

God's Calling Requirements Part 22

Friendship with God – Part 1

“13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” (John 15:13-15 KJV)

When Jesus said, ***“13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend,” (John 15:13 KJV)*** that does not mean that you give your life for your friends, but the truth is that Jesus gave his life for us because he is considering us His friends. Jesus truly died on the cross for our sins to save us and He is requesting us today to be His friends.

The friendship with Jesus and of Jesus is based on this command, ***“14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” (John 15:14 KJV)*** Jesus would consider you His friend, and His blood that He shed on the cross for your sins will cover your sins and saves you if you obey the commands of Jesus and His Word and the voice of the Holy Spirit to you.

There are much privileges of having the friendship with God, ***“15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” (John 15:15 KJV)*** Friendship with God reveals to us and makes us know the things and the knowledge of God. To be a friend with God then you will be aware of what God is doing and you can analyze clearly the events in life.

Abraham our father in faith, cherish his friendship with God, ***“23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.” (James 2:23 KJV)*** Abraham and His descendents received the blessings of the friendship of Abraham with God. **Friendship with God is not like the friendship with people. God is everywhere and He is there all the time. People are not available in the places and in the time that you are in need.**

“10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.” (Proverbs 27:10 KJV) What is said in this proverb that your friend and your father's friend you should not forsake because in your calamities they are near to you and are better than your brother who is faraway. But who can be nearer to you than God, who is just a prayer away? And who can be more faithful to you than Jesus and who can be more helpful to you than God being your friend?

God wants you to be faithful to His friendship, for the disciples of Jesus admonished that they need to have friendship with God and not to have friends with the world. He is a jealous God and He will act with anger and become furious if you favor people and friends over your friendship with Him. James, the writer of the book of James and the half brother of Jesus, emphasize about the friendship with God by condemning the friendship with the world: ***“4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5 Do ye think that the***

scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?” (James 4:4-5 KJV) When you makes friends with people and compromise with them and condone their sins because you think one day you will need them, that way of thinking and behavior will make God very angry with you. If you do that then you are forfeiting the privileges to be friend with God.

“18 But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.” (Isaiah 41:8 KJV) God here was speaking with the Israelites whom He called to serve Him and He was reminding them that He is the friend of their father Abraham. Based on the friendship of Abraham with God, the Lord here was calling Israel to continue to serve Him. **Your friendship with God today will pave the way for your children and descendants to be favored and called by God to serve Him.**

“7 Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?” (2 Chronicles 20:7 KJV) King Jehoshaphat when his land was invaded by the armies of the enemies, in his prayer he appealed to God that He had already given this land to them, the seed of Abraham, based on Abraham being the friend of God. Based on that, God intervened for King Jehoshaphat and the people with him and gave them great victory over the three invaded armies. Abraham at that time, long time was dead but His friendship to God was standing and his descendents were receiving privileges because Abraham their father was a friend with God.

Your friendship with God today and in your life on earth, will ultimately bring great blessings to your children, descendents and your disciples.

People, relatives, neighbors and friends will not help your descendents but your friendship with God who lives forever and who is omnipotent and omnipresent will secure life and the future to them. The work of your hand cannot help them but your friendship with God can.

“11 And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” (Exodus 33:11a KJV) Moses was also friend to God and He cherished his friendship with God. The value of the friendship that he had with God, the Lord was speaking to him face to face. **When you are facing troubles and you don't know what to do, and when you want a council and got advice, you need answer and clear direction to go and move. You may have and got many friends but they will not be able to do what God can offer to you when He speaks clearly to you as His friend and face to face; they cannot satisfy you with an answer as God satisfy you.**

Do not be worry if you don't have friends, because Jesus can go with you to any place and solve your problem. He may send you to certain people who will accomplish to you what you need, or He may go Himself and finish the matter to you and you don't need even to move.

God's calling for you today is to have and to keep your friendship with Him, and it will be done to you as you believe.

The Bible teaches us to make friendship with God in order for us to walk in obedience with Him and live the life to the full that He promised to us.

The Bible admonish us not to have friendships with people but to keep our friendship with God who will teach us how to handle each and every relationship with the people that we come across in life. Our God is a jealous God and He does not want us to prefer people and relationships above our relationships with Him. In addition to that our friendship with the world and to people would most likely expose us to dangers and might get harmed. Therefore God's Word is keen to teach us to abide in our friendship with Him alone.

People they usually make friends for different reasons. It might be for acquaintance and for passing time, and with such friends would be a source of entertainment. The Psalmist said to the Lord, ***"8 Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth."*** (Psalm 88:8 KJV) Acquaintance means friend. So here one of the purposes to have friends is for the purpose of acquaintance in order to spend time and have a fun or open discussion and heart to heart talk. **But whom you can find better than Jesus to meet and to trust, to open your heart and to talk?**

Why we should not have friends from the world? Friends in the world are a source of troubles in your life. The following events and situations will show clearly why you should not have friends from the world, from among those who do not follow Christ. Here we will start to describe events of wrong friendships.

