

# ARE YOU GOD'S FRIEND?

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**“And the scripture was fulfilled which  
saith, And Abraham believed God, and it  
was reckoned unto him for righteousness;  
And he was called the friend of God.”  
Ω James 2:23**

**Last week I wrote about being “an enemy of God” and this Sunday morning I feel led to write about being God’s friend. We’ve all heard the song, *I Am a Friend of God* and I’m sure we all would like to be like Abraham and be a friend of God. And how do we do this? Well, we learn from the Scriptures don’t we? And if we study and meditate the Book of James closely we will learn something about this because it’s also in James where we read one way a person becomes an enemy of God:**

**“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.” Ω James 4:4**

**So obviously we cannot be a friend of God if we seek “the friendship of the world” and world systems because they are God’s enemy for a reason—the world systems have been perverted through the Law of**

**Sin and Death by Satan and they reflect his values, not those of Father God. Jesus died for the Church and gave us the power to change the world and world systems but, unfortunately, as the Scriptures prophesy, most of the church has not obeyed James 4:4. Paul saw it in his day (cf. 2 Tim. 4:10) and we see it today.**

**If you want to be a true friend of God and become more intimate with Him then the most important thing you can do is to develop the Fruit of the Spirit in your life—it's your responsibility, not God's! The Holy Spirit deposits the initial seed of these 9 fruits but it's up to us to grown and nurture them and the more developed they are in your life the more you resemble the Father and Jesus in character and the more they will want to fellowship with you.**

**The rest of this teaching I've copied from the newest book by Evelyn and I titled *The Gifts and Operations of the Holy Spirit* that we published in 2010. We are making a special offer this month to make it available for just \$10 and encourage you to order it for yourself and a loved one as it will help you tremendously with your ministry and relationship with the Lord.**

**The following is from the book on the fruit of faithfulness because it's our observation that this one fruit is the main reason why most Christians never become "a friend of God" nor do they ever fulfill God's perfect will for their lives.**

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# **THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

## **GENERAL PRINCIPALS OF**

## **CHRISTIAN CONDUCT**

**FAITHFULNESS** (πίστις) — Firm persuasion. Fidelity to one’s promises or allegiance to duty or a person, loyalty. Faith in action is trust. Faithfulness is living such a life that God is able to have faith in you. If you develop this fruit to maturity you will be called God’s friend. One of the reasons Abraham was God’s friend was because God knew that He could trust him. God can’t trust many people; He told me so in 1998 when He gave me an assignment to minister in Anchorage, Alaska. One of the Lord’s indictments against Israel is that they were not faithful to Him.

“For their heart was not right with him,  
Neither were they stedfast in his covenant.”

■ Psalm 78:37

One of the reasons this is very important to God and why He demands absolute faithfulness among His ministers is because of obedience — if we’re not faithful in the things God calls us to do people will die and go to hell — people He wants healed won’t be healed and those He wants to use us to influence for a life of ministry will never be called.

Obedience to the Word of God and His commands — faithfulness in the things of God is the first qualification of ministry. I talk about this in *The High Calling of God* — qualifying yourself for ministry. This spiritual principle is rarely taught in seminary or Bible school. The Lord spoke to me about it over 20 years ago. The Lord told me in 1989 concerning a teaching I did in Africa titled, *Secrets of Successful Ministry*, “Many are called but few are chosen and the reason they’re not chosen is because they’re not willing to pay the price.”

There’s a price to pay for the Five-fold Anointings and a person must first prove themselves faithful. In Paul’s letter to Titus (1:7) he refers to elders (Five-fold ministers) as “God’s stewards.” The first qualification for a person to be a steward is faithfulness. That’s why God normally calls a person first to the ministry of helps — we see this in the life of Joshua. Most Christians fail the test because they are not faithful in the little things God asks them to do. Let me illustrate.

In 1998 the Lord spoke to me from Luke 16 — the chapter on stewardship. It explained a number of things to me including shedding more light on what He

said in 1989 about “not being willing to pay the price” as a reason for disqualification for promotion in ministry. I’ve learned that what the Lord said to Brother Hagin many years ago is true. He said, “Most ministers live and die without ever entering into the first phase of ministry that I have for them.”

Notice the wording in Luke 16, “There was a certain rich man, which had a steward: and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship: for thou mayest be no longer steward.” Because the text does not say this is a parable and because Jesus uses the words “a certain rich man” Bible scholars tend to believe this was a true story. In any event Jesus makes a strong point that should not be lost on those who want to be promoted in ministry and do great things for the Kingdom of God — you must be faithful if you expect to be promoted. Not only that, but if you are unfaithful you may be demoted or worse Satan may kill you.

Joseph was made a steward by Pharaoh over the whole land of Egypt. Was Joseph honest and faithful? But in Luke 16 the steward was dishonest and it caught up with him. His master, the rich man, had given him this position of trust and expected him to be honest and trustworthy. Obviously from the text the rich man was not micromanaging the steward; the Master was involved in other matters like perhaps running the entire Universe but when he heard the accusation that the steward “had wasted his goods” he demanded an accounting — an audit of the steward’s accounts.

