

2 Corinthians 6

Sunday 10/28/2012

SEC: Review of Biblical Fellowship Stages

Well, if you have your Bibles, we will be back in 2 Corinthians 6 today. We were off last week because Gene was here, and we kind of took a break. I gave you a sermon on the great classes that have to be in God's school, which I think for many of you where you are at right now, that's a great value to you and will help you a lot.

But we will be back today in 2 Corinthians 6. We now know that we have come through four great lessons on understanding your biblical fellowship through the Word of God. Fellowship with God is so crucial, and yet it is probably one of the most misunderstood topics in all the Bible. I kind of broke it down and took the time to show you how our fellowship with Christ should grow as we grow and develop through four basic stages. If you are here this morning and you are saved, I can guarantee you, you are in one of these stages. Everybody is not always on the same stage, but you are all in one of these stages. Your goal is to continue to develop to get to that point.

We talked about stage one, we will call it. We now know that the basic, fundamental bottom line of fellowship with God has to be with His truth. It has to be with the Word of God. We talked about in that message, if you remember, about God giving you His grace and you taking that grace, but taking that grace in vain. In other words, taking what God has given to you and then never doing anything back to Him with it. So we have learned in the first lesson that the basic, fundamental bottom line of fellowship starts with the truth of God's Word. You have to be in fellowship with that book.

The second thing we talked about, or the next stage, were the sufferings of Christ, the things that we go through, our adversities. Remember, I gave you ten of those things that we are in to be in fellowship with. Not the normal things that the average Christian would think that fellowship is. We like to think of fellowship always being fun things, good things, never bad things. But you saw in those ten that the real fellowship is based on our suffering with Christ through the things that we go through for Him.

Then the third stage, we saw that the areas of our lives—and there were nine of these—by which we keep our fellowship and make sure it keeps developing. You have to keep growing. I have watched all my life and all my ministry, men and women who get saved start to do well for a while and then they fall off. There are many reasons for that. Sometimes the devil never misses an opportunity to try to mess us up. He will use everything and everybody he can that is going his way to get you to quit going God's way. It is just that simple. Many times people have started coming to church or have been in my ministry over the years. They have done well for a year, two years, three years, and then suddenly something happens to them and they lose that interest. They lose that luster that they had for God. Simply, at the end of the day, they quit growing. You have to keep moving through and growing through the things in life. That was in the fourth process: what being in fellowship with, the things that we are, that by these things we really have

our fellowship. There were nine of those to keep our fellowship and make sure that we keep developing it and keep growing.

Then the fourth one, and this was the week before Gene got here, and that is the process of being in fellowship, what all of the producers are. I gave you some incredible contrasts, nine of them, that ought to be in our lives once we get to a point that God is really using us.

SEC: The Doctrine of Separation (Sanctification)

Today we will look at the fifth aspect of our fellowship. I guess probably if you want to lay these out in one, two, three, four, and five and put them in some order of importance, I would say that this fifth aspect is probably really the key to all the rest of them. I call this one the fellowship of our separation.

Like all the great doctrines in the Bible—and the word doctrine means to teach—when I talk about Bible doctrine, I am talking about Bible teachings, specifically what the Bible teaches about certain areas, certain subjects that you and I need to know. But with all the great Bible doctrines in the Word of God, the doctrine of sanctification is vital for us to understand. That is a big, twenty-five-dollar word: sanctification. You hear it thrown around a lot with a lot of preachers and a lot of Christians, but in reality, it is a very basic thing to understand.

You will remember that last week I told you that God always divides, and then He adds, but He never subtracts. You want to remember that today. We are going to use that in our little equation. When you got saved, God sanctified you as His child. What does that mean? Sanctified is simply a word that means that God separated you from this world. The word sanctification and separation are one and the same. The theological term is sanctification. That is the Bible term. But in the vernacular, in the common language, it would simply be that God sets you apart.

When you and I got saved, God divided us. I told you, God always divides us first. Then He adds things to our lives, but God never takes anything away from our life. That basic formula is why you cannot lose your salvation. God divided you from the world. He added you to His church, and He saved you, but God can never subtract that salvation from you. Somebody says, "Well, but God will take the blessing from us." Oh, no, no. God does not take the blessings from you. The devil, on the other hand, he divides you from God. Then he subtracts the blessings of God from your life, and he never adds anything. That is how it works. God does not take anything away from you. You give it up. You throw it away. You look at God and say, "I do not want it." He does not come back and say, "Well, you are not doing right, so I am taking this from you." No, no. Long before that would ever happen, you look at God and say, "No, thank you. I do not want this." So that is how that works.

