

Beware The Unequal Yoke

SR 2Co.6:14 to 7:1

Intro. This letter was addressed to Christians who lived in Corinth, a city of Greek background that was famous for its commerce, luxury and permissiveness. The church had many problems and often did not know how to deal with these as God wanted them to. There was also the daily problem of living in a “heathen” world and having contact with people that openly practiced immorality. Our world is similar in many ways and we must learn to form good relationships and be wary (careful) of bad ones. Paul uses the ‘figure’ of the yoke (harness) to teach us what we *must* do.

Yoke – a harness arrangement that was used to join 2 animals together for the purpose of work. It was not permitted under the OT to mix different kinds. (Duet.22:10) It is often used as a metaphor for a burden placed upon one as a means of subjection, or ‘ruling’ over another. (Act.15:10, Lev.26:13)

There is one important example of its use where the yoke is meant as both good and proper.

NIV Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (see also Rom.8:1-2)

This single scripture clearly tells us which ‘yoke’ we should put on!

To put it another way, Jesus is calling us to come and submit to Him, because he is gentle & humble. The world can not say the same!

What Is God Teaching Us?

(A word of WARNING. Never forget the context! 1Co.5:9-12)

6:14 **“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.”** This is a command! The opening words tell us immediately that as Christians we must not ‘permit’ ourselves to be ‘harnessed’ to any non-believer in such a way that gives them control over our spiritual lives and beliefs!

Paul continues to explain this command by appealing to common sense reasoning and rhetorical questioning;

1. What do righteousness & wickedness have in common? Nothing!
E.G. A policeman could not catch a criminal if he joined up with him.
Rom.6:12-14
2. What fellowship can light have with darkness? None! Just as day & night can not occur at the same time those ‘enlightened’ (Christians) can’t ‘blend’ together with immoral unbelievers.
Act.26:18, 1Thes.5:5
3. What harmony between Christ & Belial? None!
Harmony = joint decision. Belial = worthless one.
God did not consult with Satan or the demons over salvation, nor did He make a peace treaty with the devil! Satan has no power over God. Mat.13:27-28, 13:38-39
4. What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? Nothing!
Christians serve God, unbelievers serve Satan. *Different goals.* Mat.6:24
5. What agreement between Temple of God & idols? None!
The teaching, philosophy, culture, values & morals of Satan are completely different from God. (Paul is using ‘The Temple of God & Idols’ as a clear distinction between the 2 leaders of

mankind.) The devil has always been opposed to God and His people. Josh.24:14-15,
Joh.8:42-44. 1Co.10:14 & 19-22

Paul closes his remarks by stating firmly that Christians are “The Temple of the Living God” and as such He is in and among them. Therefore they are to keep themselves separate and clean from the rest of the world, because only Christians are His children!

What Kind of Relationships Should We Cautious With?

1. Friendships
2. Business / work
3. Marriage
4. Religious
5. Others.....make your own list.

In Christian Love