

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabible.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabible.org).

**Date:** November 20, 2016

**Sermon Title:** Learning to Live God’s Joy on the Horizontal

**Text:** 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

**Author:** Patrick J. Griffiths ©2016

Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

Date: November 20, 2016  
Title: Learning to Live God's Joy on the Horizontal  
Text: 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1  
Theme: Sometimes the work of reconciliation requires the hard work of separation.

### **Introduction:**

Every choice has a consequence and many of the consequences are unintended. The Corinthians choice of aligning with the false teachers caused a separation between them and the apostle Paul. Now their choice of alignment requires a consequence of separation.

What we are about to read in our paragraph is the action step required by the Corinthian church in order for them to be reconciled to the apostle Paul. This text is often used for any alignment between the believer and the unbeliever. We will consider what is or is not appropriate based on this text. The principle we work from is the text has a primary meaning and that meaning is "thin." When we apply the text outside of its intended meaning, we must be guarded and cautious. The principles might be valid, but they are not the voice of God.

What many claim to be the voice or will of God is nothing more or less than their own voice or will. The Bible is not given to validate your life or vindicate your choices. The Bible exists to reveal God and to show you how what you crave and are designed to enjoy is only found in God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Let us consider the text.

### **Outline:**

I. First, the prohibition (v. 14a).

- <sup>14</sup> "Do not be bound together with unbelievers"

"Do not be mismatched." "to yoke up differently" from a compound word **heterozugeo**.

**Heteros** - other or different. Not apples and oranges, but apples and cow pies.

**Zugeo** - also (literally) the beam of the balance (as connecting the scales):--pair of balances, yoke.

Some would suggest the intent of this text is for unregenerate gentiles to separate from Temple Prostitutes. Although I do not believe this is the intent of this text, I am not suggesting we SHOULD align with temple prostitutes.

"The most probable referent options are visiting temple prostitutes and joining with pagans in temple feasts. These infractions may be classified as severe violations of one's covenant with God, as metonymical idolatry, and as forming a close bond with pagans and Beliar...." There is great merit to his conclusion **but a major problem is that there is no specific reference to either of these matters in the immediate or extended context.**"<sup>1</sup>

“This entails a series of five rhetorical questions which each expect a negative answer and state ‘in proverbial form the truth that believers may have nothing to do with wickedness, darkness, Belial, unbelievers, and idols...’ Each of these questions is designed to enforce the thrust of the admonition of 6:14a not to ‘become yoke-mates with unbelievers.’”<sup>2</sup>

There is a series of parallel statements. “Here Paul snaps off five pointed, rhetorical, questions designed to explain why it is important for believers to be cautious about too close association with non-believers.”<sup>3</sup>

## II. Second, the reason (vv. 14a-16a).

- “**for** what partnership [partakers] have righteousness and lawlessness,”

The noun form occurs only here in the New Testament. The verb form [**metecho**] occurs eight times in the New Testament, five times in 1 Corinthians (9:10, 12; 10:17, 21, 30) and three times in Hebrews (2:14; 5:13; 7:13).

- “or what fellowship [**koinonia**] has light with darkness?”
- <sup>15</sup> “Or what harmony [**sumphonesis**] has Christ with Belial,”

The noun form occurs only here. The verb form occurs six times in the New Testament and all occurrences are in the Gospels and Acts.

“The word *symphony* is derived from Greek συμφωνία (*symphonia*), meaning ‘agreement or concord of sound’, ‘concert of vocal or instrumental music’, from σύμφωνος (*symphōnos*), ‘harmonious.’”<sup>4</sup>

“This is the only place in the NT where the word ‘Belial’ occurs. Its Hebrew counterpart occurs in the OT with the meaning ‘worthlessness’ (e.g., Deut. 13:13; 15:9; 2 Sam. 22:5; Ps. 18:4). In the inter-testamental literature it was used to describe a personal opponent of God.”<sup>5</sup>

- “or what has a believer in common [**share / part**] with an unbeliever?”
- <sup>16</sup> “Or what **agreement** has the temple of God with idols?”