Sanctification and sanctified simply mean that you are set apart. When you study it all through the Bible, that is what God has done to have fellowship with His people all through the Bible, especially in the Old Testament. He separated them. He separated Noah from the world in Genesis 6-9. In Genesis 12, when He wanted to build the nation of Israel, He separated Abraham from everybody in his family down in Ur of the Chaldees and brought him out. When Israel became a nation, He had to separate them from the land of Egypt. When they got into their own

promised land, He separated them. He said, "Do not have anything to do with marriage or relationships with the other nations." He had separated them. They were a sanctified nation.

SEC: The Devil's Strategy Against Separation

The devil knew—and this is something that I think as God's people, when we get into the everyday thing of life, why people make it, do not make it, why you struggle, why I struggle—I think this is the great unknown equation that we all forget. We all forget the fact that, I call it the devil factor, the fact that the devil always will do everything he can to keep you from being what God wants you to be. He will use every detail in your life that you allow Him to use.

Take the nation of Israel. God called them out, told them they were to be separate, told them that they were to be a nation that was not to be connected with any other nation. The devil knew that as long as they stayed sanctified, as long as they stayed separate, that he could never really ever do anything to bring their downfall. He could not because they had the blessings of God in their life and they had the power of God in their life. As long as they obeyed God fundamentally in one simple concept—sanctification, staying separate from the rest of the nations—the devil could never get them.

Do you know what the devil did? It is recorded for you in Numbers 25 with Balaam and Balak. Do you know what he did? Balaam wanted to destroy the nation of Israel. He wanted to wipe them out. Balak and Balaam got into a discussion of how they could destroy the nation of Israel. One of them offered him umpteen millions of dollars if he would go against and destroy the nation of Israel. He looks at him every time and he says, "I cannot do that. You do not understand. You could give me all the wealth in the world, but if I go after and hurt the nation of Israel, God is going to kill me, and what good is all the money going to do?" But he said, "I will tell you what you can do. If you want to bring about the demise of the nation of Israel, here is what you do." This is found in Numbers 25. It is called the error of Balaam in the Bible. It is also called the way of Balaam in the Bible. He says this: "You get their Jewish boys and their Jewish girls to intermingle and marry with all the other nations that are out there and get them to violate the principle of sanctification. And you know what? You will destroy them."

Do you know how you destroy them? Because when they do that and they mix their seed with another nation that God told them to stay separate from, you will not have to wipe them out. God will come down and wipe them out. In Numbers 25, you find the devil putting into play the very beginning of the downfall of the nation of Israel. That downfall did not happen for another fifteen hundred or two thousand years, but it happened. If you want to trace it back, it all starts back in Numbers 25 when God set them apart from the world and then the devil got them back with the world. That is all it took.

By the time we get to 721 BC, Sennacherib comes down and takes the northern tribes into captivity. Do you know what he does? He does exactly the extended program of the devil. In the Bible, you have a group of people called Samaritans. In the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans. The Samaritans were half Jew and half Gentile. The Jew, at that point, looked at them with disdain and wanted nothing to do with them. Most people do not even know where the Samaritans came from. The Samaritans

come from Samaria, which is a location in the Bible. You can find it on a map. When Sennacherib, king of Assyria, comes down and takes the northern tribes into captivity, and he is being used of the devil to destroy the nation of Israel through intermixing and intermingling between the nations, what he did was he took a group of those Jews and he put them down there in Samaria and they interbred. They mixed the Jewish seed with the Samaritan seed. Through that came a mixture of half Jew, half Assyrian, called the Samaritans, that nobody would ever accept, and his whole plan was in time to destroy the nation of Israel.

But we are not done there. Nebuchadnezzar in 606, 587, he comes down and takes the two southern tribes into captivity. You can read it in Daniel 1. Do you know what he does? He takes certain children of the king's seed. King's seed is the line of Christ, men and women who are going to be in the lineage of Christ, and what he does is he takes them down there and tries to intermingle them with the Babylonians. That is what the devil does.

