the spirit of this world if you truly want to serve God. You cannot, under any circumstances, have all of God if you have any of the world in you. You cannot, under any circumstances, serve God on His terms if you have any of the world in you.

Matt. 10:39-*Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.*

Jesus spoke clearly. Of what was He speaking? He was speaking of the self. The self is the part of us that feeds our egos. It controls our decision-making. We are comfortable with our self. It has been there forever and has never steered us wrong. Well, maybe not never! Well, maybe it has steered us wrong often. **In fact, everything that we have**

ever done that was not pleasing to God was initiated by the self. The self is in cahoots with the devil. The self hates God. Everything that the self stands for is the antithesis of that for which God stands. And Jesus has said that if you try to save the self, you will lose everything. Only if you are willing to sacrifice the self, only if you are willing to lose the self, will you gain true life.

Numerous times Jesus stated: *Deny your self, take up your cross, and follow me.* We all want to follow Jesus but we are not willing to do so on those terms. Well, then, dear friends, if we do not obey the Lord, are we really following Him? If you refuse to deny your self and to take up your cross, can you really follow Him?

The self is aligned with the devil. The devil is the prince of the world. He has temporary, albeit without authority, governance over the world in which we live. **His purpose is to steal, to kill and to destroy all people, and definitely, all Christians.** He loves it when you align yourself with his kingdom. He loves it when you allow his entertainment to grab hold of your heart and mind. He loves it when you play video games, watch TV, and involve yourself in every other *thing* that keeps you from spending time with your Savior.

HAVING ALL OF GOD

Every one of us would love to have all of God. What we do not realize is that all of God is available to us. Yes. John 1:1 says: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

The word was and is God. The very words, every comma, every period, every crossed T in the Bible is God. It is not just words. It is God. **The very God who, without any materials with which to work, spoke our solar system into existence, is the Bible.** Every word in your Bible contains the full power of God, that same power that created the universe.

And yet, we allow our Bible to sit unopened day after day, or at best, we spend a few minutes with it. **The Word of God has all the full power of God contained within it.** Power to heal, power to raise the dead, power to cast out demons, power to keep the devil in his place and not in our place. That power is available to every Christian – but only on God's terms, not on our terms. And not on the devil's terms.

Do you want all of God? Then God must first have all of you. And God cannot have all of you if any part of you is still super-glued to the spirit of this world.

The world in which we live is spiraling completely out of control. It is on a speed train, destined for the abyss. There is no hope for this world. God has said that this world will experience the greatest earthquake in history. He has said that the sky will roll up like a scroll. **But there is hope for everyone who is living in this world.** And there is especially hope for those of us who are called by the name Christian. But we must separate ourselves from this world.

John 17:14-16-*"I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it."*

What powerful words of Jesus. He stated, unequivocally, that He has given us His word. **His word is enough. It contains all the power necessary for us to live free of the devil and the world.** He has given us His word and His word is all we need for absolute, perfect protection. He also said that the world has hated us. Yes, the world hates us. Why? It is because it is under the temporary governance of the devil. And the devil hates us. With a passion. Jesus asked the Father *not* to take us out of the world. He knew that we would have to be here.

But He also knew that we did not have to be *of* the world. He prayed to His Father to protect us. We have the protection of God the Father to keep us from the spirit of the world. All we have to do is stop conforming to the pattern of the world. God will do the rest. His promise stands. And His promises are secure. But, we must do our part.

The choice is ours. But the results of our choices are astronomic. Do we truly understand what we are doing to our families when we continue playing with the things of the world? What kind of legacy are we leaving to those whom God has entrusted to us?

If we choose to continue playing around with the things of this world, we are committing spiritual suicide. The divorce rate in the Church is around 50%. Doesn't that scare the dickens out of you? It should. There are more men who grapple with pornography than there are that do not. And we're only talking about those in the Church. Does that scare you? It should. There are more teenagers committing suicide than at any time in history. Teenage drinking has become epidemic. There are more new diseases (of which no cure has been found) than at any time in our history. Don't these things frighten you? They should. From

where do these things come? They come from the world. They come from the spirit of the world. They come from the prince of the air. They come from the devil.

God's word tells us that He will protect us from all of these things. All of them!

But we must serve God on His terms. Not on our terms.

BELIEVING THE WORD OF GOD

Matt. 21:22- *"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."*

What a powerful promise! We all, as Christians, know this word. We all know this promise. But most of us just flat out don't believe it. *If* we believe, we will have whatever we ask for. But we don't believe. **We want to believe, but the power to believe just isn't there.** Why? It is because we have not divorced ourselves from the spirit of this world.

When we yield all to God, and I mean *all*, God Himself will come and fight our battles for us. God will honor our absolute yielding and He will transform us by the renewing of our minds.

Smith Wigglesworth, a great man of God who lived from the late 1800's to mid-1900's, made a peculiar but powerful statement. He said that when Adam and Eve sinned, God put an angel with a flaming sword at the

entrance of the Garden of Eden so that they could no longer participate in the tree of life, because of their sin.

He went on to say that when we completely yield to God and begin serving Him on His terms, He places that tree of life right inside our very beings. At that point, He wants us to live forever. And he places the angel with the flaming sword at the entrance of our lives so that the devil can have no inroad.

Dear friends, when you reach the point where God is everything and you are nothing, a very attainable position, but one that can only be reached in the strength of the Almighty, you will be able to believe the word of God. You will be able to understand and believe every word in the Bible. You will have the requisite power to understand and believe every single thing that God has said. And you will be a candidate for God to work in you and through you to do His perfect will. And His perfect will is to bring Heaven to earth.

You will see miraculous healings. You will walk in consummate victory. You will not be taken in by every enticing thought. The glitter of this world will not attract you at all. You will understand that the devil has no authority to attack you, to deceive you, or to offend you. No one can snatch you out of God's hand (John 10:29).

All that God is will be available to you. Why? Because all that you are has become available to God. And God will be able to trust you with His power because He will know that you are nothing. There will be no pride, no ego, no self to deter or interfere with His glory.

That, friends, is the true kingdom of God. And it is available. The only question is: are you available? Is all of you available to God?

Please join us at the Radical Discipleship meetings every other Monday at New Life Foursquare Church, 5913 Jefferson Pike, Frederick. We meet next on Monday, June 2nd at 7:00 PM.

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