

Your Friends Matter to God

by David Wilkerson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of evaluating our friendships and their impact on our spiritual lives, as they matter deeply to God.

Duration: 58:00

Topics: "Friends"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having righteous friends in one's inner circle. He warns that if one surrounds themselves with ungodly friends, they may lose their ability to discern right from wrong. The preacher urges the audience to be cautious of the voices they listen to, as false prophets and unrighteous influences can lead them astray. He highlights the significance of choosing godly friends, as they reflect one's own heart and can bring blessings from God. The sermon concludes with a call to repentance and a reminder that God is concerned about every aspect of our lives, including our friendships.

Transcript

Let's go to the Word. My message tonight, your friends matter to God. Your friends.

It's an unusual message for me. I have no idea why God had me preach it tonight. But I don't question him.

My job is to do what he tells me to do. Your friends matter to God. We're going to talk about your best friends.

We're going to talk about your bosom pals. I heard somebody say, I wish I had one. Father, you are interested in every area of our life.

There's absolutely nothing in our life that you are not vitally concerned about. And Lord, this message tonight is so very close to your heart. But I know this because I've seen people's lives so destroyed by their friends.

Oh God, I ask you to send Holy Ghost conviction tonight upon everyone in this house. Lord, we're to examine ourselves by the standard of the Word. And I humble myself before you and I ask you to use me as an oracle.

Holy Spirit, you speak through my mouth. You speak tonight to everyone in this house. I humble myself before you.

Lord, this is the message you put on my heart for this night. Why, I don't know. But Lord, you do.

And I pray, Father, that a miracle will happen tonight. That we will be transformed by the living Word. Lord, I take this message to my own heart.

Now, Lord, help me to deliver it with grace and mercy. In the power of the Holy Spirit, in Jesus' name, amen. Your closest friends are of great concern to the Lord.

Your closest friends tell God and others what you really are inside. Because your friends reflect what is in your own heart. If you have Godly friends, it's a link to the favor and blessing of God.

If you are in close contact or your best friend is evil or there's unrighteousness, it is a bondage, it's a bind. There are chains that can chain you to the very powers of darkness. That's how vital this message is.

Have you ever taken time in your lifetime or your walk with Jesus, have you ever taken time off and said, Lord, what do you think of my friends? Are they your friends or are they your enemies? They can be my friends, but are they your enemies? This is an important question tonight. Now, when I speak of a friend, I'm excluding your wife, your husband, relatives, children. I'm excluding all of that.

I don't want to talk about that. My definition of a friend is as follows. One that you are closely associated with, whom you continually confide.

It's the one that you walk and talk with. It's the one that you bear your soul to. That's the friend that I want to talk about.

Now, there are various circles of friends in our lives. There's the business circle that many of us have. These are business associates and you have to do business.

You have that circle of business friends, career people, those that are on your job. You have another circle where there's just a surface relationship. These can be relatives near or distant and people you work with.

There's a circle there. You have to do business. Paul said you'd have to go out of the world if you didn't associate and mingle with these.

That has to do with business, and if you do charity work, you're sometimes involved with people that are not very charitable as far as walking with Jesus. But I want to talk about that, and I want to talk about your best friends, those that most influence your life, those that are closest to you. It's probably the one whose phone bill appears most on your phone bill, their number.

I'm speaking about the one with whom you have affinity. The word I want to use is affinity. It's a Bible word.

It's a natural liking or attraction to. It's one that you agree with and who agrees with you. You're in agreement.

In other words, when you're in a crisis, you call this person or you unbosom your soul to them. You have developed this relationship with this friend you call the best friend. It could be more than one, but I want to

focus in on that very inner circle.

Now, what is in our hearts is honestly always sending out signals. Whatever is in you is sending out signals. There's a message that goes out from our very character.

For example, I watch it. I see it in this church, and I see it in every church that I've been to preach. You see it.

It's very, very obvious that there are signals that are sent out by what is inside our hearts. A very loose, lustful, sensuous woman can walk into this church and just prance down the aisle and sit, and she'll look around, and you go out in the lobby, and you'll find that she's made contact somehow, supernaturally, with every roving eye in the house. There'll be two or three guys around her.

She's walked in, and she's attracted to them. There's a signal that's sent out by her very character. I was amazed watching one drug addict who'd left our program because he couldn't give up his cocaine, came and walked and sat way over here.

There was another same kind of guy, cocaine, everything, over on this side over here. And I watched. I went out after service.

They were walking together down the street. How they got together, I don't know. They didn't know each other.

Bang. Homosexuals walk in here. They get together.

