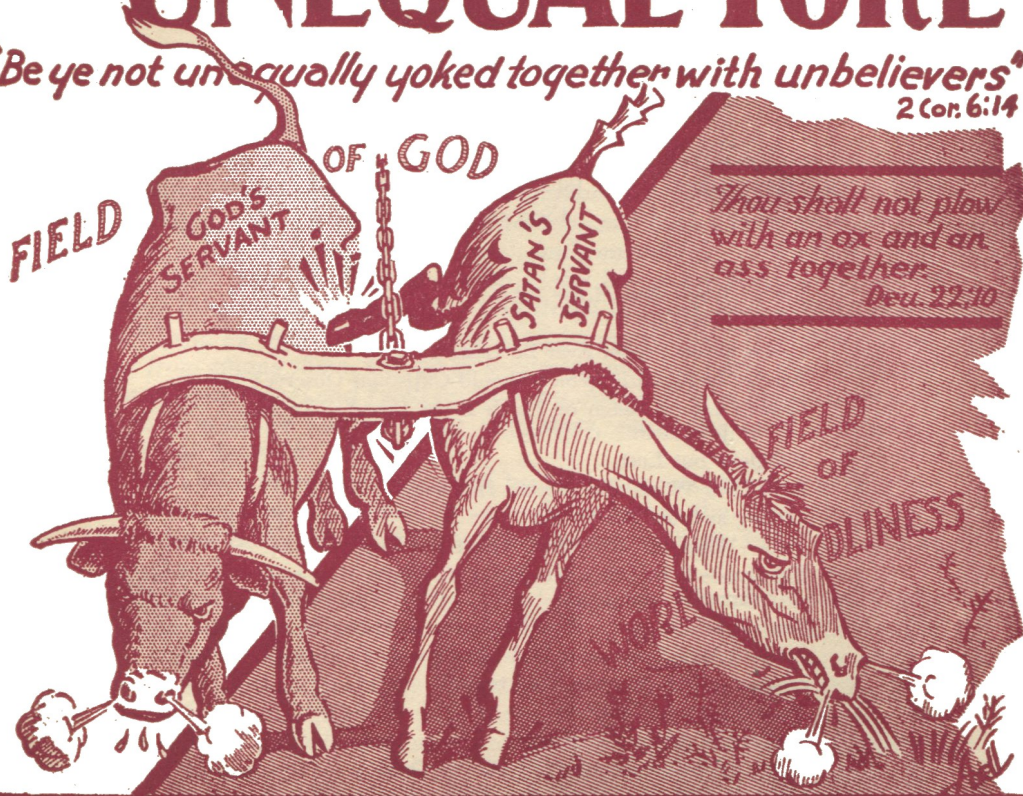


The UNEQUAL YOKE

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"

2 Cor. 6:14



*"Thou shalt not plow
with an ox and an
ass together."
Deu. 22:10*

What the BIBLE teaches about Christ-
ians yoking up with unbelievers ~
in lodges, in marriage and in church-
es and denominations ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

by Evangelist

JOHN R. RICE, D.D.

The Unequal Yoke

by
John R. Rice

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The Unequal Yoke

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord 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. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. — II Cor. 6:14-18.

The above Scripture, little used by modern preachers and little practiced by modern Christians, is nevertheless what the Bible says about Christians being joined with unbelievers in marriage, in lodges and in the churches.

Christians ought not to be yoked up with non-Christians. God's people ought to separate from the Devil's people. Twice-born people are entirely different from once-born people and should keep themselves separate. Certainly Christians should love lost people. We should be good neighbors with them, should love and seek them. We should have them in our homes and visit them in their homes, always having in mind to be a blessing. But Christians should not be bound up in the same yoke with unsaved people. Between the saved and the lost there is the same

difference that there is between light and darkness, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between an idol and the temple of God! That is what the Scripture teaches! Eventually, the separation between the saved and the lost will be the difference between Heaven and Hell, between God and Satan! On this is based the Bible doctrine of separation, that Christians should not yoke up with unbelievers.

Christians Not to Be Yoked, Have Fellowship, Communion, Concord, Part, or Agreement With Unsaved

Examine the above Scripture carefully and take it at face value. The word *unbeliever* means one who has not believed on Christ as his own personal Saviour. That word speaks of the same kind of person as John 3:18 and John 3:36, *"he that believeth not is condemned already"* and *"he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."* The Scripture means not to yoke up with one who has not trusted Christ as Saviour.