When the devil wanted to destroy the nation of Israel and keep them fulfilling what God wanted them to do, he simply had them forget about the fact that they were separate from the world, sanctified from the world, and put them back with the world. Do you know what he does when he wants to stop you and me as God's people? Just take a guess. He gets you to forget about the fact that you are sanctified, that you are set apart. He actually gets God's people to believe that you can live one foot in the world and one foot with God. It is the biggest lie ever propagated, but that is what the devil does, and God's people fall for it. They do not know how the devil is always at every opportunity there to do everything he can to take away and subtract from you what God has given you.

SEC: New Testament Peculiarity and Contrast

In the New Testament, at salvation, God has set us apart, and we now are like Israel. Israel was told to be a peculiar people, peculiar in the sense that, I do not know if you know this or not, but in the Old Testament, a Jew distinguished himself from the world by four different things, and most people do not even know it.

1. The first thing was a physical act of circumcision. You are reading the Bible about the uncircumcised Philistines. They are always like an unsaved people. Yes, I know that the physical circumcision in the Old Testament is a picture of the spiritual circumcision of Colossians 2. I understand that. But that was a physical thing on a part of their anatomy that set them apart, that they were different.
2. The second thing was the way they cut their hair. A Jew had to cut his hair in a certain fashion.
3. The third thing was how he cut his beard. He could not round the corners. His beard had to be straight down. If you have ever seen an Orthodox Jew from Jerusalem or maybe deep down inside of New York who still does those things, he certainly looked peculiar because God wanted them to look different.
4. Of course, the fourth thing was what he ate. No Arthur Bryant's, sorry. No Smokestack, sorry.

The Jew had four things that he had to do in a physical sense, kingdom of heaven, that separated him from the world and everybody else in it. God took those things and He says, "I want you to look different. I want you to look different to the other nations."

Now in the New Testament, for you and for me, the thing that distinguishes us from the world is not a physical thing. God does not require us to cut our hair a certain way. God does not require us to be circumcised. God does not require us to eat certain things, though certain things are probably worse for you than others, and there is certainly some value in the dietary laws, I guarantee you. But He does not require that because we are not necessarily to be different in how we look, but we are to be different in how we think and in what we do. Ours is the kingdom of God, and that is why we have four areas of fellowship that we develop. The world lives one way; we should live another. It is just that simple.

Here is how it is supposed to work. When the world goes one way, we as God's people are supposed to go another way. When that happens, it provides, yes, what we talked about last week, a contrast. The contrast in your life and my life, hands down, will be the greatest single thing, if you put it in your life, that will draw you to people and people to you that you can bring to Christ. The greatest single thing. First of all, the world is in a mess today. Second of all, families are a mess today. Everybody for the most part who is unsaved is looking for something in a world that has nothing. If they can even get a glimmer of hope that you have something different in your life, they are going to want it. Do you know what that is? That is contrast. It is simply the way that it works. The world goes one way, we do another. People see the difference. They may not like it. They may not agree with it. But God does it that way, and that is how He uses it.

There are simple examples that everybody can relate to. In our family growing up, as my kids were growing up and we had relatives from Ohio come in, they stayed in our home and they were unsaved at that point, and they would come out to our house and spend the week. When it came down to Sunday, we would simply say, "We would love for you to go to church with us on Sunday." But they are unsaved, and certain elements of Barb's family do not care much about us or the Bible or anything, and we would simply say, "We would love for you to go to church with us on Sunday. But if you do not feel like you want to, that is okay too. There is food on the table, soda in the refrigerator, fix yourself some breakfast, we are going to church and we will be back about this particular time."

We have had family people where they have said that we are having a birthday for so and so and we are having a party for so and so and we are having it Sunday at eleven o'clock, and we say, "We would love to be there. We would love to come there. We are going to come there, but we will be there after church." You see, they may not like that. They may not agree with that. They may even think that is weird, but that is okay. I am to be weird. I am to be peculiar.

Our kids grew up playing little league and playing volleyball. The grandkids, now my kids grew up playing little league and all that stuff, and we would tell the coach, "Hey, we are going to support you. We will bring drinks. We will bring this. We will bring that. We will be at every game you have except the ones on Sunday. My family is in church on Sunday." Now, the coach

may not like that. He may not agree with that. He may, I even had one coach get upset and mad, but you know what? I did not care. The bottom line is God takes that something just that little, and He takes that thing, and for the next forty years, that guy remembers that thing about somebody rather going to church because the Bible says the Word of God never returns void. You see, those kinds of things make it different for people.

