

## Do Not Be Yoked With Unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-18)

<sup>14</sup>Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. 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? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? <sup>16</sup>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."

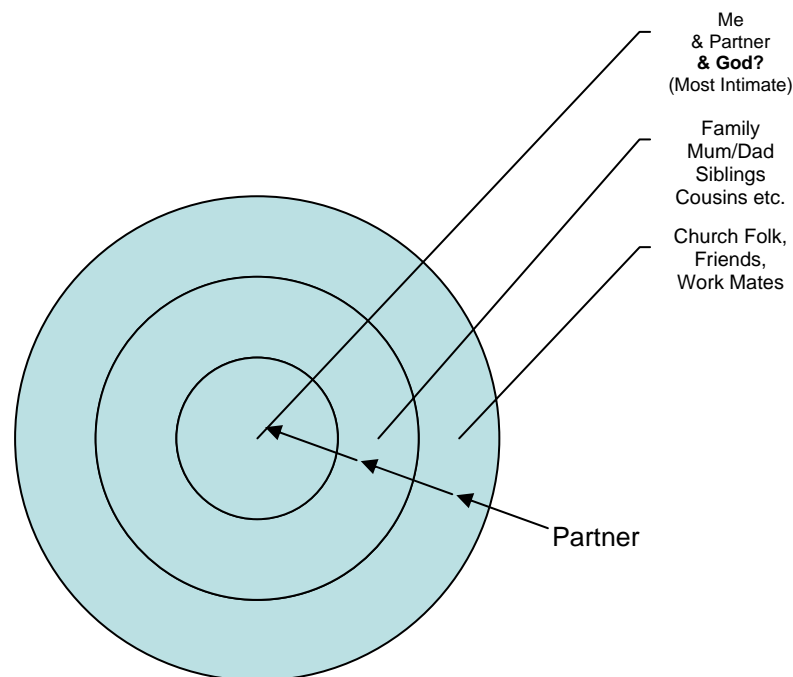
<sup>17</sup>"Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord.

Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

<sup>18</sup>"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

### Remember the "Circle of Trust" in Meet the Parents

We all have are layers of relationships:



Your partner starts off at the outer layer and gradually moves into the centre as you both become closer and intimate with each other. The question is who else is in the centre?

### The nature of the believer (6:14–16)

It is nature that determines association.

The concept of the "unequal yoke" comes from Deuteronomy 22:10: "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together." The ox was a clean animal to the Jews, but the ass was not (Deut. 14:1–8); and it would be wrong to yoke them together. Furthermore, they have two opposite natures and would not even work well together. It would be cruel to bind them to each other. In the same way, it is wrong for believers to be yoked together with unbelievers.

Note the nouns that Paul used: *fellowship*, *harmony*, *agreement*. Each of these words speaks of having something in common.

Paul saw believers and unbelievers in stark contrast to each other: righteousness—unrighteousness, light—darkness, Christ—Belial (Satan), belief—infidelity (unbelief), God's temple—idols. How could you possibly bring these opposites together? When a saved person marries an unsaved partner, it sets up an impossible situation; and the same thing applies to business partnerships

### The command of Scripture (6:17).

The major part of this quotation is from Isaiah 52:11, The reference in Isaiah is to the captive nation leaving Babylon and returning to their own land, but the spiritual application is to the separation of the people of God today. God commands His people to "come out," which implies a definite act on their part. **"Be separate" suggests devotion to God for a special purpose.**

Separation is not just a negative act of departure; it is also a positive act of dedication to God. We must separate *from* sin and *move towards* God. "Touch not the unclean thing" is a warning against defilement. We must not associate with those who will compromise our faith or lead us into disobedience.