



SECOND CORINTHIANS



The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People

Part 26—“Partners Together With Christ & His People”— 19 May 2024

Introduction: Idolatry & Identity Formation

“Idol worship is committing yourself to something that is not God...[it] is trusting in something other than God for your ultimate security and your happiness...and the idol is whatever claims the loyalty that belongs to God alone.” —G.K. Beale

⇒ In a fallen world, we are prone to ascribe ultimate worth and value (worship) to things which are not God (Rom. 1:21-23). These idols provide counterfeit versions of what our hearts truly desire: transcendence, security, joy, etc. Ultimately, however, idols tell us a false story about ourselves and the world around us and will lead us into ruin.

Main Point: Because believers are the _____ of the Living God in the present age, we should not be bound together with unbelievers in ways that will _____ how we live as His worshipers.

2 Corinthians 6:11-7:1

- As a father, Paul affirms his affections for the Corinthians and asks them to respond in kind. (6:11-13)

Observations:

1. He has instructed and exhorted them with the _____ of a father and has loved them with _____ of a father.
“We have spoken freely” *“our heart is wide open”*
2. He feels their affections for him have changed and so, he calls on them as his children to respond _____ to him.
“restricted” *“widen your hearts also”*

Key Point: Our worship and reverence for God should lead us to _____ our fathers and mothers (both our literal parents and our fathers and mothers in the faith).

- Paul then exhorts them not to become partners together with unbelievers in idolatrous practices. (6:14-18)

Observations:

1. The exhortation draws on OT imagery.
“unequally yoked”—ἑτεροζυγέω (heterozygeō)—not belonging together, to be mismatched. Used in the OT to forbid the yoking together of different types of animals (Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:10)

“Paul was not saying that Christians should break off all association with unbelievers (cf. I Cor. 5:9-10; 10:27). He had previously encouraged the saved partner in a mixed marriage to maintain the marriage relationship as long as possible (I Cor. 7:12-16). He had also urged his fellow Christians as ambassadors of Christ to evangelize the lost (5:20). Rather Paul commanded that Christians form no binding interpersonal relationships with non-Christians that resulted in their spiritual defilement.”—Thomas Constable

⇒ Believers should not willingly _____ themselves to unbelievers and their practices in ways that compromise their witness to the Gospel. Participation in idolatrous practices is primarily in view.

2. He asks a series of rhetorical questions to support the idea that certain things that do not belong together.

<i>“righteousness”</i>	—	<i>“lawlessness”</i>	<i>Partnership?</i>
<i>“light”</i>	—	<i>“darkness”</i>	<i>Fellowship?</i>
<i>“Christ”</i>	—	<i>“Belial”</i>	<i>Accord?</i>
<i>“believer”</i>	—	<i>“unbeliever”</i>	<i>Share?</i>
<i>“temple of God”</i>	—	<i>“idols”</i>	<i>Agreement?</i>

3. The questions are relevant because believers are the temple of God.

⇒ Paul uses the imagery of the temple to refer both to Christians as _____ (I Cor. 6:16-20) and to the _____ as a whole (I Cor. 3:16-17)

The temple was the _____ of God’s presence with His people.

The temple was _____ as a result and was to be treated as such by His people.

4. He then employs multiple OT quotations to explain what it means for believers to live in God's presence.
- ⇒ In Lev. 26:11-12, God stated to Israel that His purpose under the Mosaic Covenant was that they would be a holy people so that He might dwell among them.
God has always intended to dwell with His people and the _____ Covenant in Christ means that He now indwells us!
 - ⇒ Isa. 52:11 is a prophetic exhortation to His people to come out from among the defiled nations (Babylon) and to come into His holy presence.
New Covenant believers are exhorted to reject idolatrous _____ because we have been called out from the world and unto Christ!
 - ⇒ Ezek. 20:41 offers prophetic assurance to Israel that He will accept them when they turn to Him based on the work of Messiah and the promises of the New Covenant.
God will _____ New Covenant believers when we turn to Him from sin.
 - ⇒ 2 Sam. 7:8,14 are portions of the Davidic Covenant where God promises that He will not remove His favor from David's house because of the coming Messiah, the Davidic King.
Believers who are "in Christ (Messiah)" can likewise be assured that God will not remove His _____ from us, but will relate to us as He does to His Son!

"the Lord Almighty"—παντοκράτωρ (pantokratōr)—the all-powerful, omnipotent One, the Creator and Lord of history (Rev. 4:8)

5. Paul draws application for the NT believer from these OT promises in terms of how we live in the world.
"we have these promises"

"cleanse"—καθαρίζω (katharizō)—to purify through ritual cleansing, make clean, declare clean.

Defilements of _____ (I Cor. 6:13b, 18-19) and _____ (I Cor. 10:19-22)

"bringing holiness to completion"—ἐπιτελέω (epiteleō)—to bring about a result according to plan or objective, complete, accomplish.

⇒ This is accomplished only through the _____ of the Lord. That is, knowing Him and being known by Him.

Key Point: Knowing that we are the temple of God _____ us of His presence with us always and should lead us to pursue lives of _____.

"...the image of harnessing oneself to someone who is spiritually incompatible evokes images of spiritual disaster. Those who bear Christ's yoke (Matt. 11:30) cannot share it with others who deny Christ. Those who harness themselves together with unbelievers will soon find themselves plowing Satan's fields. One can only be a true yokefellow (Phil.4:3) with a fellow Christian."
—David Garland

Concluding Thoughts

- We do well to see the world as it actually is: *filled with people who are engaged in _____ practices.*
- What are the idols that our _____ is most drawn towards and what are the practices associated with those idols?

Psalm 37:1-5—¹ Do not get upset because of evildoers, Do not be envious of wrongdoers. ² For they will wither quickly like the grass, And decay like the green plants. ³ Trust in the Lord and do good; Live in the land and cultivate faithfulness. ⁴ Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵ Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.



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