I do not know how many times something just that simple. There has been somebody on a team or somebody here, somebody there that saw that or said to the coach, "Where are the Alexanders at today?" "Well, they are not here. They go to church on Sunday." "I do not know, that is stupid. We are going to lose the ball game." Not that either one of my kids were great athletes, but they were game changers. They both were. But anyway, God uses his anger, and God uses, not that he was mad, but God uses his displeasure or thinking it is stupid by saying it to somebody who is looking for something, and then they see that, and then God uses it. If I would have just gone on and been like everybody else, we never would have missed those people. There has to be a contrast. There has to be a difference.

I just tell you this to you parents, it is a great lesson to teach your kids, and it is great to teach your kids what is really important in life. I will just tell you this, and this is not the message today and this is another lesson, but I will tell you this, the priority in your life today about everything as parents will become the priority in your kid's life down the line. Take it for what it is worth, but there has to be a difference. People are looking for a difference. People are looking for something different.

You know how Obama got into office? He is a master at it. He got into office because everybody was sick of George Bush, and he got into office because he got up there and told everybody, and they believed him, "I am different." That is all he did. He convinced a bunch of people who were sick and tired of the way it was that he was going to bring hope and change. Now Romney is up there saying, "I am different." People are attracted to things that are different. I do not care about the political side of things. It does not matter one way or the other, but the bottom line in Christianity, it matters a lot. You ought to be different. There ought to be a contrast in our lives as God's people, and people are going to see it. That is how it works.

Yet, it all sounds great. It is all true, and it is all real biblical, but come on. I have been in this business too long today, and you know it too. Most of God's people, and here is the real issue, in most of God's people's lives, there is absolutely no difference in their life between them and unsaved people. They go the same places as unsaved people go. They do the same things. They never develop a contrast. I will be honest, there is a lot of pressure put on you when you become a contrast. There really is. It goes against the stream. It is like everybody else, it is like getting 150 people walking this way in a column and you walk in the opposite way. You have to fight your way through the whole thing, but that is what we are supposed to do. Our separation from the world is really the key to our fellowship with God. God's people today have no biblical priorities. They have no biblical principles by which they build anything on.

In the Bible, this great doctrine is called our standing in state. Your standing in the Bible, defined in Romans 5:1 and Galatians 5:1, is basically your standing on the promises of God. In Christ

Jesus, you are saved. You are sinlessly perfect, your soul sealed on the day of redemption. But your state is something else. Your state is a condition of your fellowship with God, your walk, your work, your separation from this world to Him. There is a great verse in Romans 1:1, and it says, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." You see, it does not do enough just to separate yourself from something as a Christian, the world. But then once you separate yourself from something, you have to separate yourself to something. That is why Paul says, "separated unto the gospel of God." There is the contrast. That is a great verse.

Now with that little bit of introduction, as we read this passage and look at it, you are going to see two key words popping up, and you will want to mark them in your Bible. For this passage really wraps itself around these two words. The first one is found in verse 14, and it is the word fellowship. I think he says, "For what fellowship?" The second word is found in verse 17, and that is where he uses the word "separate," "be separate." Those are your two key words: fellowship and separate. You want to have fellowship with God? All right, be separate. It is just that simple. It does not get any harder than that. It does not get any easier than that. Real, true fellowship with God requires you to be separate from the world.

Now let us read our text and begin to explain it and look at the next area of our fellowship here. He says in verse 11, this is where we are going to start:

2 Corinthians 6:11-18

11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompence in the same, I speak as unto my children, be ye also enlarged.

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 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.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Now Father, we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you. We ask you to take what we have got to say today and touch the hearts of these people. Lord, these people have a tremendous power to reach other people, but Lord, they will never do it without separating themselves from the world first. You divided us. You sanctified us, and you want to add to us the

blessings and all the things that go along with it, but it is based on that separation and our understanding of it. Help us today, and we will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

There are many aspects to this passage I would like to discuss with you and explore over the next few weeks, and we will. So I think the best way to do that is just to take each aspect of it a week at a time and kind of lay it out as best we can. I am going to break this passage down so you will want to put a note by where I tell you what these things mean so you have it. Somebody may ask you down the line because some of this is like an old English awkward phraseology here, so you will want to be able to understand it.