This Scripture is very explicit concerning the association of saved people and lost people. Christians are not to be "yoked together" with unbelievers. Righteousness is not to have "fellowship" with unrighteousness. Light is not to have "communion" with darkness. Christians are not to be yoked with unbelievers just as Christ has no "concord" with Belial. Verse 15 plainly asks, *"What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"* The word *infidel* is the same as the word *unbeliever*. It does not mean a man who believes there is no God, but one who does not trust Christ as his Saviour. Verse 16 even suggests that a Christian should not have "agreement" with unsaved people since a saved

person's body is the temple of God and the body of the unsaved is an idol, possessed of Satan.

Christians are urged, therefore, to *"come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord"* (v. 17), and on this basis God promises to receive and be a Father to us while we are to be His sons and daughters.

Teaching of Separation Throughout the Bible

One of the plainest doctrines in the Bible is this doctrine of Christian separation. It was the one teaching that God pressed daily, repeatedly, eternally, upon Jews. Much of their ceremonial law pointed to this particular thing alone. Abraham was called to *"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee"* (Gen. 12:1). Jews were to be circumcised as a brand or mark of their separation from other people. Jews were commanded not to eat pork, not to eat catfish, etc. (Lev. 11:7, 10), not because pork and catfish were unfit for food, but as a mark to separate them from Gentiles around about. God was teaching Israel the doctrine that His people should be separate from heathen or unsaved people. Later we are plainly commanded not to observe the Jewish dietary laws, and told that every creature of God is good for food (I Timothy 4:4), but the doctrine of separation still stands. A Jew was not allowed to plant two kinds of seed in one vineyard, not allowed to hitch an ox and a donkey together, not allowed to wear a garment of two different materials, part wool and part linen, for instance. In Deuteronomy 22:9-11, is given this remarkable Scripture:

Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of

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thy seed which thou has sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.

When a Jewish boy was eight days old, he was marked with circumcision to remind him all his life that he was of a separate people, set apart for the Lord.

When a Jew sat down at the table he was reminded, "I must watch what I eat; I am God's man."

When a Jew put on his shirt, he was reminded in his heart, "I cannot wear a garment of mixed cloth as linen and wool—that reminds me that I must not mix with idolators and unbelievers, those who do not serve my God."

When the Israelitish farmer hitched up his team, he said in his heart, "God commands me not to plow with a mixed team. I may plow with two oxen or two donkeys; but I cannot mix them, because God wants me to remember that I am not to mix with those who are not God's people."

When the Jew started to sow his vineyard, God's Word rang in his heart and he said, "I must not mix the seed in the same vineyard, because God wants me to remember not to mix with unbelievers."

A prophet of God, sent to pronounce judgment on Jeroboam and his evil worship in the northern kingdom, Israel, was commanded not to eat bread nor drink water even in that nation where such wickedness was tolerated. Because he went back to eat dinner with a backslidden prophet who had not condemned idolatry, God sent a lion to kill him in the road! (I Kings 13:21-24). Throughout the Old Testament we find this clear and ringing

teaching both by precept and example, that God's people must not intermingle, keep company, nor yoke up with unsaved people.

These Teachings for New Testament Christians

All the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament have a New Testament application. The Jew was circumcised in body, but that pictured a circumcision of heart which Jew and Gentile alike must have if they see God in peace. Christians are under no obligation to keep ceremonial laws concerning diet, the wearing of garments of mixed material or hitching ox and ass together or sowing the vineyard with divers seed. Those are the letter of the law. That part is not binding on us. But the spiritual lesson which Jews should have gotten from those ceremonial laws is a lesson for us today. New Testament Christians under grace need not observe the letter of the law, but we ought to be more particular about the spirit than the Jews were. God wants us to be separate. So here in II Corinthians 6:14-18 we are plainly commanded that a Christian is not to be yoked together with an unbeliever.

II

Christians Should Not Be Yoked With Unbelievers in Marriage

The command of God about being yoked with unbelievers certainly applies to marriage. Marriage is a yoke. The only one who would deny this is a man or woman who has never been married. When a Christian man or woman takes in marriage a husband or wife who has not been saved, then he disobeys this explicit command of God. He yokes a believer with an unbeliever; he puts righteousness in fellowship with unrighteousness; he puts light in communion with darkness; he puts Christ in concord with Belial. He, a believer, has part with one who is an unbeliever and he makes the temple of God in agreement with an idol. Children of God should never marry those who are not children of God, no matter how virtuous or high-minded or cultivated or pleasing they may be outwardly. Inwardly they are rebels against Christ, children of Hell. To do so is a sin against God and a sin against one's own best self. It is a sin certain to be reaped with sorrow in the future. Someone has well said that one that marries the Devil's child is sure to have trouble with his father-in-law. The Christian, married to one not a Christian, is certain to have trouble. Such a marriage should not be broken, and the Christian believer should not depart from his unbelieving mate (I Corinthians 7:10-16). The time to do right about that is before marriage. After marriage is too late to avoid trouble. All one can do then is to pray that God

will save the unsaved ones and try one's best to atone for the sin of yoking up in marriage with an enemy of your Saviour and your God.