The message is loud and clear. Amazing. I watched.

I've got eagle eyes. You don't know it. I may be looking over here, but I'm seeing over here.

I know in the Spirit almost every woman in this house has got a lustful spirit because there's something happening. When the Holy Ghost moves, you can sense it because they are looking like this and looking over here, and they're looking over here. And the Holy Ghost will say to my heart, That woman's full of lust, and she's sending out signals.

And every lustful person, man around her, is picking up those signals. Those filled with bitterness and anger and gossip, a big mouth always finds a big ear. I believe that with all my heart.

They get together. How they do it, I don't know. You go out in the lobby, and you can find them all together.

There'll be somebody that we've dealt with because of gossip, and there's three or four more gossipers there, and they're wagging away right here in the lobby of the church. On the other hand, I watched a young, very godly seminary student come in here. I met with him one time.

I just watched. I said, I wonder what kind of friends will gravitate toward him. And sure enough, within two services he'd been here, I saw two of the godliest young people in this church talking, and they were together.

There was something in that young man that attracted those other godly people. The signal was God. Now, we know that Satan has many devices to try to destroy the lives of the godly, and we're not to be

ignorant of those devices.

One of the most subtle devices of the devil to destroy godly, tender-hearted Christians is to send an agent of hell into their inner circle to become a friend, to destroy. Now, this is how vital this message is tonight. Satan uses this device, especially among the lonely Christians, but most of all he uses it among tender Christians, loving Christians, who have a heart for people, and the devil despises that.

And so often I've seen how the enemy will plot against those tender, loving people and will send somebody, an agent of the devil himself, who appears to be very hurt and wounded, and will send that hurting, wounded person there. This loving person will try to minister to that person, and if you're not careful, if you don't have all he goes to discernment, you can be suddenly in affinity with an evil spirit, a familiar spirit from hell. I had a minister friend in the South.

He'd been delivered years and years ago, some thirty years before, from alcohol. But the devil, this man had pastored a great church, and I'd been holding a revival meeting there when it all came, it was all exposed. Somehow he met another minister, miles and miles, hundreds of miles away.

Somehow the devil sent this other pastor into his life and became his best friend. But this best friend, this other preacher, had been an alcoholic and never delivered and was still drinking and believed that you could socially drink. So when they'd go out together he would get his buddy to drink with him, this pastor friend of mine.

And of course he went back to alcoholism. They both wound up in New Orleans on the street drinking and led him astray. Couldn't get him any other way but to bring this friend into his life, his bosom pal who led him out.

And I was there holding a crusade when he was exposed. Now let me take you to God's Word and show you what happens when a godly person joins affinity with someone who is unrighteous. Our example is going to be King Jehoshaphat.

I want you to turn to 2 Chronicles, the 17th chapter. 2 Chronicles, the 17th chapter. Everybody turn there.

I want to hear the rustling of the leaves. 2 Chronicles, the 17th chapter. When I was preparing this message I kept saying, well, who's this for? The Lord said, for you first, then for everybody in the congregation and especially for some that will be there.

Who they are, I don't know. 2 Chronicles, 17th chapter, verse 3, beginning to read, please. And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the ways of his father David, really his grandfather, and sought not unto Balaam, but sought to the Lord God of his father and walked in his commandments and not after the doings of Israel.

Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand and all Judah brought in Jehoshaphat to Jehoshaphat's presence. He had riches in honor and abundance. His heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord.

Moreover, he took away the high places and groves out of Judah. In the third year of his reign he sent to his princes even... I'm going to go over those names quickly, but on down to the ninth verse. They taught in Judah, had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people.

The fear of the Lord fell upon the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat. Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat's presence, silver. Rabbis brought him flocks, 7,700 rams, goats.

Verse 12, Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly, and he built in Judah castles and cities of store. Now look at me if you will, please. Here's a godly man blessed above every man of his generation.

He had a heart for God, a loving man. He cared for the poor. He did more for Judah and Jerusalem probably than any other king up to that time.

And what a wonderful man of God. And it's mind-boggling to read that this man, who walked in the ways of his father David, joined affinity or developed a friendship with the most wicked king in the history of Israel. His name was Ahab.

The Bible says of Ahab, he did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. Now folks, I want you to listen to me, please. Here's the heart of my message.

I believe the devil devised a plan to destroy this man. The kingdom is at peace. Nobody can rise up against him.

He's pushed the worship of Baal out. He's destroyed all the prophets of Baal. There's a revival in the land, and God is moving, and this man has a heart for God.