The first thing he says there, he says, "O ye Corinthians" in verse 11, "our mouth is open unto you and our heart is enlarged." Let me explain that. When he is saying "our mouth is open unto you," he is simply saying, "In everything I have told you, I was completely honest in every word that came out of my mouth." That is what he is saying. He says, "My mouth, our mouth is open unto you." There is no lying in it. He is telling them the truth. When he speaks, he is telling them what God wants them to hear. Then he says in verse 11, "our heart is enlarged." That means in the fact that the love that he had for them, he is saying, "My love for you encompasses all of you." Paul loved this church. So those two aspects there, "our mouth is open unto you" and "our heart is enlarged," is simply saying, "I told you the truth in every word that came out of my mouth, and my love for you is so great and so encompasses all of you. There is nobody in this church that I do not love. My heart is enlarged toward you." That is what he is saying.

When you look at the next part, verse 12, it says this, "Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels." The word "straitened" there is an old English word, and it means tense. It means to tighten up. It means to be perplexed. It means to be in some kind of emotional trauma, some kind of emotional stress. You remember that bowels in the Bible, we think of bowels, we think of the lower GI tract, but bowels in the Bible will always deal with our emotions. The greatest example of this is, you can have a really good day and be happy and the phone rings and you get some terrible bad news and you get sick to your stomach. That is your bowels. That is your emotions. That is what bowels are in the Bible, that sick feeling. He is saying, "I have no problem loving you. I am not straitened to you. I am not tense. I am not uptight. I am not perplexed with you. I love you, but you have an issue with me." He is saying, "I have no problem loving you, but some of you have a problem loving me because of what I said to you was the truth." That has caused you some emotional distress or discomfort. "Straitened" is the word he is using here. You have to remember that everybody in this church really cared for Paul.

Then he says in verse 13, "Now for a recompense in the same, I speak as unto my children, be ye also enlarged." Let me tell you what he is saying there. This is a great verse. The "recompense" of verse 13, we think of recompense, we think of something like payback, going to get recompense from somebody. The recompense of verse 13 is a relationship to getting something back from them. He is saying this, he is saying, "You are like my own kids and you are like my own children, but it is time for you to grow up, enlarged." You see, to put away your petty gripes and to give back to God, recompense, who has given so much to you by getting in ministry. That

is what he is saying. I see the same thing all the time to you guys. I am saying, "You need to grow up, get past your little petty issues, and you need to see the big picture and start doing something for God because those petty little things that you focus on keep you from ever getting where God wants you to go." This church we already know is a very unstable church, a very unspiritual church. He has called them two or three times in 1 Corinthians a bunch of babies, and they were obviously not following the biblical separation of the world. That would not be the easiest thing to do in Corinth. If you know anything about the history of Corinth, Corinth at this time was one of the metropolitan parts on the planet. It was a very worldly city, and evidently some of the people in this church, and maybe all the people in the church, are having struggles with that.

So what happens here is this. He goes through verses now, we are going to get into 14, 15, and 16, and he lays out the things that we are not to be in fellowship with. The first four areas are things that we should be in fellowship with. But this fifth one, number five in the Bible, you have to watch it. The devil was the fifth cherub. The first man dies in the Bible, dies in Genesis 5:5. When they killed a man in the Old Testament, they stabbed him under the fifth rib, and five represents death in the Bible. So this fifth one can represent your spiritual death from being what God wants you to be because the first four areas are things that we should be in fellowship with, but the fifth one is what we are not to be in fellowship with. It is a great contrast.

SEC: The Seven Biblical Reasons Against Unequal Yoking

This passage and what follows should be memorized by every Christian everywhere, especially single young men and young ladies, because this passage as we read it will deal primarily with God's people marrying unsaved people. As a child of God, you need to understand how this passage lays out. He starts with a statement in verse 14, and this is what he says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." What follows here, and I use this all the time and so will you in dealing with people. I told you Thursday night that today was going to be one of the key components of a package that you will use in dealing with people. What I am about to give you today, this week, and not next week (Jim will preach), but then when we come back and look at the next aspect of it, the following week, this will make up a major part of your understanding how to work with people. I use this all the time in one form or the other. You will too. If you have already partnered up with somebody and you are potentially going to get into the people ministry and you have already partnered up with somebody and you are well on putting your principles in your Bible and getting those down, this week and next week is something that I would get with your partner and make sure you get this down because you are going to use it, and you might as well get a head start on it if you are going to do it, because what follows here, as I said, I use this all the time and so will you, is one of the greatest counseling tools that you ever have.

