

## 2Corinthians – Week 24

### I. Review: vv. 11-13

#### A. Paul appeals for the affection of the Corinthians

- i. He had deep affection for them as a father to his child
- ii. But they withheld their affection towards him.
- iii. So he urges them to open wide their hearts!

### II. Continuation

#### A. Opinions regarding 2Cor. 6:14-7:1

- i. Some Bible commentators believe that verses 6:16-7:1 to be an interpolation, that is, it was added there by someone else...
  1. They say that the text should really read as follows:
    - a. *“We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open.<sup>12</sup> You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections.<sup>13</sup> In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also [2Cor. 6:11-13]... Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one.<sup>3</sup> I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. [2Cor. 7:2-3]”*
  - ii. Others believe this section was written by Paul but it was originally part of 1Corinthians and, somehow, wound up inserted in 2Corinthians.
  - iii. Still others believe that this section, perhaps, was dislocated from its original context in 2Corinthians.
  - iv. Yet others believe that this section belongs here but that Paul temporarily veered off the topic due to his emotions.
  - v. However, I believe the word of God is perfect and error-free and that verses 6:16-7:1 flows with the whole chapter and the next!
    1. Paul just encouraged the Corinthians to enlarge their affections him (vv. 11-13).
    2. Now he will explain to them how to do this: by disassociating themselves from evil influences...

#### B. 2Cor. 6:14a (ESV), *“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers...”*

- i. The phrase *“unequally yoked”* is associated with the following OT command:
  1. Deut. 22:10 (ESV), *“You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.”*
    - a. The moral lesson is this:
      - i. An ox and donkey cannot unite comfortably when drawing a plow.
        1. An ox is larger than a donkey and its steps are longer.
        2. The unequal strengths, sizes and paces of these two animals would cause the weaker to be overpowered by the stronger, thus injuring the weaker while putting a greater burden on the stronger.
      - ii. To be *“unequally yoked”* is not limited to marriage, but to any partnership to someone who is spiritually incompatible: whether it be in the form of marriage, business partnership, social, etc.
      - iii. Those who bare Christ’s yoke (Mt. 11:29-30) cannot share it with someone who denies Christ.
        - a. Will a believer and an unbeliever, together, preach Christ and Him crucified and disciple others unto Christ?
        - b. Will a believer and an unbeliever, together, put the kingdom of God first?
        - c. Will a believer and an unbeliever, together, establish a Christ-centered home?
        - d. A believer yoking with an unbeliever is like yoking an ox with a donkey!

4. If anything, a believer who yokes himself or herself to an unbeliever may eventually find himself or herself plowing Satan's field!
    - a. What happens when a Christian (especially a new convert) continues to be unequally yoked to ungodly influences?
    - b. What happens when a Christian marries someone who has no love for Christ and His church?
    - c. What happens when a Christian joins himself with a godless business partner?
    - d. I've seen people's faith vanish or weaken because of such alliances!
  5. Paul is urging the Corinthians to break off all negative alliances so that they can be reconciled to God and re-establish their love towards Paul.
- C. In verses 14b-16a, Paul uses five rhetorical questions to establish his reason as to why they should withdraw from evil associations...
- i. 2Cor. 6:14b (ESV), "*... For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?*"
    1. In the realm of moral behavior:
      - a. What partnership does moral behavior have with sinful behavior?
      - b. NONE: they are opposing morals! (1John 3:4 calls sin "lawlessness").
    2. In the realm of knowledge:
      - a. What fellowship does knowledge of the gospel have with ignorance?
      - b. NONE: Light dispels darkness; they cannot exist together at the same time.
  - ii. 2Cor. 6:15 (ESV), "*What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?*"
    1. In the realm of authority:
      - a. What harmony is there with Christ and Satan?
      - b. NONE: They are opposing authorities!
    2. In the realm of faith:
      - a. What does faith share with disbelief? NOTHING!
        - i. One brings salvation; the other doesn't.
  - iii. 2Cor. 6:16a (ESV), "*What agreement has the temple of God with idols? ...*"
    1. In the realm of worship:
      - a. What agreement does the worship of God have with the worship of idols?
      - b. NONE: There is only one true God!
- D. 2Cor. 6:16b (ESV), "*... For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'*"
- i. Paul paraphrases Leviticus 26:12, emphasizing that God, whose Spirit dwells in the baptized believer (cf. Acts 2:38), is the believer's one and only God, Lord and Shepherd!
- E. 2Cor. 6:17 (ESV), "*Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you,*"
- i. Paul now paraphrases Isaiah 52:11, adding God-inspired words to it!
  - ii. Paul uses this passage to urge the Corinthians to break alliances with ungodly influences.
  - iii. For by doing so, they will be prove themselves to be true children of God, obeying His will to disassociate with evil.
- F. 2Cor. 6:18 (ESV), "*and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.*"
- i. If God is to truly be their Heavenly Father, they must trust and obey Him by breaking partnership with the ungodly!