

"What Is She Doing With That Guy?"

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[0 : 00] I'm going to turn with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 7, chapter 6, sorry.

We will be going into chapter 7 today. Just a brief note on that. The chapter divisions are not part of the Word of God.

They're just a helpful tool. They're not always right or useful. And the verse at the start of chapter 7 belongs at the end of chapter 6.

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to join the church in Belial together in unholy matrimony.

To wed these two together, she who is righteous with he who is unrighteous, she who is light with he who is darkness, she who has faith with he who has none, the church wed with Satan.

[1 : 09] If anyone has any reason why these two should not be married, speak now or forever hold your peace. Then steps in the apostle Paul.

I object. I speak for truth and for Christ when I say that those two do not belong together. I speak for truth and for Christ when I say, what is she doing with that guy?

See, brothers and sisters, after Paul argued last week that the church should stick with the true ministry of the gospel and the true ministers of the gospel, because it is so much more worthy of obedience and trust.

Now Paul argues the other side of the coin. That the church should never be close to the world, close to evil and close to sin. In the text we read today, the main point will be that the people of God have no business being mixed up with the people of the world.

Like that girl, maybe she's a relative, a friend, a co-worker, and she has no business being mixed up with him.

[2 : 33] And you think to yourself after you see them together, what is she doing with that guy? Read with me today and see how the word of God makes the wonderful point that we were saved for something so much better than this world.

So much better than bad relationships with a bad world. And that we have no business being mixed up with the world and its evil.

2 Corinthians chapter 6, starting in verse 14 and going all the way to chapter 7, verse 1. Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial?

Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God.

[3 : 42] As God has said, I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God and they shall be my people. Therefore, come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord.

Do not touch what is unclean and I will receive you. And I will be a father to you. And you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Point number one. One of these things is not like the other. Paul starts off quick and clear.

Because remember how last week he was showing the Corinthians that they should follow his ministry. Because it is gospel ministry, working goodness out of weakness.

[4 : 58] Working life out of death, riches out of poverty, joy out of sorrow. That this is the true ministry of Christ. Now he is trying to win them over by showing that they do not belong following any worldly teachers.

That they do not belong chasing after the things of this life. After worldly success and worldly power in connection with worldly people. That they have no business being involved with those things. It is kind of like if a friend of mine was buying a car. Or looking to buy a car. And he picked out one that was absolutely the worst decision he could make.

And I am really trying to keep him away from it. So I would do two things. I would tell him why the car I picked is so much better. And then I would tell him why the car he picked is an absolutely bad decision.

Last week Paul showed why the car, the gospel ministry is so much better. And why the ministries of this world that they are tempted to follow are so much worse.

[6 : 12] Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. That's what this passage is doing. It's telling you that it makes no sense for you to go after these salesmen of this world.

And what they're trying to sell you. The big point of point one of my sermon is that one thing, the bride of Christ, is not like the other thing, the world and Satan.

And they have no business being mixed together. So we open this section. Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.

This unequal yoking is a word picture. When you want to use oxen like they would in that time to plow a field, you get your plow.

You yoke up. That means you put the harness on an ox on one side and an ox on the other. And you want them to be the same.

[7 : 16] Because if one is too much bigger or stronger than the other, it's going to pull too hard and they'll veer off course. So Paul is creating a word picture that if you yoke yourself up, if you get too wrapped up in the world and unbelievers, they're going to pull you away from the things of God.

And so he says, do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. When you wrap yourself up too closely with the world, they take you away from the work that God has saved you for.

As Ephesians 2 verse 10 says, For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Do not be unequally yoked because one of these things is not like the other. And so the two should not mix in their labors.

I mean, this makes perfect sense and Paul is going to show how clear it is. Verse 14. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness?

[8 : 33] Don't be unequally yoked with unbelievers because what business has the righteous obedience of Christ matching up in work with people who are lawlessly disobedient to God?

Why would those who have been made obedient in Jesus be chummy with those who hate his commandments and rules? What fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness?

And what communion has light with darkness? When have you ever seen light and dark in the same place so that you couldn't tell which one is which?

It's always clear that light and dark are different things. They are always distinctly separate. So too, it should always be clear that a Christian and a non-Christian are separate things.

That they're not the same sort of people. That they don't do the same things or function in the same way, just as with light and dark. You can be near the darkness of this world, but always make sure it is clear that you are separate from it.