A. People can be friend with you to get some benefit: ***"6 Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts."*** (Proverbs 19:6 KJV) So here the purpose of friendship is that to get something out of the relationship. People usually make friends to get some benefits. People they will become friends to influential peoples and leaders in order to get privileges, knowing that influential people are always having benefits and favor and support, so in making friends with them they are included in these privileges. Abner when he was angry with Ishboeth said to him that he is giving benefit not only to the house of Saul but extending that even to the friends of Saul, ***"8 Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ishboeth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman?"*** (2 Samuel 3:8 KJV)

When you are poor no one you will find beside you. ***"20 The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends."*** (Proverbs 14:20 KJV) ***"11 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar*** (Psalm 38:11 KJV) Job was scorned by his friends when he lost his possessions, ***"20 My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God."*** (Job 16:20 KJV) ***"14 My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me."*** (Job 19:14 KJV) ***"19 All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me."*** (Job 19:19 KJV) ***"21 Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."*** (Job 19:21 KJV) **What we can see that friends are there only to get a benefit from you and to use you, then the best friend to you is Jesus, He is there to help you and support you in times of need.**

B. Friends are also burden and are cause of troubles: ***"24 A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."*** (Proverbs

18:24 KJV) ***"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly"***, your friends will require of you to be friendly to them, and they might ask you something that contradict the Word of God or something that will affect your relationship with Christ.

Therefore we can say that a man with many friends may come to ruin. Friends will ultimately bring harms and damage. Therefore let us keep Jesus as a sole friend as God's Word declares, ***and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and that friend is Jesus.***

C. Friends can pull you away from the right atmosphere and encourage you to do bad things: Judah moved away from his brothers and married a Canaanite woman due to an influence of a friend, ***"1 And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. 2 And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her."*** (Genesis 38:1-2 KJV) That same friend was with Judah when he went and slept with Tamar after his wife death. Let us read the story: ***"12 And in process of time the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13 And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep. 14 And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a vail, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife. 15 When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her face. 16 And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me? 17 And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it? 18 And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him. 19 And she arose, and went away, and laid by her vail from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood. 20 And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not. 21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place. 22 And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, that there was no harlot in this place. 23 And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her."*** (Genesis 38:12-23 KJV) **Such kinds of people whom you take as friends they will not only mislead you but will encourage you and will not stop you from doing wrong.**

D. Friends can betray you: The friend of Samsun married the woman that supposed to be the wife for Samson. ***"20 But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend."*** (Judges 14:20 KJV) The one who was a friend to Samson is the one who betrayed him and took his wife. **Friends of the world who are not friends of Jesus will betray you.**

E. Friends can be so malicious people who invents destruction: ***"1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. 2 And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her. 3 But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and***

Jonadab was a very subtil man. 4 And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister. 5 And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand. 6 So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand. 7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat. 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. 9 And she took a pan, and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him. 10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 11 And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister. 12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly. 13 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee. 14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. 15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.” (2 Samuel 13:1-15 KJV)

Jonadab was a very subtle man and taught Amnon and encouraged him to do evil. You might not be aware that bad friends, even among relatives, will teach you to do a frank evil thing.

F. Friends will hinder you from doing what is right: “12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.” (John 19:12) Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but the Jews took advantage of his relationship with Caesar to hinder him from doing so. Pilate being a friend of Caesar they told him, “If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.” Your friendship with certain people will make you side the crowds and condone and agree with their sins. Devil will use such relationships to hinder you from doing what is right.

My dear and beloved: Do not be worry if you don't have friends, because Jesus can go with you to any place and solve your problem. He may send you to certain people who will accomplish to you what you need, or He may go Himself and finish the matter to you and you don't need even to move.

It is better that you don't have friends, because they are harmful:

- Your friends of the world are there only to get a benefit from you and to use you.
- Your friends of the world will require of you to be friendly to them, and they might ask you something that contradict the Word of God or something that will affect your relationship with Christ. Friends will ultimately bring harms and damage on you.

- Your friends of the world who are not friends of Jesus will not only mislead you but will encourage you and will not stop you from doing wrong.
- Your friends of the world who are not friends of Jesus will betray you.
- You might not be aware that your friends who are not friends of Jesus, even of those among relatives, will teach you to do evil things.
- Your friendship with certain people of the world will make you side the crowds, condone and agree with their sins. Devil will use such relationships to hinder you from doing what is right.

To fulfill our calling to God, we need to keep our friendship with Jesus and move away from other friendships that we have in the world. Apostle James said, “4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?” (James 4:4-5 KJV) Our God is a jealous God and He does not want us to prefer people and relationships with people in the world above our relationships with Him. In addition to that, our friendship with the world and to people would most likely expose us to dangers and we might get harmed. Therefore God's Word is keen to teach us to abide in our friendship with Christ alone.

Let us commit to the principle of the message that we received today and let us implement what we learn in our lives as we commit ourselves to Him in prayer.

Let us pray: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life.

Let us repent and renounce our sins. Confess your sins now to the Lord. Lord I repent of the following sins _____

Renounce the sin of being friendly with the world and trusting the people favor. Renounce the sin of being peoples' users. Renounce the sin of marrying non believer.

Lord I understood well your Word in this message. Lord I am coming back to you and I want you to be my friend. Cleanse me Lord, and build me according to your Word and your will. Lord I pray that you will provide all my needs. Lord protect me and provide me the favor that I need in my life to overcome some of my troubles. Lord I commit to you this problem _____ that I need you to go before me and solve it.

Lord I pray for my brothers and Sisters who committed themselves to live and to do your Word, Lord give them more faith and trust in you. Lord provide all their needs and go before them and solve their problems. Lord Jesus give them more fruit of the Holy Spirit to be similar to you in character and attitude and that people will see you through their lives.

Lord we pray for us as a church, Lord fill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go and evangelize and make new disciples. Lord we pray that you will enable us to plant more Bible studies and more congregations for the church. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not

feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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