

In his first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul had emphasized their status as the temple of the Holy Spirit, cf. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17. In this text Paul is reminding believers that they belong to God. If they are God's Temple, they must separate themselves from the world.

Paul is arguing based upon OT law which required God's people to be pure, applies now in the NT because they are the temple themselves. Isaiah 52:11 *"Depart, depart, go out from there; touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of her; purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the LORD."* Ezekiel 20:41 *"As a pleasing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered. And I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations."*

Do not be unequally yoked is a reference to having two different types of animals in the yoke. That never works. He then asks three questions in vs. 14-15a. One would answer those questions with obvious answers, nothing. Christ and idols don't go together. Light and darkness aren't in fellowship with each other. Righteousness and lawlessness cannot be friends either. After laying these questions he then asserts one they have to answer as did the others, *"Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?"*

1 Corinthians 6:15-20 - Paul chastises Corinthian men for using theological arguments to defend their use of temple prostitutes. They claim that because they are people of the Spirit, they can freely use their bodies. Paul implies that the church is the bride of Christ by refuting the Corinthian misconception that believers' use of their bodies does not affect their spiritual state. Because Christ claims our minds, souls, and bodies, sinful relations with a prostitute affect the whole man, and even the whole church.

This is epidemic today in the "evangelical" community. I term it as hyper-grace. The idea is you can do with your body what you wish, drink alcohol, cuss, be sexually impure, live together, and do whatever else the flesh desires, because grace covers all. We have Baptist church pastors who are preaching sermon series like The Church at the Glades *"World's largest strip club, come get naked with 5000 other people without taking your clothes off."* And yet another title for a sermon series is *"Victorious Secret, Christ lives within you."* And only one more example one pastor is using *"The Game of Thrones"* series as some sort of sermons series.

I Paul is arguing that Christ's claim on believers extends to sexuality in a way analogous to marriage, since sexual union with a prostitute takes from Christ his rightful bride, just as it would steal an adulterous spouse from her rightful husband. Sexual union outside the holy bonds of marriage, unites Christ with a temple prostitute.

Paul also presents believers' bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit (vv. 19–20). We should, then, avoid prostitution, for it defiles God's temple. As slaves of sin we were in need of redemption, and Christ paid the redemption price, redeeming us with his blood. Two results follow. First, we have

been liberated to enjoy the freedom as the sons and daughters of the living God. Second, our Redeemer purchased us so that we now belong to him: *"You are not your own, for you were bought with a price"* (vv. 19–20). We are free to love and serve him, but we are not free to sin, because we are His.

Application - Theology for Life - Since our entire selves, bodies included, belong to the Lord, we must guard mind and body against the danger of sexual immorality. We have been united to Christ and dare not drag him into sin. Rather, because the Holy Spirit resides in our body, we must treat it as holy.

Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, vs. 17. Before I go into this text, I think it is important to understand what a true Christian is. It is not simply making a statement saying you believe God. It's the practical way one lives in this world as a separated, set apart and alien in this world. In the words of J.C. Ryle concerning this text *"I am referring to people who think only, or chiefly, of this world's things, and neglect the world to come, the people who are always thinking more of earth than heaven, more of time than of eternity, more of the body than the soul, more of pleasing man than pleasing God."*

The Scripture isn't silent on the subject of not being a part of this world. Romans 12:2 *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."* The word "conform" is the Greek word meaning *"to fashion or shape one thing like another."* It's where we get the English word "schematic." 1 Corinthians 2:12 *"Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God."* Ephesians 2:1-2 *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins, in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience."* 2 Timothy 4:10a *"For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica..."*.

Further implications of not being separate and not being able to distinguish a difference between your Christianity and your activities in the world. James 4:4 *"You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."* 1 John 3:1a *"The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him."* The world rejected Christ. Therefore, it is obvious it will reject Christians today, but if you're conformed to this world, and not separate, then you look, act and reflect them.

Darrell Harrison, Director of Social Media at GTY writes an article on this subject and says *"Among those divers concerns is what appears, to me anyway, to be an increasing disregard and apathy for purity within the church, under the guise that it is somehow obligated to offer to the world around it a kind of "big tent", unoffensive, non-convicting gospel that is inclusive, not*

*merely in terms of ethnicity or sex, mind you, but also of certain sinful behaviors and practices."* Furthermore, a person who is not being purified from sin, has no claim on being saved from it. I get this from 1 Peter 4:2 "So as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God."

Many folks want to be pure. They talk the talk. They agree with statements like we have just read and talked about. But Matthew 13:22 defines them, "As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful." The seed sown among thorns likewise is unfruitful, choked out by a heart weighed down with the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches.

Application - what agreement do we as believers have with this world? If you have been redeemed by the atoning blood of Christ, you are not of this world, therefore, you will live differently. It does not mean you are perfect, not sinless, but you are striving for holiness and purity because you are the temple of God.