

A Friend of God

Last time I spoke, we covered scriptures revolving around the truism found in Pro. 23.7, which states simply “For as a person thinks in his heart, so is he”

And so we covered the point of viewing ourselves as scripture dictates, that is, viewing ourselves from the perspective of having God’s Spirit dwelling within us.

And thus thinking of ourselves from the perspective of being a man or woman of God, and that of a saint. One that is sanctified by God for Holy use. And thus a person that exhibits God’s character traits.

Today, I would like to expand on this general topic, a bit more. So to set the stage, I’d like to begin by reading a few verses.

Jam. 2.23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God.

Isa. 41.8 “But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, The descendants of Abraham My friend.

Ex. 33.7-11

7 Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the Lord went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp.

8 So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle.

9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses.

10 All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door.

11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

After reading these passages recently, the question arose in my mind, is am I a friend of God?

What are the elements, or characteristics that constitute friendship with God?

I believe these to be important questions that we should ask ourselves. So today I thought I would look into this question of our friendship with God.

Now while you could probably come up with many attributes of friendship, and I solicit your comments and input for discussion afterwards, I would like to cover what I consider to be 3 important keys to biblical friendship.

And I've used the acronym TLC, to make them easy to remember.

TLC stands for Trust, Loyalty and Commitment

All 3 of these overlap to some degree, and my points are not meant to be an extensive discussion on the topic. However I do feel that this subject has merit, regarding our relationship with our Creator.

So these points are given in the hope that they may prompt your personal meditation and examination.

So let's begin with the first point of trust. Noah Webster's Original 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language defines trust as "Confidence; a reliance or resting of the mind firmly on the integrity, veracity, justice, and or friendship of another"

Trust in a biblical sense, may be considered synonymous with faith.

Turn with me please, if you will to Hebrews chapter 6. Verses 13-20.

13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,

14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute.

17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath,

18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,

20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

As the children of God, we have been given these exceedingly great and precious promises, which are as sure as the sun coming up tomorrow.

These promises from God are our spiritual mooring or anchor that help to keep us steadfast, in a world of increasing turbulence. That is IF, we keep them in remembrance.

As we find recorded in Eph. 1.13-14

13 In Christ you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

14 which is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, [that is our redemption into eternal salvation] to the praise of His glory.

God's Spirit dwelling within us, gives us this trust, this faith, this confidence. As we further read in Phil.1. 6

“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ”

Brethren, we should meditate long and hard on this foundational element of trust. Do we really trust that God will do what He promises? Jesus gives us pause for concern as He asks this same question; when He returns will He really find faith on the earth?

For as we read in Heb.11.6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

As I covered at the beginning of this message, both Abraham and Moses are recorded as being friends of God. And they both possessed the trust in God, that motivated them to do the things that God required them to accomplish.

Continuing in Hebrews 11.

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

And verses 17-18

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called,"
19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

So we see that Abraham had a rock solid trust and confidence that God would fulfill His promises to him, regardless of the physical situation at the time.

Abraham is called the Father of the Faithful. Thus if we are to follow in his steps, and receive salvation, we also must fully develop this complete trust in God, regardless of what physical circumstances may lie ahead of us.

In Psm 125, verses 1 and 2 we find this promise.

"1 Those who trust in the Lord Are like Mount Zion,
Which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
So the Lord surrounds His people
From this time forth and forever"

Friends, God's promise of never leaving nor forsaking us, is truly something we must lay our hope and trust upon.

The second element of Godly friendship that I would like to focus on is Loyalty.

Again I will recite Noah Webster's definition. To be Loyal, is to be faithful in duty or love, fidelity.

As we see, loyalty is closely associated with trust and faith, but it adds the element of spiritual fidelity, which equates with obedience.

We read of Moses in the opening verses of Hebrews 3.

1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.

3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.

4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.

5 And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward,

6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are IF we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Moses faithfully fulfilled all the tasks that God had appointed for him. and in Deut. 34 we read about the end of Moses life.

Deut. 34.5 So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.

6 And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day.

7 Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished.

Please note verse 6, in which it says the He, with a capital H, buried Moses.

This seems to imply that God Himself, buried Moses, and thus no one, no physical person knew where Moses was buried. Although Jude 9 seems to imply that the Arch Angel Michael was charged with guarding Moses' grave site, against demonic forces.

Which in itself could be an interesting discussion, if anyone has further thoughts on the matter. However, back to the topic at hand.

Further we find in Deut. 34, verse 7, that Moses did not die of old age, the scripture implies that Moses was still in good health at age 120.

And I believe there is a lesson for us here. Since Moses had fully developed the Godly character needed for salvation, and had faithfully completed the duties that God had called him to do, God simply allowed Moses to go to sleep, to await his reward.

So we find here that death, from a spiritual perspective is not something to fear. In fact, if we are loyal to our Creator, and are following the example set for us by Abraham, Moses and all the faithful down through time, then physical death might indeed be welcomed.

