

The Spirit of Friendliness

Why Christians need to have a friendly spirit

Matthew 5.46–47

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • August 26, In the year of our Lord, 2018

Scripture Reader and Reading: Billy Henshall – Matthew 5.46–47

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Phil Joseph – Songs on loving one another

Prelude:

I. How far does friendliness go?

A. A friendly spirit makes a deep impression upon the people we meet daily and

1. upon the people we see here,
2. whether members or guests.

B. In the same way an unfriendly spirit makes a deep negative impression

1. upon the people we meet, and
2. it is hard to undo.

II. A congregation's influence is affected greatly by whether or not it is friendly.

A. We can boast of having the truth, but

1. an unfriendly spirit will cause outsiders to be apathetic toward that claim.

B. Where as if we are friendly,

C. outsiders are eager to hear

1. what we have to say and
2. to accept it.

III. Friendliness is something that we think is optional.

A. We might think that it is for people who are naturally friendly.

B. However, listen to what the Bible says.

Persuasion:

I. The Spirit of Friendliness Is the Spirit of Christ

A. Was Jesus unfriendly?

1. It almost seems absurd to ask this question, of course Jesus was friendly.

2. Even a casual reading reveals the friendly spirit of our Master.
- B. Why were most people comfortable around him?
1. Why are you comfortable around certain people?
 2. Undoubtedly part of the answer is that they are friendly toward you.
- C. If Jesus is our Master and Lord,
1. how can we not be friendly?
 2. Disciples imitate their Masters.

II. The Spirit of Friendliness Is the Spirit of the Golden Rule

A. Luke 6.31

31 “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise” (Luke 6.31).

- B. Who does not want people to be friendly to them?
1. Actually, there are people who do not want anything to do with others.
 2. Are you one of those people?
- C. Is not the Golden Rule teaching
1. that we as disciples of Christ
 2. must be the ones who make the first move?
 - a) It does not teach
 - (1) that we treat well those who first treat us
 - (2) as we wish to be treated.
 - b) Matthew 5.46–47

46 “If you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?” (Matthew 5.46–47).

- (1) Therefore, Jesus taught that friendliness is not optional.

(2) It is part of what makes us follows of His.

III. The Spirit of Friendliness Is the Spirit of the Second Greatest Commandment

A. Matthew 22.39

39 “And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22.39).

B. We are sensitive to how others treat us.

1. It determines whether or not we will patronize a business.
2. It determines where we will place our congregational membership.

C. Jesus commands us

1. to be as sensitive to our neighbor
2. as we are to ourselves.
 - a) Be sensitive to their loneliness
 - (1) when they are visitors here or
 - (2) when they are lonely outside of here.
 - b) Be sensitive to their fear of being here.

IV. The Spirit of Friendliness Is the Spirit of Christianity

A. Friendliness sums up why we are Christians.

B. Friendliness opens many doors.

C. Friendliness should be our everyday makeup.

1. Practiced only here and not other places will be hypocrisy.
2. Make it natural.

D. The New Testament either shows teachings or examples.

1. Matthew 10.12

12 “And when you go into a household, greet it” (Matthew 10.12).

2. Acts 18.22

3. Acts 21.7, 19
4. Romans 16.3–16, 23
5. First Corinthians 16.19–20

19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. 20 All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss (1 Corinthians 16.19–20).

6. Second Corinthians 13.12–13
7. Philippians 4.21–22

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household (Philippians 4.21–22).

8. Colossians 4.10, 12, 14–15
9. First Thessalonians 5.26
10. Titus 3.15
11. First Peter 5.13–14
12. Second John 13
13. Third John 14

14 ...I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name (3 John 14).

14. Second Timothy 4.19, 21
15. Philemon 23
16. James 1.1
17. Hebrews 13.24

24 Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you (Hebrews 13.24).

Exhortation:

I. What shall we do with all this New Testament information?

A. It is unscriptural to be unfriendly,

1. just as much as to use instrumental music with spiritual songs.
2. We must be friendly just as we must be baptized in order to go to heaven.

B. Christianity cannot be an experience

1. where we simply show up once a week on Sunday,
2. pay our dues and go on our way.
 - a) It is a whole attitude change.
 - b) We cannot continue to live as we did before our conversions.

C. Christianity is not a phenomenon to keep to one's self.

1. Christianity only works when we practice it on others.
2. If we withhold friendliness, why should God give us heaven?

II. The key: Concentrate on Jesus Christ.

A. He is the One who taught the Golden Rule.

B. He is the One who commanded the second greatest commandment.

C. He is the One upon whom our religion, Christianity, is based.

III. No excuses for unfriendliness are valid.

A. Shyness,

1. fear of saying the wrong thing,
2. claiming it is not our personality,
 - a) simply will not do,
 - b) especially if we have been converted.

B. Be friendly toward others, even as God was first friendly toward us in Christ.

IV. Do you believe Jesus is Lord?

A. Prove it – Luke 6.46