

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes*

**Sermon Notes for January 22-23, 2000**

**"Friendship with the World"**

**Dale Whitehead**

**James 4:1-6**

We can know if we have become a friend of the world if our various relationships are characterized by turmoil (James 4:1).

We can know if we have become a friend of the world if we find ourselves in conflict with ourselves (James 4:1-4).

James identifies for us three causes of internal conflict.

The first cause is uncontrolled desire (James 4:1).

The second cause is unfulfilled desire (James 4:2).

The third cause is selfish desire (James 4:2-3).

A sinful heart makes it impossible for the Lord to answer our prayers. Therefore the only ones who can pray effectively are Christians who are no longer dead in trespasses and sins and who are also seeking to live a righteous life (Psalm 66:18).

Our pleasures in and of themselves are not wrong. But when our pleasures become uncontrolled desires which deviate how we pray then our praying becomes worthless (James 1:3).

Praying according to the will of God is the underlying condition for successful praying. It is the man whose heart supremely yearns for God's glory and the accomplishment of His will who prays meaningfully and effectively (1 John 5:14).

How did Christ restate this underlying condition in the Gospels?

Christ restated the underlying condition for answered prayer as "faith in God."

When we exercise faith while praying we are not exercising faith in faith, or faith in our request but we are to exercise faith in God (Mark 11:22).

Having faith in God is not simply believing that He is able, but it also means we believe He knows what is best for our lives in light of who we are and what we are facing. Because of this confidence our desire will be that His will would be done rather than our's.

It is not the quantity of our faith that is the biggest obstacle to successful praying but rather the quality of our faith. It must be constant and unwavering. It is never pictured as intermittent bursts of confidence but always quiet, steady, growing trust (Matthew 17:20).

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes*

The word translated "doubting" in Mark 11:23 means "dividing judgment." Vine in his expository dictionary of New Testament words says that the word does not so much suggest a weakness of faith but no faith.