[9 : 51] Verse 15. In what accord has Christ with Belial? Belial here is a name for Satan or for a demon.

And this is a striking thing that Paul is putting. Imagine if you saw Satan and Jesus shaking hands on a business agreement. It makes no sense.

So too, there is a way in which you can throw your law in with the world that makes it look like Satan and Jesus have business together.

And so, work very hard to make it clear that the Lord you serve is different than the Lord of this world. And is after different things and is at no peace with him.

Verse 15. Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? What portion do they share together?

[10 : 55] You know, what company do they both have stock in at the same time? It's like if you saw a Jew and a Nazi working together to build a building.

It would be crazy. What possible structure could they both want to build together? So too, believers shouldn't be partners with unbelievers.

There should be a clear distinction. We shouldn't follow and bind ourselves so closely together that it looks like we're working for the same things.

And that's what part here means. It means we shouldn't be partners. We shouldn't have the same part in the same tasks.

Ultimately, Paul knows and we should know that one of these things is not like the other. And so it makes perfect sense for there to be a clear division between the people of Christ and the people of this world.

[12 : 04] And so do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. One of these things is not like the other. It makes no sense together. Like fire underwater.

Like eating a cake in the middle of a landfill. Like the Mona Lisa as bathroom paper. These two things do not belong together. So do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.

I mean, one of the clear applications that the church has taken from this text over many, many years is that believers and unbelievers shouldn't marry each other.

Because it makes it look like you're living your life for the same thing. And there's no real difference to being a Christian. You know? But it also means more generally than that, avoid connecting yourself with unbelievers in a way that will pull you off of the track of Christ.

We do have to be involved with the world. You know, we have to work jobs and drive around and share the road with people.

[13 : 21] These things are fine. But avoid the ways in which you get so close that they will pull you away from Christ. You know, think about if you wanted to start a bridal company with an unbeliever.

Well, don't be surprised when after a little while they want you to start supporting gay marriages.

This is a clear example of how you can throw in with unbelievers and pull yourself away from the things of God.

And when a believer is unequally yoked up with an unbeliever, you might ask yourself, what is she doing with that guy?

So that's point one. One thing is not like the other. But the passage doesn't end there.

Paul continues on to one last example. But this is sort of a transition example where he goes from this one thing is not like the other to show what actually makes Christians so different in the first place.

[14 : 30] Why do they really have no business being mixed up with the world? And he does that in verse 16. What agreement has the temple of God with idols?

For you are the temple of the living God. It's this picture of idols standing right next to the cross as if the two make sense in the same building.

It's like someone, if they came in and hung a couple pentagrams up in our church. It doesn't make sense together. But the secret here is that the temple is not this building.

The place where this mixture doesn't make sense isn't first and foremost here. The temple is you. And that mixture of sin and righteousness doesn't make sense in your life because you are the temple of the living God.

That is why this mixture is purely unreasonable and nonsense. So the secret is that you are the temple of the living God.

[15 : 51] And that that is what makes you different from this world. Point number two. The temple is where our God is.

Home may be where the heart is, but the temple is where our God is. What makes us the temple of the living God is God's presence in and among us.

That is what defines a temple biblically. God has made us his home and he has made his dwelling in our midst.

And to understand this idea of temple more, we have to take a journey through the scriptures.

To see how all throughout the Bible, the way it understands the temple is the place where God makes his presence in the middle of his people.

[16 : 53] This is the rule. When Paul talks about being a temple, he's not talking in a vague general way, but he's grabbing hold of this biblical idea of the place where God dwells in his people.

And he's using that to show God dwells in you and you have no business being mixed with the world. So let's go through a Bible journey and see the temple as the dwelling place of God and see that work all throughout scripture.

So all the way back in the beginning, you have the garden. God creates this beautiful cosmos, this wonderful world. And what does he declare of it?

It is good. It is good. It is very good. Because it is a reflection of his goodness, just like a temple is a reflection of God.

And then he puts his people in it, Adam and Eve. The earth starts off as a temple to God's glory. And he puts his people in it.

[18:09] And then what does he do? He spends time with them there. We have all throughout the Genesis account, God talking to Adam and Eve face to face, giving instructions.

He personally breathes life into them. He shapes them with his hands. He says, God is the first temple where God dwells in his people.

And isn't it the best place? It's that place of sweet blessing where the creator walks with his creature. But then sin gets mixed into it and it destroys it.

