

Pray for your time together in God's Word!

Read the passage out loud as a group. Option: Give the group 5 minutes to look at the passage by themselves.

This Week's Passage

Scripture Reference

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 (NIV – 2011)

¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? 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.”

¹⁷ Therefore,

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

¹⁸ And,

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

Chapter 7

¹ 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.

Discussion

Ask the Group: What about this passage stood out to you?

Leaders' Note: This question gives your group the opportunity to explore their own ideas before leading them to specific discussion. Caution: Do not let this turn into a debate about personal understandings—keep it more on the “observation” level.

Ask the Group: In verse 14 Paul commands, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.” Yoked is an agricultural term – what would this term have meant to the original audience?

Possible Answers: Dictionary definition = a wooden crosspiece that is fastened over the necks of two animals and attached to the plow or cart that they are to pull. Two different types of animals yoked together would not be able to pull the plow or cart in a straight line.

- **Ask the Group:** Using Paul’s metaphor, what types of relationships can be defined as being “yoked?”

Leaders’ Note: Marriage is the example most commonly thought of in this passage; however, this applies to other relationships as well. There are different views in understanding what constitutes a “yoked” relationship. Our understanding is that some of the characteristics of a “yoked” relationship are: a certain level of commitment, shared decision-making, a representation of one another, etc.

Ask the Group: What are the four metaphors that Paul uses to contrast believers and unbelievers? (vv. 14-16)

Possible Answers: Righteousness vs. Wickedness, Light vs. Darkness, Christ vs. Belial, and Temple of God vs. Idols

- **Ask the Group:** Why do you think Paul chose these metaphors to contrast believers and unbelievers?

Possible Answer: They are obvious opposites.

Ask the Group: In verse 16, Paul says that we are the temple of the living God. What does this mean?

Possible Answers: We are a representative of Christ just as the temple represented God in the Old Testament. Because the Holy Spirit lives within us, we no longer have to go to a physical location to meet with God. God is a personal God, and we are able to have an intimate relationship with Him.

Ask the Group: What do Paul’s Old Testament references in verses 16-18 say about God’s relationship with His people?

Possible Answers: Personal, exclusive, familial, set apart (holy), visibly obvious (God is jealous)

Ask the Group: Read verse 7:1 aloud. As God’s chosen people, why are we to be different from the rest of the world?

Possible Answers: We’re called to be holy just as God is holy, out of reverence for God, because we represent God, to make God’s name great, etc.

Ask the Group: Looking at this entire passage we see that believers are to be set apart from the world and not yoked with unbelievers, yet we live in a world with unbelievers. How are we to relate to unbelievers?

Leaders’ Note: Reading this passage out of the context of the rest of the Bible, one might draw the incorrect conclusion that believers must completely segregate themselves from unbelievers; however, other passages make it clear that we are called to engage and relate with the world around us as a witness for Christ. Some examples can be found in Matthew 28:16-20, Matthew 5:14-16, 1 Corinthians 5:9-10.

Application

Ask the Group (small or large): Think about the current relationships that you have with unbelievers.

- Are any of these relationships “yoked?”
- Are these relationships honoring to God?

Ask the Group (small or large): Do you view yourself as a person set apart for God?

- Do you think others see you this way? If not, what can you begin doing differently this week to show that you are set apart?

Suggestion: Send this application question and challenge out during the week to encourage your group.

Last Week's Application: (Discuss if time)

Ask the Group (small or large): In Paul's listing of what he endured; he gives a picture of what he was willing to go through for the sake of the Gospel. What are you willing to go through so that others may come to know Jesus?

Ask the Group (small or large): Paul modeled a godly approach to others in this passage. How will you allow Paul's approach to the Corinthians shape how you relate to others this week?