Belief and Believers

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

1. Intro
   1. Believers are different from unbelievers
   2. The contrasts made in chapter 6 are clear
   3. Let us not forget the difference: the Spirit of Christ
2. Text
   1. Verse 14: do not be unequally yoked
      1. Yoke: a wooden crosspiece that is fastened over the necks of two animals and attached to the plow or cart that they are to pull.
      2. A team of oxen or cattle that were yoked together we’re connected as a team by a yoke to pull a heavier load and to do more work.
      3. An experienced ox and a younger inexperienced ox were teamed together to allow for proper experience and strength.
   2. Verse 14-16: examples
   3. Verse 16: The Distinction
   4. Verse 17: The Separation
   5. Verse 18: the Promise
3. Point
   1. The Distinction
      1. Unequal/Incompatible
      2. The warning here is clear: Believers and Unbelievers are so different that they are incompatible.
      3. Belief in Christ causes believers to be unlike the world.
      4. Believers need partnerships, but partnering with someone from a different worldview will cause more difficulty that benefit.
      5. There is no commonality between:
         1. Righteousness and lawlessness
         2. Light and darkness
         3. Christ and the demonic
      6. The distinction is seen in:
         1. Motivation
         2. Cooperation
         3. Expectation
      7. We are different, and it matters
         1. It matters in a dating relationship
         2. In a business relationship
         3. In any relationship…so understand the distinction and work in the mission of Christ.
      8. We have a different mind:

Philippians 2: 1So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,[a] 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,[b] 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,[c] being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

* 1. The Separation
     1. The Mind of Christ/The Philosophy of Man
     2. There is a clear distinction in the heart of a believer from the heart of an unbeliever
        1. We do not have the same heart and mind
        2. We do not make decisions in the same way
        3. We do not serve for the same purposes
     3. It is sometimes hard to see the separation, why?
        1. compromise, we are not different from the world in action.
        2. Inactivity, we are not seen as separate because we are not seen at all.
        3. Misdirection, we have headed the wrong direction so long that we have become irrelevant. Our voice just gets mixed in with all the other voices and becomes gray noise.
     4. The Mission of the believer and the mission of an unbeliever will never be the same mission
  2. The Mission
     1. Separated but sent
     2. How will they ever come to faith without those who are IN CHRIST sharing the message OF CHRIST.
     3. The world is not inclined to default to the gospel, but rather the strength of Man
     4. This is why our mission is still in tact.
     5. This make the ministry seem heavy at times…
        1. Matthew 11:28-30 28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
        2. We can trust in the God who gave us this mission, to carry us through this mission.
        3. Remember, not our ability, but our availability
        4. God is doing this work, and we are supposed to fulfill our role in it.

1. Close

He said, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. My yoke is easy and my burden is light.” But why wouldn't we just avoid yokes altogether and do our own thing? Ironically, there is a comfort in being "yoked" to something or someone, when it is a benevolent entity.  We must learn the ways of living from somewhere and being completely on our own can be intimidating and overwhelming. Jesus is offering us an opportunity to learn from him and serve a righteous purpose making our lives easier and meaningful

Let’s consider the context of Jesus’ words. Two oxen are chosen to share a yoke. The first is an older seasoned ox. He is trained and hardy from years of routine. The second is a new young ox. He has potential but is inexperienced. By sharing the same yoke with a veteran workhorse, the elder trains the young.

Not only that, but the experienced one draws harder to bear the majority of the load. Since the older one leads, the younger ox does not have to wonder what to do. He learns from his mentor and gains the knowledge and skill to teach others.

This very much resembles discipleship. Jesus invites us to ‘learn of Him’ which is another way of stating ‘be my disciple.’ There’s peace in not having to figure life out on our own. There’s assurance as we follow His lead.

Jesus also declares that His yoke is easy. The word ‘easy’ here doesn’t imply ‘simple’, but ‘good’. If I’m yoked to Jesus, there’s peace in being yoked to someone good, loving, and patient.

The paraphrase? “Get in the yoke with me. Let me disciple You. I’ll bear the weight of your burden. My yoke is good and you will find rest and companionship in our labor together.”