Nothing can touch him. He's blessed and honored by the Lord. In Israel, Ahab is king, and he's married to the wicked Jezebel.

Now, the Bible says that this man has riches and honor, and Jezebel's attracted to his riches and honors. And she's got a daughter, Hathael, and Hathaliah. And she's as wicked as her mother.

Now remember, there's some wicked women in the Bible that did a lot of plotting and planning to overthrow the kingdom of God. Do you remember the wife of Philip? The Herod. Who was it that John the Baptist rebuked? Herod.

He married his brother Philip's wife. She had her daughter Salome dance before the king, and he offers her half the kingdom, and she demands John the Baptist's head in a charger on a plate. This was the scheming of this wicked woman.

Nobody could scheme like Jezebel. And her daughter was just like her, and the whole thing is now, and this is a plan of the devil to destroy the righteous royal seed, because Christ was going to come through this royal seed. That's very clear in the Scripture, that this is the line of David, and out of David would come the Messiah.

And the devil knows that, and he's going to try to destroy that seed. And so this wicked Jezebel has her daughter charm Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram, and charmed him so much that he wanted to marry the daughter of Jezebel, Athaliah. And so they come to Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat is in favor.

Jehoshaphat knew that all marriages at that time were arranged. There could be no marriage without the permission of both parents, and on both sides. This was not something that the son coming, saying, I want her, I'm going to marry her.

He had to give permission. Jehoshaphat knew that Ahab was the most wicked king Israel has ever known. Now he's reigning in Judah.

This is the king of Israel. But he gives permission for his son. Affinity, joining affinity means they joined in marriage.

They joined in marriage. The devil must have danced in glee and all of hail at the marriage of righteous Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram to the wicked Ahab and Jezebel's daughter Athaliah. Here they are married.

Suddenly, an idolatrous, devil-possessed young woman is in Jehoshaphat's home and court. And the whole plan of the devil is to bring into this righteous man's life a friend, out of hell, to destroy the kingdom of God at Jehoshaphat. You read this story and it's very intriguing.

It's very, very interesting. When you follow through, you'll see before my message is over, the price that this man paid with his friendship with this wicked man. This has been a plan of the devil himself to destroy the seed, the righteous seed of Christ.

Now, because Jehoshaphat didn't take a stand against affinity with ungodly companions, he brought on himself, his family, and his nation the wrath of God. Total destruction. If you follow the story right through to the 21st chapter and 22nd chapter, 2nd Chronicles, you will find that Jehoram takes the throne and Jezebel, the mother-in-law, is calling the Jots and now enlightens Judah.

They turn the whole nation to idolatry. Jehoram kills his six brothers. Now, think about that for just a moment because of one friend joining one wicked man in friendship, bringing him into his inner circle.

He had seven sons. Jehoram is the oldest. When Jehoram takes the throne, he murders his six brothers.

Now, the reason for that murder is the devil is trying to kill the seed of Christ and leave only wicked Jehoram. When Jehoram dies, his mother Athaliah takes the throne and she puts all of Israel, she goes out and slays, the Bible said, all the royal seed, except God preserved one young child. And, folks, that's why the devil wants to bring in, he's got a plan to bring into your life.

And the more righteous you are, the more you walk with Jesus and the more you love him, the more you and I have to be on guard that the devil is not allowed to plant in our inner circle somebody who has the devil in them. Now, it's not explicitly said in the Scripture, but the more I study this event, the more I'm convinced that the devil himself brings this whole plan together. If you'll look now at chapter 18, verse 1. Now, Jehoshaphat had riches and honor abundance and a joint affinity with Ahab.

And after certain years, he went down to Ahab to Samaria. Now, nine years go by from the time that Jehoram, his son, marries this wicked Athaliah. Athaliah, nine years of constant contact with Ahab.

Nine years of this daughter-in-law wearing him down or charming even Jehoshaphat. I want you to follow me very closely now. King Jehoshaphat had all the writings of David at his disposal.

David wrote, I'm a companion of all them that fear thee and of them that keep thy precepts. He said, my companions, those that are closest to me, fear God and obey his commandments. He said, that's the kind of friends that I have.

I want no other friend in my circle. David wrote, blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, standeth not in the way of sinners, and sitteth not in the seat of the scornful. Let me tell you right

now how you can tell whether or not the devil has planted somebody in your inner circle to destroy you.

And to destroy the work of God in your life, the kingdom of God. And turn you away from the Messiah. And before you say, well, please Pastor David, please, I don't want to suspect my friends.

I don't want you to plant something in my mind tonight that I would be suspicious of one of my friends. Well, you had better be suspicious. You had better examine it by the word of the living God.