As the Apostle Paul stated in his letter to the Phillipians, in chapter 1, verses 21-23;

21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.

23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better

In Moses' case, I'm sure he welcomed the retirement from his God appointed charge, being a most difficult task, of overseeing several million unconverted souls.

For I personally can attest to the difficulty, at times, with living with just a single unconverted spouse.

Moving on, in John 15. Here we find that Jesus equates our obedience with spiritual friendship with Him and our Father.

Beginning in verse 9 of John 15, we read;

9 “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

So we see that our spiritual friendship with God is based on our spiritual fidelity to Him.. Which in reality is simply living life the same way as God would if He was still in the flesh.

And really, isn’t that the crux of what true Christianity is all about?

Each day of the remainder of our lives, God gives us another opportunity to practice the lifestyle that God wills for us to share with Him, for all eternity. Our Job is to be loyal to the oath we all took at baptism.

Giving our physical life over to God's charge, pledging to do His will, instead of our own.

And as you know, we have in reality entered to a marriage contract with Jesus Christ. In which we pledge mental fidelity to Him.

The Apostle Paul refers to this very point in 2 Cor. 11.2, in which he writes;

“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ”

And in Revelation 14.1-5, we find depicted the reward for our mental fidelity, and spiritual loyalty.

1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, [false religious concepts] for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

So to sum up point number 2. Our loyalty to God can be summed up from a passage in Gal. 6.7-9

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

I'd like to conclude this second point, by turning to a passage from 1 Chron. 28. I'll read briefly from verses 1 and 2 for context.

1 Now David assembled at Jerusalem all the leaders of Israel..
Verse 2 Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brethren and my people:

And now beginning in verse 6. And please consider that King Solomon was given the very same opportunity from God, as all of us have been given. Verse 6.

6 Now He said to me, 'It is your son Solomon who shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his Father.

7 Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, IF he is steadfast to observe My commandments and My judgments, as it is this day.'

8 Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to seek out all the commandments of the Lord your God, that you may possess this good land, and leave it as an inheritance for your children after you forever.

9 "As for you, my son Solomon, KNOW the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

Brethren, these are all words that we should take to heart, for our Godly friendship and salvation, is dependent upon having a loyal heart.

Point number 3, Commitment

The word commit, is defined as; To give in trust, to put into the hands or power of another; To entrust.

As Christians, we have pledged our lives to God. We have literally put our lives in God's hands, our lives have been entrusted to Jesus Christ.

Psm 37.5 states "Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him"

So as I stated before, all of these points are interrelated.

If we are to commit our way to the Lord, then we will be about our Father's business of overcoming, and doing whatever God has personally called us to do.

As we find God stating in Jer. 29.13 "you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart"

In order to develop a closer friendship with God, we must be fully committed to doing so. And we must come to choose and value what God values.

Both Abraham and Moses, as friends of God, were totally committed at completing the charge that they were given.

In Heb. 11 beginning in verse 8 we read.

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

And also verses 13-16

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.

15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.

16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Abraham, responding to God's call, and left one of the most prosperous and modern cities of his day, and lived the rest of his life in a foreign land, without any permanent dwelling to call home.

Abraham had a loyal heart, and was committed to seeking God's friendship, and trusted in that eternal city, that God has promised and prepared, not only for him, but also all of us, the long for the Kingdom to come.

Likewise Moses, was so committed to God's plan, and promises given to Abraham, that he prayed fervently after the golden calf incident.

That God would not wipe out the nation of Israel, and replace Abrahams lineage with his own. Which would have made Moses, the new patriarch of salvation.

In this act of humility, Moses showed God that his heart and intentions were pure. Moses had a loyal heart, and was committed to God's plan and purpose.

So in this short study, we see that friendship with God is based on trusting God, and thus our conforming our thoughts and desires, with His will.

The Apostle James gives us a simple solution for developing a closer friendship with God.

James 4.8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Sounds simple enough, but just how do we draw closer to God? The next part of the verse tells us how.

Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

We cleanse our hands by physically stopping sinful actions. And our hearts are purified by becoming single minded. In other words, by fully changing our goals and priorities in life.

As we find a little further up, in James 4.4

4 Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

That's what James means by being double minded. It's being uncommitted to living God's way of life.

And as Jesus states in John 15, our seeking to live God's way of life must be motivated by our love for Him.

And in 1 John 2.5-6 we read; ;

5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

6 He who says he abides in Him, ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

And we also read in 1 John 4.16

16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

And the end result of our developing our friendship with God is described in the next verse.

17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

And so my friends, let's make every day we have count. Let's all endeavor to develop a closer friendship with our Father and our Savior, by giving them a lot of TLC

I'd like to conclude by reading with a short addendum, a very comforting verse found in Luke chapter 12.

Luke 12.32 "Do not fear, little flock, [Trust in God, Be Loyal and Committed to Him] for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"

Friends, thank you for your time today.

Thomas C. Trinko

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