I call this the seven reasons why your marriage to an unsaved person will be a disaster. Now I said that and had people say, "Well, I am married. I am a Christian, and I know I married an unsaved person, and we get along just fine. We have been married for twenty years, and we get along fine. We go out to eat together. We never fight. We never do this. We never do that. Bob, I do not understand why you would make that statement. How are there seven reasons why you

are married to an unsaved person will be a disaster?" My answer was, "Because you did not let me finish." I said the seven reasons why your marriage will be a disaster will not be here. It will be at the judgment seat of Christ. But we forget those things.

There are two aspects to this passage. There is a doctrinal aspect, and that is what we are going to talk about today. It is very important that you get this one down if you are going to work with people. This one deals with saved people being yoked with unsaved people. Then there is a second aspect, which is a practical side, and we are going to look at that one the next time we get into this thing. But there are two formats, two formats to this doctrinal application. The first one is keeping single people from making a disastrous mistake. The second one is helping people you find that are after the fact that have already got into this and getting a workable plan to find their way out. We are going to talk about all that as we get farther down. This is not going to be just a beat-up message for somebody that made a mistake in life. That is not my goal, and that is not my style. I mean, I think you have to understand what the problem is to fix it, but I am all for fixing problems.

Here are the seven biblical reasons that you as a child of God never marry an unsaved person. If you have, this shows you basically what you are up against. Believe it or not, this whole study is based on seven key words in this chapter, and you want to mark them as we go along and mark them off to the side. As I said, if you have a potential partner in your counseling team, I would get with them and start working through this.

Let me say this. I hate always being so negative about things, but most of the Bible is very negative. I mean, you get outside salvation and doing what is right, everything else is negative. I am not saying that everybody is absolutely finished at the judgment seat of Christ, but I will say this. For every thousand people who knowingly, consciously marry an unsaved person after they are saved when they know that they should not, I am talking to you in that scenario. I am going to give you the other scenarios later. I know that there were people who were both unsaved and then one got saved, now you are stuck with an unsaved spouse. I understand that. I am not talking about that. We will deal with that a little bit later. I am talking about a conscious Christian who is saved, goes to church, knows what the Bible says, and in spite of doing what the Word of God says, for any reason—"I am lonely, I need somebody, I want somebody," whatever the case may be—you consciously violate that principle. You find some guy, christianmingles.com is a great place to go. You go someplace, get to twenty-one compatible things that you find there at the other place. Christianmeatmarket.com is another one you can get to. You basically, consciously, without following through the biblical principles and proving all things, because it is a Christian website, you would be surprised how many people think that because it is called a Christian dating website—I am not just going to pick on Christian Mingle, there are a million out there—you would be absolutely amazed at how many people think because it says Christian that everybody in it is a Christian, or everybody in it is the right kind of Christian.

It is like the idea that parents had years ago when we were growing up, that when the Christian school era was going, that you parents actually sent their kid to Christian schools because they really believed in their head that when your kid walked through that great door into the Christian school, there was a sign up there that said, "Devil cannot come in here." Parents thought sending

your kids to Christian school was a guarantee your kids were going to be okay and grow up great, and then many parents did exactly what most parents do. They let the Christian school do what was right with their kids instead of them. The only funny thing was the devil never misses a trick. Christian schools are no different than unchristian schools. They are all a mess, and the devil walks the halls there just like he walks anyplace else. But again, that is another study, and if you have got your kids in a Christian school or you grew up at a Christian school, take no offense to that, I am just a crazy old man up here just talking to myself.

- 1.) Yoked
- 2.) Fellowship
- 3.) Communion
- 4.) Concord
- 5.) Christ and Belial

SEC: Practical Application for Mixed Marriages

Let us stop for here a minute because this is one that you are going to deal with all the time. I want you to begin to understand this, and I want to explain myself. Rule number one, and this is basic that we are talking about today. If you are single, if you are in fellowship with God, stay that way. Follow the biblical principles in finding the right spouse. It may take longer than you want it to, but it is nowhere near as long as a marriage will seem married to the wrong one. Genesis 24 is a passage that I have taught you many, many times. Nineteen principles on how to find a spouse. Two times in that passage, he tells him, "Do not get him an unsaved woman."

Here is the issue that you are going to face. Many times two people will both be unsaved when they come to church and one will get saved. The other one is still unsaved. Now you have a scenario that you have that you better know how to deal with because in this case, the person did nothing wrong. If you are a saved person and you consciously marry an unsaved person, that is on you. But if you are just two unsaved people who go to church and you get saved, sweetheart, or the man gets saved and the wife stays unsaved at that point in time, you did not do anything wrong. But as you got into that, you were unsaved anyhow. So that is a whole different scenario. That is not what I am preaching about this morning.

