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## *Be Not Unequally Yoked*      **Go to Him**

By Harold Turner

One of our readers has presented the question, "Does 2 Cor. 6:14 teach that it is a sin for a Christian to marry a person who is not a Christian."

2 Cor. 6:14 states, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteous? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

Seldom is this Scripture discussed apart from someone asking a question similar to that above. Since this Scripture sets forth a positive command, the need to understand it is most important.

If this command is directed at, or includes the marriage relationship, for a believer to marry an unbeliever would be to disobey a command of God, hence it would involve sin, for "sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4.) Any marriage that is in transgression to God's law must be dissolved. Notice in Matt. 14:3-4. Herod had taken his brother Philip's wife. According to God's law governing marriage this was not a lawful marriage, therefore John said, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." In Matt. 19:6 Jesus said, "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Will God join together in marriage those, who by entering this relationship, do so in direct violation to His law? This is what Herod and Herodias had done. John said "it is not lawful for thee to have her." God did not bind or join these together in marriage. Their relationship was sinful, it was adulterous. In Matt. 19:9, Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

Any marriage that God joins together must never be put asunder. However, any marriage that violates God's law is sinful, and is never joined together by the Lord.

Now, let's look again at 2 Cor. 6:14. Notice first the expression, "Be ye not". Paul did not say, as many read this, "Become ye not". "Be ye not" is present tense, whereas, "Become ye not" relates to the future. Those "unequally yoked together with an unbeliever" must separate from this relationship. In verse 17 Paul said, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the

Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Paul isn't altogether warning these about getting into this situation, but warning them to get out of this situation. "Be ye not . . . Wherefore come out from among them."

Now, let's picture a situation. Two unbelievers enter into a marriage relationship. Sometime later one hears the gospel and obeys it. The other hears but disbelieves it. What do we have now? A believer married to an unbeliever. Remember now, Paul said, "Be ye not". Now, what is to be done? Must the marriage be dissolved? Do we have a believer unequally yoked together with an unbeliever? Paul said, "Be ye not . . . come out from among them and be ye separate." This would find us dissolving a marriage every time we converted one and not the other in this relationship.

Since the command in 2 Cor. 6:14 is to the Christian, is the Christian to separate from the unbeliever? 1 Cor. 7:12-16 has the answer. "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him . . . But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart." Paul then shows why the believer is not to put away the unbelieving companion, "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" Here is a clear example of a marriage between a believer and a non-believer. The believer is commanded to not put away the unbeliever. Yet, 2 Cor. 6:14 clearly commands, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Do we have a contradiction here? No, but obviously a misinterpretation.

In 1 Pet. 3:1 we again have this idea, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands: that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;" Here is a Christian married to a non-Christian with clear instructions to

By Ted Knight

There are several passages in the New Testament which we choose to ignore most of the time. We will go to great lengths to justify our reasoning and our failure to do what the Lord wants done. Among those are these words found in Matt. 18:15-17, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two witnesses, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Brethren, these passages are not hard to understand. It is because of our unwillingness to face our brother that we fail in the very first part of these instructions. Our usual course is to tell others and allow it to be blown way out of proportion and someone finally is hurt seriously because of it. There is not a way out of this matter. If your brother has offended you, be it the preacher, elder, deacon, or anyone else, the Bible says GO TO HIM. If you can't do that, then keep your mouth shut! The Bible does not say that if you are offended at the preacher you are to go to the elders, but go to him. It does not say that if you are offended at the elders you should go to the preacher, but go to them. Failure to observe this principle is sinful.

The objection usually is given, "Well I just can't talk to him or her." Brother, if you can't talk to the one who has trespassed against you, you had better not talk to anybody. If you can't talk to the elders when you feel aught toward them, then there is something wrong with you or the elders. If you can't talk to the preacher then something is wrong with you or the preacher.

Let us remember that we are Christians. If we cannot be honest with each other and discuss our feelings with each other, how do we expect to go to heaven? It is sinful to spread gossip or feed rumors. GO TO HIM . . . that is the Bible way. Any other way is wrong.

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen  
and Harrold Turner.

