

Personal/Small Group Sermon Study

Week of September 18, 2022 A.D.

You Are as Close to God as You Choose to Be

Christianity is not a religion. It never has been. It never will be. Christianity is having a friendship with God. (Note: If you are discussing this lesson in a group setting, beware. Satan will try to lead your discussion astray. Don't let him. Stick to the questions. Stay on task. Satan does not want you to be closer to God.)

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Friend is defined as: a person whom one knows well; an intimate associate: a person on the same side in a struggle.

Read James 2:23

1. Refer to the definition of "friend" found above. How well do you know God? How intimate are you with God? What evidence can you offer to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that you are a passionate friend of Christ in the invisible, spiritual struggle to expose and overcome the deception and corruption of the world system?

Read James 4:4

2. Please explain the meaning and practical application of this verse. Include in your answer an explanation of what is meant by "adulterous people." Please state the extent to which this verse describes the church in America today.

Read James 4:7-10

3. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "You are as close to God as you choose to be."
4. Read each of these verses one at a time in the order in which they are written. Before going to the next verse, state how each verse is being followed by you on a daily basis.

Read Philippians 4:6-7 and I Thessalonians 4:17

5. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "If God is my best friend, I will talk to God honestly, openly, intimately, and as often and as long as I can."

6. How often do you talk to God (i.e., pray): (a) with your eyes open? (b) vocally/out loud? (c) silently? and/or (d) anytime and anywhere?
7. Does God want to be your best friend? Does God have the power to change you, your life, and/or your circumstances? Have you asked Him to do so? If God does not make the changes for which you ask, do you trust Him to know what is best for you? What are you doing each day to enable God to know that you love Him as your best friend forever?
8. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Prayer involves speaking to God and listening to God with a desire and intention to love and obey Him."

Read Psalm 1:1-6

9. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The more that I meditate upon, memorize, and recite scripture, the more that I will be able to hear God speak to me."
10. Is it possible to be a good friend of God without daily meditation on the teachings of the Bible and/or without trusting and obeying what the Bible tells you to do?
11. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The more time that I spend reading and watching the media, surfing the net, and/or talking on the telephone, the less time I have to enjoy a conversation with God through prayer and meditation."

Read John 14:23-24 and John 15:14-15

12. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "I can lie to myself all that I want; but I will never be a close friend of (or a productive servant for) God until I make prayer, Bible reading, and obedience to God the top priority of my life."
13. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "If I don't want to please God and to have God as my best friend, there is something missing in my relationship with God."

Consider: You are as close to God as you choose to be. "You think about that." Amen.