Paul drives us back to the Garden / Temple theme.

The reason why we are to separate from such thinking is because the two parties are incompatible. They do not fit; they do not work.

## III. Third, the promise (vv. 16b-18).

Temple / Garden language. This is what God designed us for. Adam was to guard the Garden and Eve. He let the serpent in. Now is the time to turn back and drive the serpent out of the Garden / Temple. Do not allow the serpent to re-enter the Garden!

“This then provides a transition Unequally Yoked into supporting statements from Scripture, a series of OT quotations, which support his call for separation. The promises in 6:16-18 become the basis for Paul’s concluding exhortation. On the basis of these promises, he calls on the readers to ‘cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit’ and at the same time be ‘perfecting holiness in the fear of God.’”<sup>6</sup>

- A quotation from Lev 26:12; also similar to Jer 32:38; Ezek 37:27.
- A quotation from Isa 52:11.
- Or “will receive.”
- A paraphrased quotation from Ezek 20:41.
- A paraphrased quotation from 2 Sam 7:14 and Isa 43:6.

“For we are the temple of the living God;  
just as God said, ‘I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM;  
AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE’” (2 Cor. 6:16b).

The text he quotes from Leviticus 26 is one of blessing and cursing. Do not leave the Garden. Listen to God’s promises for your joy.

- [Obedience / Blessing versus Disobedience / Cursing]  
<sup>3</sup> **“If you walk** in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, <sup>4</sup> **then I shall give you** rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit. <sup>5</sup> Indeed, your threshing will last for you until grape gathering, and grape gathering will last until sowing time. You will thus eat your food to the full and live securely in your land. <sup>6</sup> I shall also grant peace in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land. <sup>7</sup> But you will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword; <sup>8</sup> five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword. <sup>9</sup> So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you. <sup>10</sup> You will eat the old supply and clear out the old because of the new. <sup>11</sup> **Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you.** <sup>12</sup> **I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.** <sup>13</sup> I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that you would not be their slaves, and I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect. <sup>14</sup> **But if you do not obey Me** and do not carry out all these commandments, <sup>15</sup> if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and so break My covenant, <sup>16</sup> **I, in turn, will do this to you:** I will appoint over you a sudden terror, consumption and fever that will waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away; also, you will sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies will eat it up” (Lev. 26:3-16).

“See 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19f.; Eph. 2:20f.; 1 Pt. 2:5. If the OT prohibited the introduction of idols into or even near the temple in which God resided, how much more horrendous is the introduction of idolatry and sinful bondage with unbelievers into the individual believer who is himself now that very temple.”<sup>7</sup>

“tn Or ‘live among them,’ ‘live with them.’ sn *I will live in them.* The OT text that lies behind this passage (Lev 26:11-12) speaks of God dwelling in the midst of his people. The Greek preposition en in the phrase ‘en autoi’ (‘in them’) can also have that meaning (‘among’ or ‘with’). However,

Paul appears to be extending the imagery here to involve God (as the Spirit) dwelling *in* his people, since he calls believers ‘the temple of the living God’ in the previous clause, imagery he uses elsewhere in his writings (1 Cor 3:16; Eph 2:21-22).”<sup>8</sup>

He supports his appeal in verses 14-16a by combining and quoting several OT passages. There is no exact verse, but the “flavor” of multiple verses.

<sup>17</sup> “Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord. ‘AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAR; And I will welcome you. <sup>18</sup> And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,’ Says the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:17, 18).

Isaiah 52 expands on God restoring His people to joy. He appeals to them to return to the land of promise, to the Garden, to the Temple. It is in His presence there is fullness of joy and pleasures forever more.

