



SERIES: FEBRUARY – MARCH FAITH IN REAL LIFE

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Scripture: James 4:3-5

TITLE: Friend or Fiend

As a Father and as a seasoned person, I totally recognize the danger and potential of who your friends are. Jim Rohn called it the power of 5. You become the composite of the five people you surround yourself with. This influence isn't limited to friendships. It's impacted by the shows you watch, the music you listen to, the articles you read. In other words, where your attention is there, your destiny lies.

But does that really matter? I mean, if we're saved, we're covered, right? James has a harsh answer for us today in James 4:3-5 (CSB).

You ask and don't receive because you ask with wrong motives so that you may spend it on your pleasures. You adulterous people! Don't you know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? So whoever wants to be the friend of the world becomes the enemy of God. Or do you think it's without reason that the Scripture says: The spirit he made to dwell in us envies intensely?

Here in verses 3-5, we find one of the harshest rebukes in all the New Testament. James is continuing a thought about the inner war of pride, envy, and selfish ambition. In verse 2, James said, you have not because you ask not. Ask what? God for wisdom to think and live in a godly manner.

The issue, as James points out, is their motives for asking and desiring were not pure or right. They were selfish and self-indulgent to the core. That's when he calls these people adulterous. That is deeply offensive and telling.

What was happening? James says that friendship with the world is offensive to God. It makes God our enemy.

At our house, we are big Duke Blue Devils fans. If my wife or son showed up in a Tarheels jersey or shirt, I'd flip my lid. I'd feel like they flipped from family to fiend. How much more so for our view and relationship with the values and habits of the world.

John wrote in 1 John 2:15, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." This is a battle for us all. It takes wisdom, discipline, and some accountability to surround ourselves with godly influence and feed ourselves wisely.

So here's my challenge for you today: keep a spiritual food log. I'd like you to actively record who you spend your time with and what you fill your time with. Who is influencing your worldview? Coworkers? Friends? Family members? Take note.

What are you filling your time with? Social media? Streaming series on Netflix and Hulu? What are you listening to and reading? How are these things shaping and influencing your beliefs?

If we're not intentional with our attention, we will become adulterous with God. So today, keep a log and become intentional each and every day.