# Let Us Reason Together

By Glynn V. Purdy

In Isaiah 1:18, God said, "Come now, and let us reason together..." God made man an intelligent being, able to accept testimony, and reach a logical and scriptural conclusion; then to act accordingly to the convictions resulting from the testimony. It was not God's intention in the days of Isaiah, nor even today, that men should base their religious convictions on the opinions of men. God is not the "author of confusion" and where we find confusion instead of unity, we know that is not of God.

teach that it is because the man is already saved. One will teach that a child of God can fall from grace and be lost and another preacher will teach that this is impossible. One teaches that sprinkling is baptism while another teaches that it is not. One teaches that we are saved by faith only and another teaches that we are not. One teaches that we can do nothing to be saved and another teaches that we must obey the gospel. Now, can we, as intelligent human beings, believe that God has "called" two preachers and given them a message that contradicts each other? Some say that a person is saved by obeying the message of either preacher, as "it does not matter what you believe, just so you believe." Then can a man join two churches that teach conflicting doctrines? If one makes him good then two ought to make him better. No, these preachers say, that in a case of this kind the man would be a hypocrite, for he cannot believe two conflicting doctrines at the same time. He may give up either and accept the other, but he may not believe both at the same time.

## BE NOT UNEQUALLY (Cont.)

live together. Is Peter violating the command, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"? Again, obviously someone is misinterpreting 2 Cor. 6:14.

The marriage relationship is not remotely implied in the context of 2 Cor. 6:14. Paul is pleading with the Corinthians to separate themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7:1). If marriage had been the object of Paul's command, would it not have been more appropriate to have used "an unbeliever" (singular) rather than "unbelievers" (plural)?

Though 2 Cor. 6:14 does not forbid a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever, there is a danger that those who enter into this relationship need to consider. Surveys show that in over 50% of such marriages the believer becomes unfaithful to the Lord. It is a very low percentage where the believer converts the unbeliever after marriage. If you are not able to convert the person you plan to marry before marriage, what makes you think you will after? The odds are greatly against you. How beautiful is the marriage relationship where both are involved in and work together in every phase of life. It is far better and safer to choose a companion that you can really share every phase of your life with. Not only do you subject your soul to the risk of becoming unfaithful to the Lord, but you also face a greater challenge of finding the happiness you desire in life.

The Bible was written by about forty persons over a period of about fifteen hundred years, and yet it is in complete unity and harmony. Many of these writers foretold the coming of others in the future and of their entire life's work. Each word of all the prophets was fulfilled in due time, thus proving that God is the author of the Bible. God never had two prophets prophesy and the prophecy of one contradict that of the other. Should this have happened, then men would not have believed it, knowing that God is "truth" and not the "author of confusion." One prophet telling us one thing and another telling something that is in direct conflict with that of the first prophet would certainly be confusion, especially when both claim to be speaking from God. The church at Ephesus was praised for trying them "which say that they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." (Rev. 2:2.) In 1 John 4:1 we are told to "believe not every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Suppose one prophet had foretold that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem and another said it would be in Rome; one said he would die for our sins and another saying that he would not, and so on. Then would you believe that both spoke the truth? We know that God cannot lie. Then one of these prophets would have lied because his message conflicted with the other. This then would prove that one or both were not from God.

Now, may we continue to reason together. In the same city, at the same time, only a few feet apart, we find preachers who preach conflicting doctrines and contradicting each other. One will teach that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins and the other will

Let us examine this reasoning. They say that a man is a hypocrite if he believes, or accepts conflicting doctrines at the same time. Then they say that Jesus not only believes the many conflicting doctrines, but "calls" preachers to teach them. They say that Jesus is in "all" churches, but each teaches a doctrine unlike the others. Now, if believing in two churches that teach conflicting doctrines makes a man a hypocrite, what would being in 255 churches, each teaching a different doctrine, make Jesus? Would any honest person be willing to say that God is the author of confusion? I am sure he would not. But if 255 preachers, preaching 255 doctrines, and each claiming to speak for God is not confusion, then what is confusion? Then if this is confusion (and it is) and God is not the author of it, who is? (Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-13.)

God wrote the Bible, and we are able to understand it for God commands us to (Eph. 5:17, 2 Tim. 2:15.) The Bible is ALL we need (2 Tim. 3:16-17.) We must neither preach or believe any other doctrine (Gal. 1:8-9.) Then why not be safe and instead of following the "pastor" follow God. He will judge you by HIS word (John 12:48.)

"When the heart is full of love, the life will be full of service."

