
Deuteronomy 22:10: "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together"

To do so would be to "unequally yoke" two completely different animals together. An ox is larger and stronger than a donkey, the ox would bear most of the weight of the yoke; they have different natures/temperaments; the ox was determined by God to be a clean animal, the ass, unclean. They have different strides, they're not going to plow in a straight line, they will struggle against each other. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Amos 3:3: "How can two walk together except they be agreed".

The first thing we must ask ourselves is WHY did Paul write this here? If you've been here for the entirety of our study of 1st Corinthians, and now 2nd Corinthians, you know that the Church @ Corinth had a myriad of sin problems, Paul dealt with most of them in his 1st letter.

We know there was pride, contentions, fornication, divisions, (or cliques and factions in the church). There was the major problem of professed believers in the church "mingling and mixing" in the customs and culture of Corinth, which was wholly given to idolatry. Psalm 106:35-36

"They were mingled among the heathen and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them"

And if that wasn't bad enough, false teachers infected and plagued the church, they continually questioned Paul's preaching and doctrine, but also his legitimacy and calling as an Apostle of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5, 9:1-3, 10:14-21, 11:18-19, 12:1-6, 14:37, 15:12

So, you should see that Paul was continually contending with false teachers and unbelievers in the church! This continued into his 2nd letter to the Corinthians, oftentimes, instead of teaching/preaching to the church without resistance, he had to deal with Judaizers, false teachers and their false doctrines. 2 Corinthians 2:17-3:1, 4:2, 11:1-4, 13-15

And now, in 2 Corinthians 6, Paul wrote, in all of what we have suffered, we have approved ourselves as the ministers of God, sent by God to you as His ambassadors; open your hearts to us, for ours are WIDE OPEN to you!

Knowing this: I hope you have a better understanding as to WHY Paul warned the Church @ Corinth of the "unequal yoke".

There were STILL a lot of close and intimate associations among the people with unbelievers; with those that could influence them away from Christ and spiritually corrupt

their minds from the truth and simplicity of the gospel of Christ!

This is a good place for each of us to ask ourselves if there are any intimate associations in our lives which are influencing us away from Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:33, 5:6

In EVERY association that you have in the world, YOU are called by God to be the INFLUENCE, YOU are to be "good leaven". *Luke 13:20-21*

Paul's concern: There was beginning to be no distinction between believers and unbelievers. The church was in the world, but now the culture and customs of the world (the sinful leaven of the world) was encroaching into the church and spreading!

This is where Satan (to this day) concentrates his work; go to church YES! But make the church inclusive of all that is in the world! Here is where Paul pricked the minds of the Corinthians with (5) awakening questions!

What fellowship (or intimate spiritual sharing) is there between righteousness and unrighteousness?

What communion (or joint intimacy) is there between light and darkness?

What concord (or symphony/symphony ~ harmony and agreement) is there between Christ and Belial?

What part (or intimate participation) do believers and unbelievers share? An infidel is simply one who is an unbeliever; one who has no faith in God.

Paul's main emphasis to the believers at Corinth was, "separate yourselves" from close and intimate associations with unbelievers, from false teachers and idolators, before you are negatively influenced, and your minds are corrupted away from Christ!

2 Corinthians 6:16B: "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people":

If God is IN YOU, you must remember; you are in the world, but you are not of the world! Yes, you are to be friends to sinners, that you might influence them and lead them to Christ, but sinners should not be your best and most intimate friends, if that is so, you are in danger of being corrupted away from Christ by their influence! Your vulnerable times, your communion, fellowship, and times close intimate companionship should be with fellow believers! *2 Corinthians 6:16B-18*

What you have in COMMON is God IN YOU!

God doesn't dwell in buildings that are made with hands, God dwells in His people, IN YOU... if you are born-again and a believer in Jesus Christ!

Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:15-20

Spiritual Applications:

We must be so careful of intimate associations with unbelievers in the world (in such ways) that we might be influenced away from Christ and from godliness and true holiness in our lives.

But here is where you must be wise, and exercise spiritual discernment in the world as a Christian; Paul is NOT teaching the Corinthians, NOR IS HE TEACHING US that we are to completely shut sinners out of our lives and completely disassociate ourselves from unbelievers.

What do the scriptures say of our Lord when He trafficked in the world among sinners, unbelievers.

Mark 2:14-17, Luke 15:1-2, 19:5-10, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Brethren, ye are the salt of the earth and the light of the world; you are NOT to hide your light under a bushel, YOU are to be a gospel and godly influence in the world, in your own personal society, in your neighborhoods, and especially in your families.

Let's talk about what everyone (in all probability) thinks about when they read this text: Marriage!

Was Paul teaching that married couples should separate and dissolve their marriage unions in cases where one spouse is lost and the other is saved?

The short answer is NO!

You say: Well, there's no relationship in the world that is closer and more intimate than marriage. TRUE!

But if Paul was teaching "believing spouses" to separate from "unbelieving spouses", what he wrote (HERE) in 2 Corinthians 6 would contradict what he wrote in 1

Corinthians 7:12-17 (READ).

Bottom line up front: These (were and are) lawful marriages. The scriptures teach us that the unbelieving spouse (and children) are brought under that sanctifying influence and godliness of the believing/Christian spouse.

Mark 10:9: "What therefore God hath joined together, let NOT man put asunder"

The actual application of this text to marriage APPLIES to believers BEFORE entering marriage, WHO should seek a believing husband or a wife!

An unmarried, single believing man or woman SHOULD NOT KNOWINGLY enter a marriage with an unbelieving man or woman. If you're not married, DON'T begin an intimate relationship with someone who is NOT a Christian! You should desire TO ONLY marry "in the Lord"!

Now, IN MANY CASES, both spouses marry as unbelievers, and one spouse is saved after they are married, but the other spouse remains unsaved.

Kim and I were married as unbelievers. She was in all probability saved before I was. I was saved soon after, within days.

In all of this, don't forget this truth: For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people"

You are to be the "good leaven" in every worldly relationship!