

Why Being Unequally Yoked Is More Dangerous Than You Think

crosswalk.com/family/singles/why-being-unequally-yoked-is-more-dangerous-than-you-think.html



What does Unequally Yoked mean?

Is dating someone who doesn't share your beliefs really such a big deal?

Actually, yes.

[2 Corinthians 6:14](#) is the oft-cited verse calling believers to be “equally yoked”. But many believers fail to see why this command from the Apostle Paul is so important. Others disregard it completely.

Being equally yoked is not meant to inhibit our dating lives. Rather, it is a command designed for protection and honor. Being unequally yoked is more dangerous than you think – and waiting for someone with whom you share the same spiritual heritage is far more rewarding than many believe.

Dating an Unbeliever is Disobedience

I once received an email from a reader. In it, she said she didn't think God cared about who she dated or married – He had bigger things to worry about. But this couldn't be further from the truth. God has always cared about the unions His people make – as evidenced by His relationship with Israel.

In Deuteronomy 7, Moses is instructing the Israelites in their responsibilities as the people of God. They have been freed from slavery and are now free men, about to enter the Promised Land. But Moses gives a warning:

“You shall make no covenant with [the people of the land] and show no favor to them. Furthermore, **you shall not intermarry with them...** for they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods...” (Deut. 7:3-4)

Fast forward several hundred years, and we find Israel in direct rebellion against God’s command:

“The sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites...; and they took their daughters for themselves as wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, **and served their gods.**” (Judges 3:5-6)

It probably didn’t seem so harmful at first. Perhaps the Israelites felt like there weren’t enough women, or there weren’t enough men to go around. However they rationalized it, the Israelites formed covenants between themselves and people who neither knew nor served God. In so doing, they were led astray.

Over and over in Scripture, we see this theme repeated. Two are Samson, who repeatedly sought out unbelieving women, a choice which in the end destroyed him (Judges 14), and Solomon, the wisest man in the world – until his many wives led him to worship other gods (1 Kings 11).

Uniting ourselves to people who do not love, follow, or submit to Christ is direct disobedience.

Intimacy is Impossible Without Spiritual Unity

If Christ is truly King of our lives, our most intimate selves should be submitted to His influence. How then can we unite a Spirit-led soul to one in rebellion against God?

This rubs people the wrong way, because no matter how respectful, sweet, or “loving” an unbelieving partner is, he is at odds with Christ – he is in rebellion. But if we call ourselves Christians, we’re saying we believe the Bible is our final authority. The Bible says that *all* have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and that without Christ we are “[unresponsive] in our transgressions”, conformed to the world, “living by the cravings of our flesh” and “by nature, children of wrath”. (Eph. 2:1-3) This is who we are without Jesus. This is *who everyone* is apart from Christ.

Therefore, those of us in Christ cannot be in a harmonious, God-pleasing relationship with an unbeliever. There is no fellowship between light and darkness (2 Cor. 7:14)! The Greek word for “fellowship” in this passage literally means *contact or intimacy*. Through Paul’s inspired words, we learn that intimacy with unbelievers is not just discouraged – it’s *impossible*.

God knows this. It’s why he commanded the Israelites to marry within the household of faith, and it’s why He inspired Paul to issue the same command. This is for our spiritual protection!

Righteousness has nothing in common with a person who believes they are good enough apart from God:

“For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?” (2 Cor. 6:14-15)

No relationship apart from Christ can be truly “good” (Mark 10:18). No “love” apart from Christ is truly love (1 John 4:16-17). It may look like these things from the outside, but will never be unified within.

Your Body is a Sanctuary of Worship

Paul’s mandate to be “equally yoked” isn’t found in a list of commandments; it was written to the struggling church at Corinth, a group of people confused about how to live for Christ in a corrupt world. That’s why he took the time to explain *why* equal yoking is essential to the Christian walk:

“What agreement can exist 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.”*

*“Therefore come out from among them
and be separate, says the Lord.*

*Touch no unclean thing,
and I will receive you.”* (2 Cor. 6:16-17)

Your body is the new Temple. As a follower of Christ, the Spirit of God dwells in *you*. This is why God calls us to “come out from among them, and separate.” He’s not telling us to be unloving – we are called to love unbelievers (1 Pet. 2:12). God is calling us to love *Him* more than we love our own desire for a relationship. He’s calling us to be a place of worship.

This is a call to reconsider your view of God and dating. God cares about our relationships because He cares about *us*. He cares about our purity because that is what keeps us in a relationship with Him! Our holiness preaches the gospel louder than our words. Unequal yoking hinders our walk with God – the one thing we need more than anything else.

If you are already married to an unbeliever, the Bible speaks to your next steps. Start by reading 1 Corinthians 7. Questions? Email Phylicia at phyliciadeltablog@gmail.com

Phylicia Masonheimer blogs at Phylicia Delta, where she teaches women how to preach the gospel with their lives: proclaiming Jesus in work, love, and home. Her eBook Christian Cosmo launches March 1st, 2017.