Because God cannot be near sin. He is holy. There is no place to mix sin with God. So sin enters the first temple.

It breaks down and they are separated from the presence of God. The temple stops. Then you go forward in the story. You get the tabernacle.

[19:15] This is a cloth temple. God brings his people out of Egypt. And then in Leviticus, he gives them instructions about how to make a temple, a tabernacle.

And he tells them that this is the place where he will put his presence in their midst. Tabernacle, temple is this idea of God in his people, near his people, to bless them and bring them goodness. The tabernacle, the temple becomes a do-over of the perfection of the garden. And then it is from this instruction about the tabernacle that Paul quotes in our passage in 2 Corinthians 6.

He quotes from Leviticus 26 verses 11 and 12. I will set my tabernacle among you. That's my temple. And my soul shall not abhor you.

I will walk among you and be your God and you shall be my people. Then we read the same, you know, it's paraphrased, but the same idea in 2 Corinthians 6.16.

[20:30] I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God and they will be my people. Paul is leaning on this Old Testament idea of temple.

That the temple is where our God is and you are the temple of the living God because he is with you. This word that is used in Leviticus, tabernacle, it actually means, it doesn't mean directly temple, but it's borrowed for that purpose.

It means to dwell or to live in. And so God dwells in temples within, tabernacles within us.

This cloth temple is God's dwelling in the midst of his people. And this is how God first shows that his dwelling in his people is his plan for salvation.

See how wonderful the temple is? It is the place where God is in the midst of his people. Where they have fellowship with his creator.

[21:44] Where you get to see your Lord in all of his glory and be near him. But we aren't the people of Israel fresh out of Egypt.

So let's keep following through the Bible to see how this temple idea continues to work out and become our temple. The temple culminates.

The temple culminates not in a building, not in a cloth building or a stone building, but in one person.

As you continue on in the scripture narrative, you get tabernacled and temple, temple, temple, temple. And it's never enough to make things right, to bring things back to Eden.

And then one man shows up. And he is the fulfillment of everything the temple was supposed to be. That man is Jesus Christ.

[22:46] God found dwelling in a man in Jesus. We know the rule.

The temple is where God is. So Jesus must be the temple because in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. So when Jesus is predicted in Isaiah 7.14, it says, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us. You see that?

It's temple language. God in the presence of his people. Jesus is Emmanuel. He is the temple of God right there. And it continues on.

John 1.14, The word that is Jesus became flesh and dwelt among us. The word there, dwelt, is tabernacle.

[23 : 53] It's literally, God became flesh and temped among us. See how this idea of temple culminates in the person of Jesus.

Then the camera pans down on Jesus. And John says that this is God being the temple in us, in our midst.

He continues on and shows that the temple is Jesus' body. John 2.19-21 Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

Verse 21. But he was speaking of the temple of his body. The idea of temple culminates in Jesus.

But then, scripture continues and it shows that Jesus, who is the temple, whose body is the temple, gets mashed up with his people when God calls the church the body of Christ.

See that? If the body of Christ equals the temple, and the church equals the body of Christ, then the church equals the temple.

[25 : 15] These ideas connect all together to make us into the church of the living God. I love Ephesians 2.19-22 on this.

Now therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a place, for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. This is the point. The thing that makes you different from the world is that you are a temple of God. That he has made himself to dwell in your midst.

It's not, you know, when we read earlier, what fellowship has light with darkness, or Christ with Belial, or righteousness with lawlessness.

[26 : 33] It's not that we are so good that we're righteousness, and that we're light, and that we're Christ. It's that he dwells within us.

Apart from Jesus, you belong with the world. There's nothing different about you then. You mix it all up. But with Jesus, you become something else entirely, and you have no place being mixed up with them.

The temple is where our God is, and our God is with us. The temple is this precious place where the presence of God is in his people to bless them, and that's what makes them unlike the whole world. So don't go mixing that temple with idols. Don't set up in your heart, alongside the cross of Christ, idols of wealth, and approval, and success, and worldly esteem, and comfort and luxury.

Don't go mixing that temple with idols. Don't mix the worship of the living God with the worship of things that aren't God.

[28 : 01] Celebrities, wealth, approval, friends, success, and so much more. If you do that, if you cross these wires and mix these things that don't belong being mixed, you should ask yourself, and we should all rightly ask, what is she doing with that guy?