I will be honest with you, that can cause some issues, but it does not have to cause any issues if you recognize what God is doing. Do you actually think that God reached His hand down in your life and saved you and does not want to save your spouse? Do you really believe that? But that is how a lot of people look at it. But what you have got to look at is that there are two of you and you are both lost. God reached down and saved you. Then maybe God reached down and saved your child or God saved somebody else in your family. Your husband or your wife, whatever the case may be, is only down the line as a process that they will get saved too because that is what God wants. That is what God saved you for. He just started with you. He does not want to start and end with you. He wants to start and He wants to develop through you and in time reach

everybody, but it is up to you. It depends on you realizing that you are the key in that situation. It is a situation where you have to realize now what you are up against. There is a certain way you have got to do this. This happens all the time.

The saved person needs to see the need to get that spouse saved. I am telling you, when you get biblical principles and you understand your scenario and you get a plan, I cannot tell you how important it is for whatever you are trying to pursue in life or do in life as a Christian, probably everything in life, you need to have a plan, a biblical plan based on biblical principles that is going to get you from point A to point B. When we get into the counseling scenario after the first of the year, I will walk you through these and show you exactly how you handle it. But I am telling you now, that person did not do anything wrong. That person was unsaved when they came to church. One of them got saved, the other one is lost. All that means to me is now we have a tremendous opportunity that that whole family can get saved. You are just the crack in the door that God is going to get His light to shine through. Then we work it from there. We sit down and we put a plan. We orchestrate circumstances. We put things together.

I remember one time, one of my greatest friends in the ministry at this point was a good friend of mine, Greg McClintock. I preached a revival many, many years ago in Monmouth, Illinois. Greg was a prosecuting attorney, but he was unsaved. Great guy, moral great guy, but he was lost. His wife Irene was saved. He went to the revival that night, and we struck up a friendship, and immediately we had talked about Greg getting saved. My whole goal, when I went up there to have me back up for other times, and my whole goal was to win Greg McClintock to Christ. Every time, I remember the first time we had a, they had some kind of carnival or something, and we took a bunch of people up and we set up there and we passed out deals, and Greg came over and we talked for a while. We got along very well. I told him, I said, "Do you know what? I said, he was going home, and I said, how about we pick up a pizza. We will go. We are in a war movie, and we will go sit down and watch it." He says, "Sure. Come on." We got a pizza, got a war movie, and sat out. I preached that Sunday in the church. That Sunday he showed up all because I got him some pizza in a war movie. We sat down and we talked. We had a good talk. I brought up nothing about God, nothing about the Bible. We just, that Sunday. He showed up. I said a lot about the Bible on Sunday. I came back for a revival. He came every night. About four months later, that guy got saved, and now he is as smart as any pastor I know. He teaches Bible studies. He preaches in the church up there, and he turned his, it all turned around. All because there was a plan put in effect that had an end result, and it works. But you have got to know what you are doing. This is not a place where you want to put on an Acme transmission suit and stand in front of the car with a garden hose, say, "I always wanted to fix a transmission." That is not what you want to do here.

The saved person needs to understand that they are going to get their spouse saved. We put a plan together. Remember the fact that God reached down in that family and saved one, He wants to save the rest. This is what we do. This is what the plans we put together. This is what we help you accomplish. You are just the beginning. It is not, "Well, I got saved and the rest of my family is lost." No, no, no. That is not how you look at it. You got saved as the first installment of getting your family saved. We work along those lines.

- > 6.) Part
- > 7.) Agreement

SEC: The Command to Be Separate

In closing, look at verse 17 and 18. I want to move through this here and give you this. We just kind of laid out the format. Over the next couple of weeks, we will be going back through these things and slicing and dicing and giving you all the inside stuff on this. What follows here is Paul taking and quoting an Old Testament passage in Isaiah 52:11, and he makes a New Testament spiritual application. He does this a lot.

He says in verse 17 and 18:

2 Corinthians 6:17-18

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

As we learned in English class last week, the word "wherefore" always means, "because of what I just said, I am going to tell you something else that goes along with what I just said." Very important in the Bible. You always want to watch the "wherefores" or "therefore." "Wherefore," because of what I just said, he said about why it will not work, it will not work to be unequally yoked with unbelievers and stay away from it and do not get involved with unsaved people. Then he says, "Wherefore come out from among them," the world, "and be ye separate." There is our second word, separation, sanctification, sanctified, and come out of the world.

