

To Be God's Friend

“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend.” (James 2:21)

Many times you may find people who are proud to have famous and influential friends; and they brag and boast mentioning their names. They felt so elated that they have connections with them even they are just working as staff or laborers at their companies or in their big houses. But if someone who is unknown invites you to dine with his friends, or appreciate your work and given you compliment, how would you react?

Today's message is inspired by the life of a man of God, who is mentioned in the Bible as God's friend, this man is Abraham. How he became God's friend and how you and I can become God's friend, is what we are going to explore.

“The Lord had said to Abraham, “Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.” (Genesis 12:1) That was the first time God spoke to Abraham, He gave him the order to leave the area that he was living and the place that he loved much. And the Lord God gave him this promise: ***“I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse and all the people on earth will be blessed through you.” (Genesis 12:2-3)*** It was not easy for Abraham to leave behind the things and the people he loves but, ***“By faith, Abraham when called to go to a place he would later received as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.” (Hebrews 11:8)*** Abraham trusted God. He knew that the Lord had a good and perfect plan for him – which God will give him the best and wherever He is sending him He is with him and walking beside him. The Lord will neither leave him nor forsake him. Abraham's faith in God made him ready to obey the Lord's command. And it was credited to him as righteousness.

In order to be God's friend, first we ought to trust Him and obey Him. Sometimes we are not willing to go one meter forward. We are not willing to leave behind things we love. But let us remember this: ***“We cannot receive new blessings beside the old ones because we cannot carry both, unless we brag and boast.”***

God had promised Abraham to bless him and to make him a big nation and he will be a blessing to others. But until that time Abraham was without a child. When God spoke to Abraham for the first time, he was 75 years old and Sarah, his wife was 65 years old. Both of them were beyond childbearing age. The meaning of the word “Abraham” means the father of many. And indeed God fulfilled His promise to him and Sarah became pregnant at age 90 and Abraham 100 when Isaac, his son from Sarah was born. ***“By faith Abraham, even though he was past age and Sarah herself barren was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man and he is as good as dead, came***

descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.” (Hebrews 11:11-12)

After the birth of Isaac, God tested Abraham: ***“Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love and sacrifice him to me as a burnt offering.”*** Abraham, God's friend, obeyed God and he took Isaac his son to offer him. ***“By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promise was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.” (Hebrew 11:17-19)***

Abraham walked step by step with God. He tasted God's love and faithfulness and enjoyed God's presence in his life. He was obedient to God doing His will; listening to His instructions and believing God's promises. Abraham's faith in God enabled him to leave behind many things including the pleasures of this world and followed what God wanted him to do - even he offered his son Isaac. ***“You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness and he was called God's friend.” (James 2:22-23)***

You and me, if our actions is working along with our faith, we are God's friend. We will enjoy His love, His presence, His mighty and rescuing hand that fulfills all His promises. God is the same yesterday, today and forever. As God walked with Abraham, He also walks with us. God has come to us through the Lord Jesus Christ who did mighty miracles, healed the sick and raised people from death. Jesus took our sins, nailed with Him on the cross and died to give us eternal life. To everyone who believe and have faith in Him, to all who follow Jesus, they are God's friends. Jesus said to His disciples, ***“Greater love has no man than this that He lay down His life for His friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call your servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:13-15)***

My dear and beloved: You may be proud for having friends who are big and well-known people, but I am proud for having Jesus as my Friend and Saviour. Through believing in Jesus and following His steps you have the access to know God, to know God's secret, to follow all His steps and commands all the days of your life and to take hold of the eternal life to which you are called and that shall be your utmost desire if you are God's friend. To my friend, I am asking you, ***‘Will you be willing to sacrifice the worldly passionate desire you are holding and instead dedicate your life to Jesus?’***

“Heavenly Father, I come before You in the name of Jesus who died for my sin on the cross to give me eternal life. Than You, Father God, that You consider me a friend. O Lord, increase my faith and my trust in You to believe in all of your promises and to follow You all the days of my life, enjoying Your presence, love, and care. Thank You, Lord. This is my prayer through Jesus Christ, my Lord, my Saviour and my God and my Father, Amen.”