What is the bride of Christ doing mixed up with the world? separate from the world? Separate from the world. Not in location, but in heart, in truth, and in life.

Make sure you act in a way that shows that you are separate. So as we get into the home stretch here, I ask you to hang on with me.

We're going to work through a couple more ideas to hopefully bring this all home. See, the temple is a clean place.

Point number three, cleanliness is part of godliness. This is very similar to what we had talked about before, so use it to drive home your separate and your special status as the temple of God.

[29 : 20] starting in verse 17. Therefore. What is the therefore, therefore? It shows you the point of everything that came before.

Before Paul says you are a temple, then he says therefore, and so now he's saying if you are a temple, this is what should come next.

Therefore, come out from them, from among them, and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.

I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and my daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

It is here where our status as a temple demands that you try to keep yourself clean and separate from the world.

[30 : 31] The temple is to be a clean place. If you have repented and trusted in Christ, then God is your father.

He has made you a son, a daughter. Verse 18, I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

Oh, to be a son of the Almighty. Oh, to be a member of the heavenly family. I mean, what better status is there?

Don't you want that? Be separate so that you can enjoy those privileges. You know? Remember the passages we read earlier in 2 Samuel 7?

That is where this passage comes from. I will be a father to you, and you shall be my son. Paul is drawing from the promises that come to David, get fulfilled in Christ, and then he's showing how they're our promises in Jesus.

[31 : 46] We are sons, and we should rejoice like David. Who am I that you have shown such regard for me?

And of course, if I am a son, how am I going to be best friends with traitors, rebels, and terrorists? It, like, it doesn't make sense. I'm not saying that you shouldn't interact with the world at all. We're not called to be monks. But it should be clear that you are an ambassador who is trying to win over rebels to your father's cause.

So when you're in the world, make sure it's clear that you are not of the world. There really should be a clear difference between the ambassador and the rebels.

[32 : 50] Verse 1 of chapter 7, Since we have these promises, we have them. We have the promises that we are sons and heirs with Christ if we trust in him.

Since we have the promises that I will be your God and you will be my people, I will dwell in you.

Since we have the promise that we are a temple of the living God.

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves. we are promised children. We are a new Eden.

We are made righteousness and light and we have Christ in all of his beauty. What does the world have that would make us yoke up with them instead?

Are you really happiest when you're with people who hate your Savior? Isn't there better joy with the people who are themselves members of that temple?

[33 : 58] who themselves are set apart? So brothers and sisters, as this verse says, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of the body and spirit that we might bring holiness to completion in the fear of God.

Brothers and sisters, be at war with your sin. Be at war with every sin and every allegiance to this world that hides the beauty of the temple that Jesus died to make you.

Make every effort to be clearly distinct from this world because you are relishing in the presence of your God. We will close with the answer to one of the issues that comes up with all this temple things.

You see, God is holy. Fully holy. Fully pure. There is no place for evil in his midst. He cannot be mixed up with evil like we can.

And if the temple is where he dwells, then there is no place for sin there. So when Adam and Eve sin, they are kicked out of the presence of God.

[35 : 33] When God went into the tabernacle, that cloth temple, he had his own room, the Holy of Holies, where no one was allowed to enter lest they die because of their sin.

So that raises the question, how can we be the temple of God? I'm not holy. I've sinned. There's no, I'm not pure enough for God's presence.

Well, it's by sacrifice. Once a year, the priest could enter that Holy of Holies, the presence of God. God, and before doing that, he would have to sacrifice a lamb to pay for his sins.

It was a picture of what Jesus would do. So too, when the better sacrifice is given, when Jesus is offered, the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, then we who trust in him can be cleansed enough to enter the presence of God.

When Jesus died, he is paying the price that all sinners deserve so that anyone who relies on him can enter into the presence of God and receive the blessing of being the temple of the Lord.

[36 : 55] That's why when Jesus died, the curtain of the temple was torn in two. It was a picture that God made happen to show that the way in to his presence is now free and clear.

As his body is torn, as his body the temple is torn, so too the picture of the temple is torn and the way into the presence of God is made.

Receive his sacrifice, rejoice in God's presence, and be clean and separate from evil. Let us close in prayer.

God, it is amazing that you are in our midst and that you have made us into your people. We were once rebels and enemies.

We rejoice at your blessings and we ask that you help us to not take them for granted. In Jesus' name, Amen. Please rise for our closing song.

[38 : 05] Amen.