Notice also from the text it wasn’t just that the steward was dishonest, he was also negligent — he’d failed to collect a lot of account receivables that were owed his Master.

Now let me show you what the Lord said to me from this chapter regarding stewardship. He spoke to me very strongly from vv. 10-12,

“He that is faithful in that which is least is Faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in The least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye Have not been faithful in the unrighteous Mammon, who will commit to your

trust the true Riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that Which is another man's , who shall give you that Which is your own?"

The Lord said, "The true riches are the souls of men." If we do not show ourselves faithful and good stewards of "the unrighteous mammon," i.e., money and material goods then the Lord is not going to trust us with the souls of people. Most Christians today fail this test alone because according to the latest polls only 3% of Christians tithe (down from 10% 25 years ago). Have you been waiting for your ministry that you know God's called you to for years? Maybe you need to check up on yourself in the area of faithfulness.

Faithfulness is doing what you know to do — being obedient to the Word. That means we must be obedient also in the area of mammon and our giving to God what belongs to Him. Many Christians believe — at least they say they do though often I think it's simply rationalization because they don't want to give — that the tithe is not New Testament. Well, perhaps you should take out your Bible and read everything Jesus said about it as well as the other forms of giving mentioned in the New Testament — offerings and alms.

Notice also from the text v. 12. Jesus said, "And if ye have not been *faithful* (italics added for emphasis) in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?"

The point is not just that we must be faithful in tithes, offerings and alms — money and materialism — feeding and clothing the poor, passing out tracts, etc., but we must prove ourselves faithful "in that which is another man's." This applies to our stewardship wherever the Lord has placed us. That's why often He begins a person destined for Five-fold ministry in the Ministry of Helps — it's not just for training, you must prove you are faithful to another's vision, in keeping your word and honoring your commitments to that ministry, etc. It's a test of your stewardship. And as you know many, many people fail this test — that's why we have church splits — a person cannot "wait on their ministry" any longer so they begin before its time. Thus they prove themselves an unfaithful steward and God cannot promote them. Eventually He may promote them if they've repented, learned from their mistakes and have proven

faithful where they are but it's rare because normally by then pride or bitterness becomes an issue in their hearts and they never repent.

Another example we've seen much of over the years is that many Christians go to ministry after ministry and church after church in search of help in fulfilling what they consider their ministry call. They are hoping to learn more and also hoping to get under an anointing that will help them in their ministry yet this is a futile exercise because normally they are not *faithful* to the ministry that they are sitting under.

Faithfulness or faith is implied in the area of fidelity — both to God and to our brethren. This is a fruit most Christians and even Spirit-filled Christians need to develop and why God has a difficult time blessing them spiritually. They are not faithful with what God has given to them. You will never get very far in the Christian walk with God if you are not faithful. You must develop this fruit to be faithful in every area of your life — in finances as we've said, you need to be faithful with tithes, offerings, and alms; in spiritual gifts, you must be faithful to minister these gifts to the Body and to others as the Spirit leads; in prayer and study of the Word, you must be faithful; in praise and worship, you must be faithful. And you must be faithful in keeping your word.

Notice this principle in the following Scriptures:

“His lord said unto him, Well done, good  
And faithful servant; thou hast been faithful  
Over a few things, I will make thee ruler over Many things: enter thou  
into the joy of thy lord.”

■ Matthew 25:23

The servant was first tested in “a few things”; after he proved himself to be faithful he was promoted to be a “ruler over many things.”

From our many years of ministry we've observed a very sad fact in the Body of Christ — a very large percentage of Christians simply do not keep their word. That's being unfaithful. If you promise somebody you're going to pray for them or you promise your pastor that you're going to give the church \$5,000 when you collect that real estate commission then you'd better do it. Remember Esau — he took his birthright lightly and didn't think it mattered but God was

listening. And God is listening when you tell your pastor that you will be there for the worship team, the choir or whatever you promise. Be faithful!

Many churches never grow because they are not faithful. But don't think that just because a church is large that the Lord is in it. In 1980 the Lord showed me a vision of a church in Houston that closed down because they were unfaithful. I saw a large open pipe and a hand pouring water out of a glass pitcher into one end of the pipe. As my gaze shifted to the bottom end of the pipe, I noticed only a few little drips of water coming out of the pipe. That vision meant that this church was not faithful! They were as the Scripture says, "Ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." They were not giving out to others the "water of the Word" that they were receiving so God could no longer bless them.

A big problem in Charismatic churches especially today in the area of faithfulness is simple attendance. I call this a Reuben spirit (Genesis 49:4) — unstable as water. They're always changing churches because they are carnal Christians and are "body ruled." They get upset at the pastor or the order of worship or whatever and then change churches and the cycle starts all over again. God will never be able to bless such people to any great degree because they are unfaithful.

Unfaithfulness is no doubt one of the fruits most Christians have trouble with but if you want a greater anointing and you want to go deeper into God then ask the Holy Spirit today to help you develop this fruit and make a quality decision and a concerted effort to improve your spiritual life in this area.