

## Exegetical Notes – 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen for Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kyllies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

[charleshjensen@aol.com](mailto:charleshjensen@aol.com)

### 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

#### Verse 6:14a

***Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.***

- Paul lays down a general rule for Christian living. Christians should not “yoke” themselves with those who do not accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This, of course, cannot mean that Christians have nothing to do with non-Christians.
- Yoking is the practice of putting two animals of equal size and strength into harness together to increase their strength. It combines their strength into a binding team effort.
- The principle here is that this cannot be done between Christians and non-Christians.
- This principle is often invoked when a Christian decides to marry a non-Christian. The principle certainly applies to marriage. A Christian should not consider marriage with a non-Christian. However, the rule Paul lays down is not limited to marriage. It is a principle which governs all of a Christian’s relationships.

#### Verses 14b-16a

***For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? <sup>15</sup> What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? <sup>16</sup> What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols.***

- To establish grounds for this principle, Paul first asks a series of questions. This is an appeal to logic. In each question he asks, “Can you mix oil and water successfully. Righteousness and wickedness, light and darkness, Christ and Satan (Belial, see Deuteronomy 13:13). God and idols are as different as oil and water. They cannot be successfully yoked.

## Verse 16b

***For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said:  
“I will live with them  
and walk among them,  
and I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.”***

- Next, Paul quotes Scripture to prove his point. He quotes Leviticus 26:12-13. It is rare for Paul to quote Scripture to prove a point. He is speaking to Corinthians, Greeks, among whom the Old Testament is not understood or known. However, he uses Scripture here, and in other places, to speak to those converted Jews in his audience.
- In this case, he quotes Scripture to defend the statement that “we are the temple of God” (see 1 Corinthians 3:16). For Hebrews, the “temple of God” was a building in Jerusalem. Paul challenges the Jews who have converted to Christ to understand that the “temple of God” is not a building but the people of God collectively and individually.
- Through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, God lives in those who are His.

## Verses 17-18

***Therefore,  
“Come out from them  
and be separate,  
says the Lord.  
Touch no unclean thing,  
and I will receive you.”***

<sup>18</sup> ***And,***

***“I will be a Father to you,  
and you will be my sons and daughters,  
says the Lord Almighty.”***

- “Therefore,” because of logic and because of what the scripture says (Leviticus 26:12, Ezekiel 37:38), Christians should avoid being yoked to those who are not Christians.

**Verse 7:1**

***7<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.***

- “Therefore,” given all that he has said, with support of logic and Scripture, Christians cannot mix themselves with the corrupting influences of the world. They must avoid anything that will weaken their alliance to God and pull them away from Him.
- Christians must seek to live holy lives (see 1 Corinthians 1:2). To be “holy” means to be different, to be separated from that which is not of God. Christians are IN the world, but not OF the world. Christians are to be ambassadors for God (see 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2).

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