

River Valley Notes

OASIS

Part #7: "So, Where Did All This Come From?"

February 25, 2007

Today's Nutshell: What we tend to want with God is respectful _____, but what He wants is much deeper: an intimate, transparent, _____-fueled _____.

When I Substitute Friendship With God:

God is my...

Moral Taskmaster

Cosmic Genie

Spiritual Drug

Fearsome Eternal Gatekeeper

Wise Instructor

Excuse for Irrational Behavior

And therefore I am...

Sad, mad and _____

A spiritual _____

A spiritual _____

Stable & _____

A _____ of God

Rev. 2:1-6

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands: I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." (NIV)

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...continued

John 16:2-3

For you will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are doing God a service. This is because they have never known the Father or me.

(NLT)

Religion that doesn't have friendship with God at its core can only cause _____, not healing.

Jesus is not asking us to recapture a _____; He's urging us to realign the center of our devotion.

Question: "OK, so what do I do?"

Answer: Love God and then _____ what _____ would do.

If we learn to speak the language of our culture but fail to love, we are meaningless. If we have impeccable doctrine and faultless wisdom, but don't have love – love for God that overflows into love for people – we actually have nothing. Even if we have faith that can trust God for anything imaginable, without love we would be no good to anybody. If we engage in religious sacrifice to the point of giving up our very lives, still, if we don't love people, it will all add up to nothing... and would likely cause harm. If we have meetings, sing songs, pray prayers, hear sermons, join small groups, serve on ministry teams, offer programs, go on mission trips, build buildings and share meals together... lots of meals, but do not have love for God and love for people, it all means nothing. Religious activity that lacks loving friendship with God is less than empty... it is dangerous. We can only offer redemptive friendship to our world because we have first become loving friends of God.