

Enemies of the Cross



“For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Messiah, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah” (**Philippians 3:18-20**).

The Bible tells us in **James 4:4**, “Adulterers, do you not know that friendship with the world means hostility toward God? So whoever decides to be the world’s friend makes himself God’s enemy.” So, can we actually believe that we are good Christian people and yet actually be God’s enemy? What exactly is friendship with the world? **1 John 2:16** says this: “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

If we go back to the garden of Eden, we will see what this is all about. “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, “You shall not eat of every tree of the garden”?’ And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.”’ Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.”

God told man that they could eat from every tree in the garden except one. The serpent came and tempted Eve, lied to her, and trapped her by using lust, the desire to have something that you cannot have. He distorted the love of God with lust, and she saw that it was good to eat and pleasant to look at. I’m sure that all the trees were good and pleasant to look at. God Himself at creation said that it was all good. But she coveted something that she could not have. She called evil good and disobeyed God along with her husband. We say, “If only Adam and Eve

would not have sinned, life would be so nice!” If it would not have been Adam or Eve, it would have been someone else, because this is what man has done all of these years since.

We question God’s commands. We think that we are gods and we can handle our lives. We believe the little lies, that if we do this this time we will never do it again. We tell ourselves that God is a loving God and He will forgive us. We use the cross as an excuse to tell ourselves that Yeshua has died for our sins, so we are free to do all that we want to do because “we are saved by grace.” Our appetites grow for the things of this world instead of the things of God. We grow fat, but not on the Word of God. Our appetite for the things of the world has caused us to do just the opposite of what it did for Adam and Eve when they ate from the Tree of Knowledge. Their eyes were opened to good and evil (which is the state that we now live in), but when we have an appetite for the things of the world, we who now know good and evil have chosen evil.

The Bible tells us friendship with the world is enmity with God (**James 4:4**). We know that the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life are not from God (**1 John 2:16**). Our falling away by going after the things of the world is totally a violation against the cross of Messiah. Why? Because Paul tells us in **Romans 6:1-4**, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Messiah Yeshua were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Messiah was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”

We are not to be fence-sitters, for the Bible tells us that we cannot serve two masters (**Matthew 6:24**). Either we are going to be a friend with God or we are going to be His enemy. We are to set our minds on heavenly things, like His truth (the Word), pursuing godliness and holiness, and the advancement of the kingdom. We are to be workers in God’s vineyard, harvesting souls. If this is not our desire, but instead our desire is to live life obtaining the world’s goods, then we are enemies of the cross and enemies of God. Life is not in our possessions, but in God. “It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace” (**Hebrews 6:4-6**).

As we look to the cross of Messiah, we must ask ourselves: “Have I picked up my cross, and am I following in the footsteps of my Savior? Have I truly crucified my flesh with all of its passions and desires for this world? Am I putting my thoughts on things above, and pursuing after the things of God?” We must examine

ourselves to be sure that we truly are in the faith, as Paul tells us in **2 Corinthians 13:5**, “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Messiah Yeshua is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!” If you find that you are an enemy of the cross, repent.

At this time more than ever we should be meditating on the cross of Messiah. We should be examining ourselves, and we should be coming closer to Him. In fact, we need to embrace His cross. **Philippians 3:3, 7-11** tells us. “For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Messiah Yeshua and put no confidence in the flesh. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Messiah. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Messiah Yeshua my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Messiah and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Messiah, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”

Let’s come to know Messiah and embrace His cross and all that that means.