

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes for February 5-6, 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 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).

Our pleasures in and of themselves are not wrong. But when our pleasures become uncontrolled desires which dictate 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 in essence restate 1 John 5:14 in the gospels?

Christ restated 1 John 5:14 as "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 ours. Christ restated 1 John 5:14 as "Abiding in Christ" (John 15:7).

"Abide" (MENO) carries the basic meaning "to remain." The idea is to remain in vital contact with someone or something.

"Words" (RHEMA) could also just as well be translated "sayings." The significance of RHEMA (as distinct from LOGOS) is exemplified in the injunction to take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word (RHEMA) of God" in Ephesians 6:17. The reference is not to the whole Bible as such, but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of our need.

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Those who have the words of Christ abiding in them will manifest two very important characteristics:

They will be continually feeding and reflecting upon the scriptures (Joshua 1:8).

They will be seeking to carefully apply the specific teachings of the law to their lives (Joshua 1:8).

Prayer is God's mechanism that He has interwoven with His eternal sovereign plan to accomplish His revealed will. I know this because He repeatedly calls us to pray and tells us that our prayers will be effectual when praying according to His revealed will.