You have to find out. You've got to know, and I can tell you whether or not, it's easy to determine whether or not your closest friends are really of God, or they've been planted by the enemy to destroy you. It's very, very simple.

If you've got a friend who whispers evil words into your ear against dignitaries, leaders. If you hear them backbiting, they're debaters, they're argumentative according to Scripture. They call godly people phonies.

If there's a sound of disobedience or envy or suspicion or poisonous words against their own husbands or wives. If you have a friend like that, I'm telling you it's a plant. If you have somebody that keeps you away from the heart of Jesus.

If you have somebody filling you with poison, it's a plant. Let me tell you something about a godly friend. Let me tell you somebody who's really of the Lord.

If your friend does not provoke you to righteousness, a godly friend will provoke you to righteousness. If your friend does not warn you to do what is right and avoid evil. If your friend doesn't speak honestly about your unchristlikeness to you.

If he or she does not pray with you when you're down, encourage you to do what is right. If your friend does not help you to be more like Jesus, but instead fills you with dissension and drags you down into the mud of gossip. Your friend has been planted by the devil.

A God sent friend will always take God's side. Not your side, but God's side. He will stand or she will stand on the word of the Lord and love you enough to tell you the truth.

If you really love the Lord and you want to please Him. Why don't you ask yourself the question tonight. If you've got one of those kind of friends in your inner circle that is bitter, resentful, always speaking against their mate.

Always speaking against leadership, gossiping. Ask yourself the question, why am I attracted to this person? What is there in me that responds to this? What kind of Christian am I that I have a friend like this? Does this reflect what is in my own heart? Now let me show you what inevitably happens to a child of God who walks with affinity with bitter, unrighteous people. I'm going to show you three awful consequences.

And it's very interesting to see how these consequences unfolded in the life of Jehoshaphat. First of all, if you have in your inner circle an Ahab and a Jezebel spirit. This wicked spirit that will drive you away from the heart of Jesus.

First is, you're going to be drawn into somebody else's war. Somebody else's problems that you have no business involved in to your own regret. You're going to get involved in somebody else's war.

Look at 2 Chronicles 18, verses 2 and 3. And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance. And for the people that he had with him, persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-Gilead.

And Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Will thou go up with me to Ramoth-Gilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people. We will be with thee in the war. I'm with you.

You can count on me. Your problem is my problem. And now he's getting sucked into a war, into a mess.

It's a war that cannot be won. It's a hopeless war because God is not in it. Any war that God is not in, forget it, folks.

Up to this time in chapter 17, verse 10, it reads, No kingdom made war against Jehoshaphat. Yet a kingdom of peace. Always will be blessed and prospered.

There's peace everywhere. Nobody's standing up against him. And now the devil has succeeded in doing what he would like to do to every one of us.

When you walk with the Lord and the devil can't get to you, he'll try to get you involved in somebody else's war. Doesn't mean that you don't pray with people, you don't counsel. Yes, you do.

There are people that are called to do that. But I'm talking about a war that you have no business being in. Someone else's problem.

Ahab persuaded him to go with him to war. And in the Hebrew, persuaded is a soothing seduction. That's what it means.

He was seduced through his friendship to get involved in a war that wasn't his. I want to tell you something. If you've got a friend, listen to me now.

If you've got a friend that gossips and talks about a husband, talks about a wife in derogatory terms, always complaining, you mark it down as a war or they're on the brink of a war. And you're going to get caught in the middle of it. You're going to have to take a stand.

Say you're a sister and you're talking on the telephone to another sister and she feels she's been betrayed by her husband and she can't get along with her husband and my husband treats me like a fool and all this. They'll build their case. Anyone who wants out of marriage always builds a case.

And so they're building their case and you just sympathize. Yes, yes, yes, I know. You think you're going to stay out of it? No way.

You're going to get called on by this Ahab spirit. You're going to get called on to make a stand. He commits himself to this war that he has no business involved in.

All this man does when he says, I'm with you, and he encourages him in this war, all he did was send Ahab quicker to his death because he was going to be doomed and you're going to see that the prophesy wasn't coming back. All he did by siding with this friend of his now was to hasten his death. Because let me tell you, hear me good.

Get on the telephone. You tell your dear friend, this lady who wants out of her marriage, you said, yes, I know. I know what he's like too.

I believe you. I'm with you. You encourage her all the way to and through divorce.

What you're doing is nothing more than speeding her to her spiritual death. You're just as guilty. Like the woman that came to my office, just left her husband, sits there just as calm and collected as she can be.

