

Dear Grace Church,

This Lord's Day, I'll preach the Covenant of Grace as warmly and practically as possible in relation to becoming friends of God to multiply the grace of friendship and communion with God to others. I'll seek to show you practically the source and cause of enmity and how our enmity manifests itself particularly in relation to Christ in order to demonstrate the glories of Christ in transforming us from enemies to friends.

So in preparation, I encourage you to read Genesis 17:1-7, James 2:23, Genesis 15:1-6, and John 15:12-25. Then read and pray through Genesis 17:1-7 with the aid of our outline.

Seeking to live together with you as friends to multiply friends in a needy world,

Murray

HOW TO BUILD THE PERFECT CHURCH SERIES, MESSAGE 2

“Living Together As Friends in the Covenant of Grace to Multiply Friends”

Genesis 17:1-7; James 2:23

KeyWords for Kids: El Shadai (God Almighty, or God All-Sufficient), Covenant of Grace, Natural Enmity, Friends

Genesis 17:1–7 ¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I *am* Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ² And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.” ³ Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ⁴ “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. ⁵ No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. (NKJV)

James 2:23 ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” And he was called the friend of God. (NKJV)

I. God’s Reveals Himself as All-Sufficient to Abraham and Calls Him to Live in Blamelessly in the Presence of God (1)

II. God’s Befriends Abraham in the Covenant of Grace (2, James 2:23)

A. Solving the problem of our natural enmity against God (2a, James 2:23)

B. Living together as friends of God in the covenant of grace to multiply friends (2-7)

Genesis 15:1–6 ¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your shield, your exceedingly great reward.” ² But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!” ⁴ And behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.” ⁵ Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” ⁶ And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. (NKJV)

Isaiah 41:8 ⁸ “But you, Israel, *are* My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, The descendants of Abraham My friend. (NKJV)

John 15:12–25 ¹² This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should

remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, that you love one another. ¹⁸ “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵ But *this happened* that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘*They hated Me without a cause.*’ (NKJV)