- [Kingdom Truth]

<sup>6</sup> “Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, ‘Here I am.’ <sup>7</sup> How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’ <sup>8</sup> Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the LORD restores Zion. <sup>9</sup> Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> **The LORD has bared His holy arm In the sight of all the nations, That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our God.** <sup>11</sup> **Depart, depart, go out from there, Touch nothing unclean; Go out of the midst of her, purify yourselves, You who carry the vessels of the LORD.** <sup>12</sup> **But you will not go out in haste, Nor will you go as fugitives; For the LORD will go before you, And the God of Israel will be your rear guard.** <sup>13</sup> Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted. <sup>14</sup> Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men. <sup>15</sup> Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand” (Is. 52:6-15).

The local church is reflecting the Garden / Temple. We are in the “already,” while waiting for the “not yet.”

The reason why the local church is not to align itself with the unbelieving is because the local church is the Temple of the Living God. GOD IS IN OUR MIDST! Friends, we have so marginalized the local church and our participation within it that we do not recognize the significance of this truth. In a way that is different from the presence of His omnipresence, God is in this place when we gather. Do we consciously recognize God in this place when we gather on Sunday Mornings?

This is so stunning. Not only is God walking here for our joy, but by default we are to purge from us anything that would diminish and devalue the gospel.

Notice the application of this truth.

#### IV. Third, the application (7:1).

- <sup>1</sup>“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

Paul ties all of this back to his appeal in 6:1-13. I always find the handling of the text in context a bit “troubling.” It is “troubling” because we often ask the text to do something it was never intended to do. This text has everything to do with Paul’s appeal to the Corinthian church to separate from the false apostles and to receive the apostle Paul. Unless and until you get this straight, do not run to the various applications one often hears from this text.

- “And now in a very abrupt, forceful and dynamic way, he draws their attention to the true cause of their lack of openness toward him: the pollution of their lives because of the lack of separation from pagan worldviews and values that so greatly affected them (6:14-18).
- It is from this pollution that they must now cleanse themselves both in the realm of their actions (flesh) and their attitudes (spirit) (7:1) if they are to be able to share in this openness with the apostle.”<sup>9</sup>

In order for the Corinthian church to reconcile with the apostle Paul, they must put out the false teachers and receive the apostle Paul. It is that simple.

Paul’s appeal is for them to act with courage in the severing of the one and the reuniting with the other.

Paul speaks of “perfecting holiness.” The word “perfecting” is a compound word. It means “fully finish, do it, do not stop.” Push where you are to completion. Stay this course. You and I are on a trajectory. Stay the course and finish it. Do not stop.

#### **Shepherding the Sheep:** (What is the NEXT STEP?)

1. Sometimes the solution is simple and staring you in the face.
2. You know what you need to do, so deal with it.
3. It is foolish to “kick against the poker.” If you are striking yourself with a hammer and do not like the pain, then stop striking yourself with the hammer. However, in addition to stopping the striking, it requires looking to Jesus the author and finisher of your joy.
4. God’s promise to give you the joy and peace of His presence is knowable and experienced as we act on His known will. You and I will not know and experience His joy on the horizontal as long as we continue to align ourselves with evil. There is always an intrinsic demerit to sinful choices.
5. Sinful choices have consequences and you cannot control the consequences. No matter how hard you try to keep those things under wrap, they will not be contained.

- 
- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.tms.edu/m/tmsj10h.pdf>
  - <sup>2</sup> <https://www.tms.edu/m/tmsj10h.pdf> excellent article, well worth the read.
  - <sup>3</sup> <http://www.samstorms.com/all-articles/post/2-corinthians-6:14-7:16>
  - <sup>4</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphony>
  - <sup>5</sup> <http://www.samstorms.com/all-articles/post/2-corinthians-6:14-7:16>
  - <sup>6</sup> <https://www.tms.edu/m/tmsj10h.pdf>
  - <sup>7</sup> <http://www.samstorms.com/all-articles/post/2-corinthians-6:14-7:16>
  - <sup>8</sup> <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/2+Corinthians+6:14>
  - <sup>9</sup> <https://www.tms.edu/m/tmsj10h.pdf>