She said, brother, they want to tell you something. And she said it just as sincerely as she could. I prayed about this, and God told me to do it.

God told me he had something better for me. I want to tell you something. You can quote scripture.

You can do all you want and not make a touch on that woman. And the problem is she had a best friend that she confided in every day for hours, and this other woman confided in her. I get the same word from the Lord.

And they're both going to stand at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and answer for that. They're going to the Lord. You're going to get involved in somebody's war, and it's going to cost you.

Number two, you're going to end up ignoring all prophetic warnings and all scriptural counsel. This is what happens. Verse four, And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord today.

Therefore the king of Israel gathered together prophets, four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up, for God will deliver it into the king's hand. Four hundred voices approving this ungodly thing. Let me tell you something.

If you've got in your inner circle a friend like this that's unrighteous, and you've lost your Holy Ghost discernment, I promise you, you're going to have all these voices appear telling you it's okay. You're going to hear voices on tapes from preachers that are false prophets. You're going to pick up books.

You're going to hear these voices telling you. And a lot of times, there are many books that are written by bitter ministers that will minister to all kinds of rebellion in us. And the devil will see that you get all the reassurance that you want.

And that's why people can look you right in the eye. People say, I love Jesus, I pray, I heard from God. And they're telling you that you're about to take a step that's almost into the pit of hell itself.

And yet there's, God told me, you'll hear voices. Jehoshaphat said, and by the way, all these false prophets said, Go ahead, everything's fine, everything's all right. Jehoshaphat said, Is there not another prophet in the land beside these that we might inquire of the Lord? Ahab sends for another prophet.

He jailed and called him out of jail, Micaiah. This fearless prophet stands before these two kings, and he begins to prophesy. First, he mocks the whole scene.

He says, Sure, go, go, go. Ahab gets mad and says, I told you to tell me the truth. Don't ever lie to me.

He says, All right, I'll tell you. I saw Israel scattered like sheep over the hills. They had no shepherd.

He's prophesying they have death. He says, You're going to die. And all the people are going to be scattered over the hills.

He turns to Jehoshaphat, Didn't I tell you he's always prophesying evil about me? I knew it would happen. One of the most amazing things happened, and if you read your commentaries and read the books of theologians, this has been for centuries, it's been a dilemma for many, many theologians, what happens next. Here's a man who appears to want to walk in the will of God.

Here's a man who appears to be very anxious to do everything God says. Here's a man who says, I'm not going to do anything until I hear from God. I'm not going to do anything until I know I'm on good scriptural grounds.

Folks, you can make all the noise you want to about how you love God. You can make all the noise you want about how you love the word of God. You're going to obey the Lord.

But if you're not careful, and you've already set your mark, you've decided to do it your way, you won't humble yourself before the Lord and test and see if this is right. This word came from this prophet. In fact, as soon as he was done, this prophet turns, and I believe he's pointing right to Jehoshaphat, and he says, hearken, listen to me, all of you.

And that's his finger right at Jehoshaphat. And it sounds like Jehoshaphat really wants to do what is right before God. Oh, I've heard people say that, brother.

I love God. I want to do His will. And then the word comes.

Strong. Break it off. Deal with it.

That friendship you have is with an evil person. That woman you're with is an idolater filled with this world. Break it.

Get away from it. Your friend is destroying you. Your friend is bringing gossip and filth.

Break it. The word of the Lord came. This is doomed.

There's deception. The prophet said there's a deceiver. The devil has come with deception.

And, folks, you'll get that message. The Lord is faithful. The Holy Ghost is very faithful.

He's being faithful to you tonight. He's being faithful to all of us by His word. And He will come to you and deal with it.

And what happens next, the theologians can't understand. The next thing you'll hear, you'll read, so the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth Gilead. It totally ignores it.

Ignores the pleading, the warning. Goes up to war. He chose the word of his friend, Ahab, over the prophet, the warnings of God.

Totally ignored it. This is the danger of being led astray by a plant of the devil of a friend in your inner circle. That the time will come you'll lose your discernment.

You'll be able to sit in any service and hear the Holy Ghost thundering the word. Hear the word of God come sharp as any two-edged sword and still go your own way and totally ignore everything that you hear. That's why people can get a divorce even though they've had the Holy Spirit warn them and plead with them and show them all the consequences of it and still they go on because that's where you come to finally if you hold on to that friendship that is of the world.

Any man who's a friend of the world is an enemy to God. Things are getting more and more quiet as they go along here. So, Jehoshaphat goes to the war now.

