

## Do Not Yoke Up!

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what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

II Corinthians 6:14

The double-negative "not unequally yoked" can be somewhat confusing to our modern vernacular, but it simply means "do not be yoked together with unbelievers." The

yoke spoken of here refers to the wooden implement that binds two farm animals together.

It was common for two oxen or mules to be joined together with that device so they could plow a field together. We are not going in the same direction as the world is going. We should not be plowing the same "field" as they.

We should not be yoked to unbelievers in marriage, business relationships, friendships, or other close relationships. When we are yoked together closely in such a relationship, we can end up going the wrong direction.

We are in the world, and we may naturally be in close contact with the unsaved. That happens and is a good opportunity to be a

witness and an example to them, but getting into the position that we are going in their direction is what God is warning us against

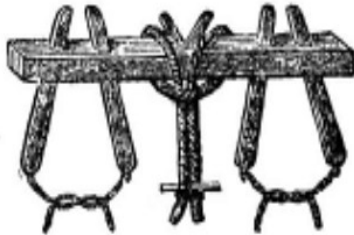
A child of God is on the winning side. Why in the world would he want to go in the same direction as the losing side?

We have a Leader who will take us in the right direction. We should not be following those who do not know the way. We should be guiding others in the right

direction, not following their wrong pathways through life.

The Bible says there are two spiritual sides in this life: God's and the devil's (also called Belial). What can we possibly have in common with an unbeliever's thinking and goals?

"And what concord [agreement, union in opinions, sentiments, views or interests] hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." II Cor. 6:15-16



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## There Are Accursed Things Among Us!

Bill Brinkworth

"Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you." Joshua 7:13

Joshua and the people of Israel had seen God's hand in their victory over Jericho. All marveled at how that mighty fortress collapsed with God's help (Joshua 6).

The leader's further instruction to the people was to enter the flattened city and not spare any enemy lives (Josh. 6:17, 21). All were to be killed.

Israel was also strictly forbidden to take any of the riches of the city for themselves. All the treasures of the fallen city were to be given to Israel's treasury.

As Israel's army entered the city and did to it as they were commanded, one man could not resist the temptation of all the

valuables he saw, and took some for himself. That man, Achan, took a Babylonian garment, silver, and some gold. He took it back to his tent and buried it. The thief thought no one knew, but God knew of his disobedience.



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One of the principles that will distinguish a strong Christian from a weak one, when practiced, is taught in II Corinthians 6. Not adhering to God's teaching on this doctrine has ruined many Christian lives and testimonies. It is the number one robber of joy for a child of God. Paul taught that there should be a separation of a Christian from those who are not saved (II Cor. 6:14-17). "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for

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## There Are Accursed ...

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Later, when a small force of Israel's army went to attack the nearby town of Ai, they were easily defeated. Joshua and the people were horrified over the defeat and the death of some of their soldiers. The thrashing from a weaker enemy led Joshua to believe that God's hand was no longer with His people.

Joshua was grieved. He prayed, and God revealed that the defeat was due to one man's disobedience (Josh. 8:13). Because of one man's sin, all of Israel was guilty (Josh. 7:1, 11) of rebelling against what God had commanded them to do.

One man's iniquity cost the lives of others. Israel's testimony was tarnished, and God's hand was no longer helping His people.

Later, with God's help, Joshua discerned who was responsible (Joshua 8:17-19). Achan was revealed to be the culprit. He confessed, and what had not been put into Israel's treasury was recovered. Because of the sin that cursed the people, Achan

and his family were killed (Joshua 8:25). Many suffered greatly because of one man's sin.

Today, that principle still applies. Others suffer great loss because of an individual's sin.

Families are split up because of an adulterous parent's sin. Friends who innocently ride along with a friend who commits a crime often see jail time as accomplices to the wrongdoing.

New laws rob many of their freedoms because of others' wrongdoing. A family can get a bad reputation because of one misbehaving child. Whole communities have been looked down upon because of the belligerent attitudes of some. Sin's tentacles often reach further than the one sinning.

In the account in Joshua 6-8, one individual's sin affected all of Israel. Perhaps two million people suffered loss of God's guidance and protection! It was not a "little" sin.

With Achan's treachery in mind, and how it affected so many, imagine how the sins that are rampant today are harming nations. Although many are ignorant of God's commandments, and many refuse to obey the ones they know, God has not changed.

What was sin in Joshua's day and biblical days is still iniquity today. Sins that cost nations in the past are causing much suffering today.

God is aware of today's national tolerance of sins such as abortion, sexual deviancies, acceptance of man-made religions, mockery of God and biblical morals, lessening punishments for crimes, reliance on government rather than God, attacks on Christianity, and scores of other "acceptable" behaviors. Although much of society tolerates current immoralities, God does not. He did not tolerate it with Achan, and He will not put up with it today.

Because of Achan's transgression, Israel could not stand against a smaller, insignificant enemy. Today, we have small, terrorist cults creating great havoc to very powerful nations. Small minorities seem to hold the power to control vast majorities.

Common sense is dumped for philosophies that have failed countless times previously. Once great nations are now cowering under pressures from small groups of radical extremists.

Why all the chaos? Why is sin prevailing and righteousness failing?

As a nation was judged because of one man's disobedience after the Battle of Jericho, so are some being judged today for sin. No one person or country gets away with wrongdoing.

There may be no thunderbolts being hurled from the heavens or earthquakes swallowing the sinning individuals, but unless sin is dealt with directly, God's helping and protecting hand will be with-

drawn from many. It is far past time we learn the lesson that Israel learned the hard way; that unless sin is judged, halted, and repented, many will suffer — even today!

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chron. 7:14*

## Do You Really Want What It Has To Offer?

*J. Mason*

If you love your soul, beware of what the world has to offer. It has slain millions.

☞ What ruined Lot's life? The world!

☞ What ruined Haman? The world!

☞ What ruined Judas? The world!

☞ What ruined Demas? The world!

And you really believe you can survive what the world will give you unscathed?

**"The pull to have what the world temporarily has to offer has cost countless Christians their joy, testimony, and futures!"**

*— Barbara Brinkworth*

**O**il and water  
donot mix;  
neither do the  
saved and the  
unsaved.

*— Author Unknown*