**Healthy Church Series**

**Topic: Creations, Children, Sons, Servants and Friends of God (Part 1)**

**Text: *John 1:12-13, John 15:14-15, James 2:23, Gal. 4:1-2***

**Introduction:**

Last week, we discussed “Graduating from being servants to being friends of God”. We understood that the ultimate will of God for us is be His friends i.e. God craves our friendship *Ish 1:18*. We also learned that we cannot be God’s friend unless we had been His servant. Today, we will be looking deeper into this God’s truth by considering more granular levels of our relationship with God. Just like any developmental growth, our relationship with God also spans from childhood till Adulthood. First, we will be looking at those early stages of our relationship with God.

**Creations of God – Gen 1:26:**

God created the known physical and biological universe, therefore, there’s no argument we are all God’s creation. But man is a different kind of creature. He was created with will and the ability to rationalize and make decisions. At creation of man, God gave man the responsibility of ruling over and taking care of the rest of creation but man lost it in one of the earliest biblical record of an attempted coup *Gen 3*. After the great fall, God let man retain his will and rational thinking but lost the divine nature that synchronizes him with God and gave him the authority over all created things. This is the what the bible called the natural man and we will now discuss key attributes of a natural man Rom 8:5-8.

**Attributes of a Natural Man:**

* The natural man is unable or unwilling to perceive spiritual realities – *I Cor. 2:14*

How difficult it is to teach the natural man who comprehends nothing more than that which he sees with the natural eye! … Talk to him about angels, heavens, God, immortality, and eternal lives, and it is like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal to his ears; it has no music to him; there is nothing in it that charms his senses, soothes his feelings, attracts his attention, or engages his affections, in the least; to him it is all vanity.

* The natural man is proud - *James 4:6*

The natural man’s most distinguishing feature is pride, which is enmity - enmity toward God and enmity toward man. The look of the natural man is neither up (to God) nor over (to man), except as the horizontal glance allows him to compete with his fellows. “Pride is essentially competitive in nature,” “We pit our will against God’s. When we direct our pride toward God, it is in the spirit of ‘my will and not thine be done.’ … The proud wish God would agree with them.” said Ezra Taft Benson

* The natural man is overly competitive and externally driven *– 2Cor 10:12*

The natural man is preoccupied with the rewards of this world. His values are derived solely from pragmatism and utility. Such people “are tempted daily to elevate [themselves] above others and diminish them.” There is no pleasure in “having something,” only in “having more of it than the next man.”

* The natural man is subject to earthly passion *– Gal 5:19-21, Rom 1:28-30*

The natural man allows earthly passions to overshadow his spiritual inclinations.” Rudeness characterizes his relationships, crudeness his speech and manner. He finds reasons and arguments to perpetuate his earthly inclinations.

**Conclusion:**

We have studied the first level of man’s relationship with God. We have also seen that one must not remain at this level as it is characterized by rebellion against God. The good thing is, once we give our lives to Christ, we have escaped this level.