Ahab goes dressed as a common soldier and he tells Jehoshaphat, You wear your kingly robes. It's a setup. I'll tell you what, you think that your friend is the best thing that ever happened to you and this friend is not a God? I want to tell you what, when the chips are down, they're going to turn on you.

They're going to let you take the brunt just like Ahab did. And, of course, the Syrians thought that that's Ahab and they're after Ahab and they surround Jehoshaphat's chair. They're ready to chop him up.

And the Bible says that Ahab, or rather Jehoshaphat, cried out to the Lord, screaming probably, God help me! And at the same time, a stray arrow somehow pierces a seam in Ahab's armor and pierces right into his being. Of course, it killed him. Ahab dies in the process.

I don't know what went through Jehoshaphat's mind when he races his chariot back toward Jerusalem. Did Jehoshaphat say, Oh God, thank you. I see now the danger of walking with an ungodly companion or a friend.

Lord, never again. I won't do it anymore. I will not be a part of the world system.

Thank you, Lord, for delivery. I love you, Lord. It's all over.

It's all over. But it wasn't all over. See, God still had a controversy with this man.

Now, I've never been, I've never called myself a prophet or thought of myself as a prophet. But I'm going to come to you now as a servant of the Lord because the Scripture says here, go to chapter 19, if you will, please. Just look at 19.

In Jehoshaphat, first verse, Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. And Jehu, the son of Hananiah the seer, went out to meet him. Look at me, please.

He's coming back in peace. But God sends a man with a message. Jehu.

Now, folks, I'm that man tonight for you in this place and time. I'm his Jehu now. I'm not calling myself a prophet.

I'm his Jehu to you tonight, sending out right now to you a message, the same message. Look at it. Verse 2. And Jehu, the son of Hananiah the seer, went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.

You see, this is the third and most awful consequence. God says, I don't think you know, Jehoshaphat, what you did. I don't think you know the consequences.

You don't know the danger of it. You think it's an insignificant thing to be in affinity with somebody that is my enemy. Ahab was my enemy.

Ahab was an idolater. And you were his friend. You encouraged him.

You listened to his idolatry. You listened to his filth. And you didn't take a stand.

God said, I have a controversy with you on this. And folks, we've taken it too lightly. We say, my friends are my business.

I'm there. Maybe I can win them to Jesus. They cannot be in your inner circle.

The Bible says, come out from among them. Be ye separate and clean, saith the Lord. Then I receive you as my son and my daughter.

Oh, they can be in your outer circle, but not this inner circle. Not where there is influence. Not where you are sharing.

And the inner knowings of the heart. Impossible. You say, Pastor, I don't want to consider my friends ungodly.

I don't want you to think that my friend, even though they're not where I think they should be, I don't want you to say that they're enemies to God. My friends, the friend I have is supposed to be a Christian. But let me ask you this.

Here's what the Bible said. He that's not with me is against me. Is your friend really with the Lord? If he's not, he's against him, the scripture says.

Is there any rebellion you hear from your friend? The Bible said rebellion is the sin of witchcraft. That's from the devil. Does your friend condemn the righteous, speak against leadership? He that condemns the righteous is an abomination to the Lord.

Does your friend speak evil? Is there something that comes out of rebellion and dissension out of your friend into your ears? The Bible said if you give your mouth to evil and your tongue frames deceit, and you speak against a brother and slander him, if you do not consider this, I'll tear you to pieces. Folks, it's not a game. Your friends matter to God.

My friends matter to God. Is your friend a joker? And all he or she does is joke and tell stories and never talk about Jesus? You know why that's your friend? Because that's what you want. That reflects the need in you.

That reflects something in your own heart or my heart. My friends reflect who I am. I'm so glad Brother Carter's my friend.

Isaiah the prophet said, Surely they're all my people, and in my pity I redeem them. You see, you say, well, I can say that, my friend, the Lord's redeemed them. They're servants of the Lord.

But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit. Therefore, I turn to be their enemy, and I fight against them. Now, where's God's wrath? He said the wrath of God comes upon those who are in affinity with the wicked.

A righteous person who's walking in close relationship but attracted to some wicked individual with rebellion in their heart. Where is the wrath of God? Well, first of all, the death of his six sons. And in the Bible, if you read the very next chapter, it reads, And it came to pass after this, the children of Moab, the children of Ammon, with many others, came against Jehoshaphat to do battle.

War broke out in his own home and his own territory, his own home base. And folks, this is what happens. This is the awful consequence.

If you side with your friend against the righteous, if you side with your friend with iniquity, divorce or anything else, if you're a partaker, the Bible says you're a partaker in their sins, first of all. And not only do you get involved in somebody else's war, but you end up with war in your family, your children, husband, wife. War broke out for Jehoshaphat.

