

THE BEREAN

"...EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY..." (Acts 17:11)

FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD

*A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES
PART FORTY FOUR OF SIXTY FOUR*

The Christian cannot divide his affection between God and the world. "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God (James 4:4). I doubt if many people, in this generation accept this fact as "many walk...enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose God is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:18,19)

What is the world? "It is that order of things about us, or that spirit in us which is blind and deaf to the value and reality of spiritual things, and careless to the will of God" (Brown). It is selfishness in any form. It may be seen in self-gratification, sensuous delights or arrogant self-seeking. The love of earthly pleasure, earthly gain and display is worldliness. The world seems

harmless, attractive, exciting, and gay. It is covered with smiles and bears a wealth of delights. By these it wins men's hearts from God. If we think highly of the world and its ways are more diverting than spiritual things, we are its friend and God's enemy.

Worldly things war against any delight in spiritual things. Once they master us, spiritual privileges become irksome and disagreeable duties. Spiritual things no longer give pleasure and we turn from them to seek pleasure in Satan's toys. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15).

It is our choice. If we choose the world, James wants us to understand clearly that the subsequent condition of enmity with God is our fault. Thus the one who loves the world "maketh himself an enemy of God."

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