"Talk to the Lord about sinners, then talk to the sinners about the Lord."

"Prayer must mean something to us if it is to mean anything to the Lord."

# Absenteeism Pharaoh's Compromises

By James Knight

By Clovis Ragsdale

Just what is meant by the term absenteeism? It means, the act of absenting oneself from the place where they ought to be, or from work which they ought to be doing.

Absenteeism is one of the greatest problems facing the church today. It keeps the church from doing many things that it should be doing. This is the reason for Paul's statement in Heb. 10:25; "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." If we want to be pleasing to God it is a must that we attend all the services unless circumstances are beyond our control. There are not too many times when this happens, but rather, we are usually absent because we plan to be.

Now let us look at some things which absenteeism keeps the church from accomplishing.

(1). Because of absenteeism most congregations do not have an active personal work program. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This can be accomplished only when members of the church cease being absent from this part of the church program of work.

(2). Absenteeism keeps men, women, boys, and girls out of the Bible classes which are designed to help them have a better understanding of the Bible. In being absent from Bible class we miss the joy of studying with others who have like interest in things of a spiritual nature. We miss the thrill of learning new truths from the Word of God, and making application of old ones to our lives.

(3). Absenteeism keeps the church from reaching goals that have been set in all periods of worship. Goals are not set just for the sake of goals, but so that more people can be taught the word of God. The more we get to attend, the more we can teach. Goals represent numbers, and numbers represent souls which are saved or need to be saved from sin. The ones already saved need to be edified, and those who are not saved need to be instructed in the right way.

(4). Absenteeism keeps people from obeying the gospel. When one is not a Christian and sees those who claim to be, absenting themselves from the services, they conclude that the church is not very

When the children of Israel were to be delivered from Egyptian bondage, Moses and Aaron were instructed to go before Pharaoh and ask permission to take the Hebrews into the wilderness to worship God. When God began sending the great plagues upon Egypt, Pharaoh suggested that they compromise and worship in Egypt. When Moses rejected this, he then offered another compromise, that they go outside Egypt, but that they not go very far. When this was rejected, he offered his third plan. He suggested that the elderly Israelites go out, but that they leave the children behind. Then, when this didn't work, he finally consented that all the people go, but that they leave their herds in Egypt. Moses rejected all of the compromises offered by Pharaoh, and God continued to plague Egypt until Israel with all their possessions were free to leave Egypt.

Most students of the Bible agree that many of the events that took place in the lives of God's people in the Old Testament, are types or shadows of things that have happened and are happening in the Christian age. For example, Egypt represents the world of sin, Pharaoh is a type of Satan, Moses, the deliverer, was a type of Christ (Deut. 18:15), crossing the Red Sea is a type of baptism (1 Cor. 10:1-2), the wilderness wandering represents living the Christian life, and crossing over Jordan represents death. Canaan, the promised land, was a type of heaven.

important. Thus we stand a good chance of losing our soul because we set the wrong example before others. The church is gauged by others according to the interest shown by those of us who are members of it. When we are absent we keep the church from having the good influence that it should in the community.

I want to encourage every member of the church to help stamp out absenteeism. Let's put an end to it once and for all. Let's conquer one of the greatest enemies that the church has. May each one of us take seriously every opportunity that we have to worship God with fellow Christians. Let us be at our station or work, let us always be about the Master's business, and the best place to start is in the home.

In Pharaoh's suggestion that the Israelites should worship and serve God in Egypt, we see a similarity of the idea that people can be saved and serve God acceptably outside the church. There is no salvation today outside the church (Acts 2:47, Eph. 2:16). This being true, what could please Satan more than keeping people out of the church? As long as he can keep them in the world he can claim them as his people.

Pharaoh was willing for the Israelites to leave Egypt to worship, providing that they would not go very far. We see a similarity here in the many who become Christians, but who do not fully dedicate themselves to Christ and his cause. They seem to hold Christ with one hand and the world with the other. Pharaoh knew that if the people did not go far they would eventually come back to Egypt. Indeed, they did look back to the "feshpots of Egypt" as they wandered in the wilderness and became hungry. The Christian must never look back to the life of sin with a desire to return. In Luke 9:62, Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Pharaoh's next compromise was for the adults to leave, but for the children to remain in Egypt. Satan would be happy today if he could keep the young people from becoming a Christian, because if this happened, in a few years the church would cease to exist. The greater percentage of people today who obey the gospel are young people. God expects and commands his people to bring up their young in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). World Communism, in its effort to stamp out Christianity, directs its attention at destroying the faith of the younger generation. The church today needs to concentrate its greatest efforts on converting the young.