There is a great example of this in the Bible, and it is found in the life of Abraham. So many things are in the life of Abraham. But here is a classic example, and there are lots of them in the Bible, but he is the one that we most can relate to. God has something He wants Abraham to do. So He calls Abraham and his wife out of Ur of the Chaldees. That is modern day Baghdad, Babylon. He calls him out of Ur of the Chaldees, and He is taking him to the Promised Land, which is going to become the nation of Israel, because from Abraham is going to come Isaac. From Isaac is going to come Jacob. Jacob down the line is going to come twelve boys who become the twelve tribes, and off we go. So He calls him out, He has to get him here again. Before He could multiply the blessings in his life, He had to divide him. So He divided him from the Ur of the Chaldees, and He says, "Get ye out from your kindred, everybody, and go to a place that I have told you to go, and there I am going to give you everything, and we are going to get some things done."

Now Abraham was just like you and me, and Abraham was a guy who, he had the same like passions we have and the struggles in life, and starting out he did not always do the same thing right, just like we did. In fact, he did not do everything right all of his life, just like we did. But here is a fundamental flaw that he made, and we learn from this. So we ought not to make the

same mistake, even if we are as weak as he is. We have an example that should correct our mistake. He did not obey God totally, did he? He took Lot with him, and Lot is a picture of the world. In other words, Abraham loved God, wound up being one of two men in the Bible called a friend of God, did everything in his life as a perfect picture of what our life should be, right up to the point where he offered his own son. He is a great example of everything we should be, but fundamentally had one flaw in his life, and that flaw was when he left, he did not completely separate himself from his kindred. That one choice, that one little choice.

I guess if we were around at that point, and you saw him all packing up the camels, and you heard what God said to him, and he said, "Abraham, did you get ready to go?" "Yeah." "Well, are you taking, what are you doing? Who is this?" "This is my nephew, Lot. I am taking him with me." "Oh, why is that? I thought God said..." "Well, you know what, he is a good kid, and there is not much back here for him, and I just felt like the experience would be good for him, and I can really influence him for God." Now, does not that sound like a good excuse to take him? How many times I have heard somebody tell me the exact same thing about messing with somebody that is unsaved and of the world in their life? It did not work for Abraham, and it will not work for you. God means what He says, and He says what He means. When He says, "Separate yourself," in the Greek that word means, "separate yourself." For the next 2,500 years, Israel's problems go back to his bad choice in bringing Lot out. The end result of Lot is Ammon and Moab, who become the nations that he fosters children through his own daughters, who plague Israel all down through their time period. All of it goes back to one thing. God tells you to do something. We do half of what God says and add what we want, and there is the problem.

Fellowship. Your children ought to be in such a way that when they do something wrong, they are not afraid of getting a whipping, though they are afraid of getting a whipping. They are not just afraid, and what bothers them is not that they did something wrong. What ought to bother your child more than anything else, when they do something wrong, if you have the right relationship with them, is what ought to bother them more than any single other thing, why they did what they did, is because what they did broke fellowship with you. That ought to be the thing that brings them to a point where they cannot hardly stand it. "I did, and I broke fellowship with my dad or my mom over what I did." Oh, I know God is involved in all those things. I understand all that. Do not go spiritual pious on me. I am talking about in your husband and wife relationship with your children. The number one thing ought to be, "Dad, that bothers me more than anything else is I broke fellowship with my father. I broke fellowship with my mother. What I did broke that bond that I had with them." When that gets to that point, they do not care how hard you whip them. You can throw them off the roof and it will not be enough. You could drag them around the parking lot with chains on their ankles and they will say, "Let us go another couple laps." Breaking that fellowship has to be the key.

Do you know what? The difference between you and most Christians in your life is that when it comes down to you and God, that will be the number one thing that smites you when we do wrong. Not that I did it, not that I got caught, not that I wish I am going to confess it, but I am going to do it again. It is the fact that you are smitten in your heart because what you did broke fellowship with your Father. Nothing better in this world, folks, because fellowship is the key to

everything. Now you are seeing it goes through four developing stages, and now you have seen the thing that you better keep away from. Next time we get together, we will go back through this, I will bring it back. I am going to show you the practical side to it. You will leave this chapter understanding. Maybe you will not do it, but you will understand what it means and what it takes to have a biblical fellowship with God. Let us pray.