Twenty-five years in peace, and now suddenly war on everywhere he turned. On all sides, there was war. And I've seen this in families.

And people try to figure out why. Why am I not in the favor of God anymore? And I see problem after problem, trouble after trouble break out. Now, that's not the only reason.

But often, you can trace it down to a wife or husband who is in league with somebody planted by the devil who is trying to destroy that home that was a Christian home, destroy Christian brothers and sisters who had a heart for God. It's that serious. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

In other words, they know better. They know the truth, but they suppress it. They hold the truth down.

They hold it in unrighteousness. They suppress the truth. They won't obey it.

They ignore it. Thank God, Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to seek the Lord and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. The Bible says, Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshiping the Lord.

God came and gave them a great victory against the Moabites and all the enemies. He subdued them, and the Bible said, Great peace once again came to the land and to Jehoshaphat. Folks, we have a loving Savior.

If you're willing to deal with this tonight, the Lord in His mercy will deliver you from the enemy. He will deliver you. Take a stand.

I don't care what you have to do. You say, I don't want to offend my friend, even though I know my friend is everything you describe, Pastor. I can't offend and hurt my friend.

You would rather offend the Heavenly Father? Shall we offend Him and bring the wrath of God upon our own heads? Take the stand. Say, God, open my eyes. And say, God, what do you think of my friends? Holy Spirit, what do you think of my best friends? Examine that before the Holy Spirit.

I want to tell you, folks, this is a lifelong battle. You can't ever, ever stop being aware of this in your life to make sure that the enemy never succeeds in bringing into your life someone sent by the devil to destroy your home and your life. Jehoshaphat, it's amazing.

Just before he dies, his last days, and after this, did Jehoshaphat once again join himself to the Hazziah, king of Israel, who did very wickedly. And God sends another prophet. Because thou hast joined thyself with the Hazziah, the Lord hath broken thy works.

God says, I'm smashing everything you've built because you have never learned this lesson. You keep doing it. Folks, it's a lifelong watch to make sure that this doesn't happen.

The Bible says, Make no friendship with an angry man, and with the furious man thou shalt not go, lest you learn his ways and get a snare unto your soul. You know an angry person that's angry at the world, gossiping full of rebellion and spitting out all kinds of dissension, the Bible says, don't go near that person. Hang up the phone and say, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

I can't go on with this. Break it. And if we don't, here's the consequence.

With this I close. As for those that turn aside by crooked paths, the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. The Lord says, I'll lead you.

You want that? I'll lead you into that. And folks, it won't be long until you have a whole circle of the same kind of friends until finally it's a snare to your soul. It brings a war that you can't handle.

I thank God, though, for a place of repentance in these last days. Before I close, I did that in 45 minutes. That wasn't bad.

I didn't overload you. Simple message, just as clear as it can be. What does God think of your friends? What does God think of your best friend? You know who he is, she is.

God help you if you're a married woman or a man, and your best friend is someone who's going to try to help destroy your marriage and your home. God have mercy. Hallelujah.

Well, I've run out of words. Will you stand? Now, there may be some walk out here tonight saying, oh boy, that message messed up my life. Well, I'll tell you something.

Maybe it needed just that. How do you give an altar call for this? I don't know. Lord, I know that my friends matter to you.

But I thank you, Lord, that you brought into my life some friends that are full of the Holy Ghost, who walk intimately with Jesus, who give nothing but words of praise to Christ, who provoke me to righteousness. Lord, I thank you for that. Thank you for a wife, Lord, who would rather tell me the truth than just to flatter.

I thank you, Lord, for friends that tell me the truth rather than just flatter. And I thank you, Lord, you've guarded me over these years, never allowed the devil to plant in my inner circle somebody that would bring dissension to my heart and wound my spirit and drive me away from you, Jesus. I thank you for that.

But, Lord, there's some people tonight in this church that are trapped. They're already in this snare of affinity with somebody. God, break those chains tonight.

Please break them. I know that you love everyone in this house. Lord, you're not trying to beat anybody down.

You're trying to deliver by a clear, clear word. You can't walk in agreement with somebody who's an enemy to God. And they're an enemy to God if these things that we've talked about are evidenced in their lives.

Oh God, what we take into our ears and into our hearts, help us, Lord, because they will either poison us or bring us life. Lord, I wonder how many people here tonight have friends that suck their life rather than give them life, draining their life right out of them, their spiritual life. God, break those chains.