The last compromise Pharaoh suggested was for all the Israelites to leave, but let their herds remain in Egypt. We can see the similarity of this idea among those today who become a Christian, yet, who can never give as they are prospered, and with a cheerful heart. Of these it is sometimes said, they are converted, all but their pocketbooks. It takes money to spread the gospel and minister to the needy, therefore the Lord gave each Christian the responsibility to

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PHARAOH'S COMPROMISES

(Cont.)

give as he is prospered. No fairer method is known. No set sum that we all have to meet. This makes it possible for the beggar to worship with the rich.

The Lord had his plan for the liberation of his people. There would be no compromise accepted. The Lord has his plans for people today to escape the bondage of sin, and to worship and serve God as he directs. Satan offers us many compromises in many areas of the Christian life. Many believers have accepted these compromises, even in areas where God has clearly spelled out his will. Because of this we have many false doctrines being proclaimed for truth. These false doctrines have produced the many divisions of our religious world. Only Satan profits from many divisions. May God help us to stand firm in His truth, and never accept compromise. For compromise is from Satan, not God.

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"The highest type of education is to learn to do God's will."

"Some folks who think they are busy are just confused."

"A closed hand can neither give nor receive a blessing. Selfishness defeats itself."

"We worship the God of heaven for much the same reason that we go to the table to eat; To gain strength to work. Worship is a means to a worthy end."

# Jesus is the Son of God

By Richard England

There have been many "good" men live and die. Many of them died for some cause that might well have been noble. But, none have had such an impact on the human race as did the man called Jesus. Jesus lived and died. While he was alive on the earth he had a number of followers who later wrote about him. The record of his living on the earth is not a legend, myth, fantasy nor fairy tale. It is a historic fact. That many believed him to be the Son of God is also a fact. Further, that many believed him to have been raised from the dead is also beyond question. The only question that is worthy of consideration is: are they correct?

There are only three possibilities concerning the witnesses of the resurrection of the man named Jesus: 1. They were deceived. 2. They are gross liars. 3. Their testimony is true. Were they deceived? Many people have stood, fought and died for a cause about which they were deceived. Though they received false testimony, for some reason or another (maybe the one who told them was extremely convincing), they believed it. But this cannot be the case with the men who testify of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Here is what they said of their source of information: Acts 1:1-3 "The former treaties have I made O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: TO WHOM ALSO HE SHOWED HIMSELF AFTER HIS PASSION BY MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS, BEING SEEN OF THEM FORTY DAYS, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (1 John 1:1-4) "That which was from the beginning, WHICH WE HAVE HEARD, WHICH WE HAVE SEEN WITH OUR EYES, WHICH WE HAVE LOOKED UPON, AND OUR HANDS HAVE HANDLED, OF THE WORD OF LIFE . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you . . ." Having been with Jesus for a long period of time, seen him die and then buried, there is no way these men could have been deceived about the identity of the man they claimed to be Jesus, raised from the dead.

Were they gross liars? Their dedication to their testimony, the moral standard they taught and practiced and the sincerity they displayed gives evidence that THEY CERTAINLY BELIEVED WHAT THEY TAUGHT. Their

willingness to die for the cause they espoused establishes their honesty. Martyrdom does not necessarily prove the thing for which one dies, but it proves honesty and conviction. Not one person who ever said that he saw Jesus after he was raised from the dead ever changed his testimony, even in the face of death.

With such devotion and genuineness coupled with the fact that they could not have been deceived, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that their testimony is TRUE, and Jesus was RAISED from the dead. Being raised from the dead, HE IS THE SON OF GOD.

"When duty is a delight, life is sublime."

"Some have ceased to be fishers of men and have become keepers of the aquarium."

"Because of his inordinate desire to do all the talking, many a man has missed hearing a lot of needful information."

"It is right to love the sinner, no matter how vile; but it is never right to tolerate his sins. Toleration of evil is false kindness."

"The more sluggish the stream, the more crooked it runs. So with a man's life."

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