

## "Friendship With Whom?"

*James 4:4-6*

Hae-Rin Kwon



### **Background**

James continues his exposition of people's hearts in this Sunday's passage. Using Old Testament language, he calls them out for the idolatry that their self-serving desires represent. In following their desires, they have chosen friendship with the world instead of friendship with God. In what ways are we choosing friendship with the world? And how is God calling us back to Himself? Join us as we explore these questions together this week!

### **Sermon Text *James 4:4-6***

*<sup>4</sup> You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup> Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? <sup>6</sup> But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:*

*"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."*

### **Discussion Questions**

#### **1. Preparation**

- What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?

- What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

## 2. Sunday Questions:

### 1. The Weight of Language: "Adulterous People"

James uses the provocative term "adulterous people" to describe those who prioritize worldly desires over God. Pastor Hae-Rin mentions that while some may bristle at such strong language, it is intended for our good and growth.

- **How does viewing spiritual unfaithfulness through the lens of a "betrayed marriage" change your understanding of sin? Does this metaphor make God's response to our choices feel more personal or more severe to you?**

### 2. Defining "The World" in Your Context

The sermon defines "the world" not as creation itself, but as the "unrestrained, self-centered passions and pursuits that bring about evil and harm".

- **In your specific daily environment (e.g., your neighborhood, workplace, or social circle), what are the specific "worldly" values that are most difficult to resist? How do these values specifically compete for your "friendship" or loyalty against God's ways?**

### 3. The Tension of Power and Witness

Pastor Hae-Rin suggests that seeking "friendship" with earthly power—whether in politics or corporate status—can rob the church of its "prophetic voice" and witness to the Gospel.

- **Can you identify a time when the desire for influence or "a seat at the table" caused you (or a community you belong to) to compromise on love or integrity? How can we engage in these systems without becoming "polluted" by them?**

### 4. Creative Surrender During Lent

The sermon poses a specific reflective question: *"What alliances have I made with greed, lust, or pride that the Lord is asking me to surrender?"*. It encourages us to be "creative" in what we give up, moving beyond just food to addressing systemic issues like consumerism or unfair labor practices.

- **If you were to "fast" from a specific worldly attitude or habit that harms others, what would that look like in practice this week?**

### 5. The Paradox of "More Grace"

James 4:6 reminds us that God "opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble". The sermon emphasizes that God is eager to be our friend and offers "more grace" even in our failures.

- **Why is humility a prerequisite for receiving this specific kind of grace? In what area of your life is it currently hardest to "humble yourself" and admit you have chosen a worldly friendship over God's friendship?**