And I pray for a miracle tonight that you put this whole church on guard. Put us on guard, oh Lord, that we would not let anybody, we would watch out for those that are sent by the enemy. There be no Ahab or Jezebel spirit that gets into our inner circle, I pray.

Amen. Beloved, I have to tell you, I know prophetically tonight that there's some here that God is really, you're here tonight because He's warning you. He's warning you.

You're not there yet, but He's warning you because the devil's about to try to do that to you and you have the truth now, you have the weapons to withstand it. So ask God every day, Lord, please open my eyes. And everyone that you meet, examine that.

Listen to what's coming out of their lips. And if what you hear is not righteous, back away. Get away quick, back away.

If you're here tonight and the Holy Spirit's dealing with you about anything, about sin, about friendships, or if you need a miracle, you say, Brother Dave, I'd like to break a friendship, but I don't know how without the power of the Holy Spirit. I want you to come and we'll pray with you. You fellows from Timothy House, you know, been on drugs and alcohol, you know how important it is to have friends that boost you up rather than kick you to hell.

And you know that. If you've got friends like that, if you make a commitment to the Lord, I'm not going to go back to those friends. I have nothing to do with them anymore.

You've got to break away from any friendship tonight that is unlike Christ. Take that stand. There are going to be a lot of people coming.

Up in the balcony, go to the exits, the stairs on either side and come down any aisle. While they sing a chorus, obey the Holy Spirit and come. You may have to just take that stand by walking down the aisle.

That may be the step that God wants you to take. You break it as you come down this aisle and say, Lord, I hear you, I'm going to obey you right now. Okay.

If you're not saved, you don't know Jesus, you're backslidden. Come along with these that are coming. Friends, look at me please.

All of those that came forward, how many of you have to admit, Pastor David, I have to break a friendship. It's just the way you were describing. Raise your hand please.

I have to break a friendship. I'm going to tell you how you do it now. You always are civil and kind.

It's never Christ-like to be harsh with people. You give a testimony. You say, I'm sorry, I can't walk with you because I'm not hearing what I need to hear.

You have to be honest about it but loving about it. Understand? Others, you say, well, if I pick up the phone and talk to my friend, if I see him face to face, it's going to be hard for me to break it. As the young lady said, she was really trying to serve the Lord and she was living with a young drug addict.

She said, he has a hold on me. I can't face him. If I face him, I'll give in.

So write a letter. Write a note and say, I'm sorry, I can't walk with you. I can't be a close friend.

I'll be here if you need me. You can call me for help, but you can't walk with them. You can't be in constant contact with them.

You have to say, I'm available, but call me only when you have a need. I'll pray with you. I'll love you.

I'll stand with you in prayer. And that's as far as you can go. But there has to be a break.

Some of you young ladies need to break from young men that are not righteous. Understand? Some of you young men, same thing. If you're dating a girl that's not a righteous girl, if she's not like Jesus, I mean, you're headed pell-mell to destruction.

It'll destroy you. You say, well, I'm trying to win her to Jesus. Wait until she's won and then talk about it.

Lord, I don't know how to bring people out of bondage. It's not my job. Lord, all I can do is preach what you put in my heart.

But I feel so strongly about this tonight. You put this in my heart because there are people here now that are absolutely ready to be destroyed if they go another day. You had to speak tonight.

And I pray that you will send a Holy Ghost right now. And they hold to the hearts of these that have to break an ungodly alliance with somebody, an attraction, an attraction that's not of God, a friend that they should not be walking and talking with, and they should not be influenced by these that are in their lives. Oh God, by your Spirit, break the chains that bind and set free.

I pray for a miracle now. I want you to raise both hands to the Lord right now and pray this prayer with me. Jesus, I need a miracle.

I come to you now to be delivered from a snare of the enemy. The enemy has tried to ensnare me. Open my eyes.

Help me to see. I call on you, Holy Spirit. Deliver me from every friend who is not righteous, who would lead me astray, or who's been planted by the devil in my life.

Open my eyes. Give me the courage and the power to break it. I can't do it myself.

But you have the power to do it in me and through me. Now let me pray for you again. I speak against every lying spirit, every prince of power and power of darkness that's come to destroy the godly Lord.

I pray for the tenderhearted ones I spoke of who care about people. And the devil's tried to bring somebody in their life to destroy them. Somebody pretends to be wounded and somebody's just trying to draw them out.

Oh God, break that chain, I pray. Break every ungodly chain. I give you the glory.

Give you the praise. I want you to just lift your hands and thank the Lord for his freedom now. He's right here to deliver and set you free.

Hallelujah. Wonderful Jesus.

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