In I Corinthians 7:39 the Scripture says:

The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will;
ONLY IN THE LORD.

Widows have a right to remarry if their husbands are dead, but they have a right to marry "*only in the Lord.*" God mentioned specifically widows here, but we have already had the general teaching that every Christian should only be yoked up with believers, not with unbelievers.

The Flood Caused by Intermarriage of Saved and Lost

The Bible is full of accounts of tragedies caused by the mixture of God's people with the Devil's people. In Genesis 4:25, 26 we are told of the birth of Seth, evidently a godly man, given to Eve as "*another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.*" This good man, Seth, had a son, Enos, and "*then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.*"

But in the sixth chapter of Genesis we are given the account of how the godly line of Seth, saved people, "sons of God," intermarried with the unsaved people, "daughters of men:"

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always

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strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. – Genesis 6:1-7.

The descendants of these mixed marriages became so terribly wicked that God destroyed the earth with a flood. The influence of a saved man is lost when he compromises and sins against God by marrying an unsaved woman. The children of such marriages usually follow after the unsaved parent, not the saved one. As Peter lost his courage when he sat down to warm by the soldiers' fire, and as Samson found the Lord departed from him with his head in the lap of Delilah, with his hair cut off; so the average Christian who marries an unsaved person finds his joy gone, his testimony fading and a constant weight around his neck as he tries to live for God. The trouble that falls on the unsaved husband or wife is shared by the Christian companion yoking up with him or her. Remember that the family of Achan was stoned with him when that troubler of Israel died in the valley of Achor (Joshua 7:24-26).

Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, married unsaved women and they turned away his heart. First Kings 11:4, 5 tells us about it as follows:

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For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

For this cause God took away ten tribes of the kingdom from Solomon's son.

Nehemiah rebuked the sin of the Jewish remnant in his day in marrying unsaved women and used Solomon as an example. In Nehemiah 13:23-27 the account is given:

In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?

If one reads this who is a Christian, a child of God, but who plans to marry a child of the Devil and be yoked up with an unbeliever, then I beg you now not to commit this sin against God, not to bring this trouble upon yourself and upon your children!

“Why Didn’t Some Preacher Show Me That Fifteen Years Ago!”

I once held revival services in a small town in north Texas and preached on “Be Ye Not Unequally Yoked Together With Unbelievers.” The next day a woman who was not present at the preceding service chided me saying, “I know what you preached last night and I don’t believe it.” From hearsay she had been displeased with my sermon. However, I told her that it was not my message but God’s, and I turned in the Bible to II Corinthians 6:14 and had her read the plain command of God not to be yoked up with unbelievers. I knew her case. She had married an unsaved man. A fourteen-year-old son was already grieving his mother’s heart and following in the footsteps of his unsaved father. When she read the Scripture she turned to me and her eyes filled with tears. This is what she said, “Why didn’t some preacher show me that fifteen years ago!” I answered back that I could not say for other preachers, but for my part I wanted no brokenhearted woman, because of ignorance of the Word of God, blaming me for her sin and unhappiness when it was fifteen years too late! Therefore, I am warning people not to be yoked up with unbelievers.

In revival meetings again and again people make requests for prayers that their loved ones may be saved. If a father sincerely says, “Pray for my lost boy,” I find that usually that prayer is answered and the lost boy is saved. Where Christians do right, God is good to answer our prayers and requests; and when Christians join in prayer, many times their prayers are answered and unsaved loved ones are brought to God. But in every revival campaign I hold there is one kind of request made again and

again—the request of wives that people pray for the salvation of their unsaved husbands. I am sorry to say that in a majority of cases the revival services come to a close and such husbands are not saved. Women ignore the plain command of God, go against the Bible and marry unsaved men, and then turn and ask God to put His blessing upon their sin. In many cases a good and merciful God does answer their prayers, but in hundreds of such cases, for some good reason, He does not.

Dear Christian girl, if you want some man saved, then get him saved before you marry him. To sin against God in this matter often means that you will so displease God and so compromise your own Christian influence that you will be unable to win to Christ the man who is to be the father of your children and your lifetime companion. After you marry, then you ought not to leave your husband. But if you plan such a marriage, then heed the command of God and break up your plans, even though it be only one day before the wedding. You may think it will break your heart now, but a heart broken in doing right will soon be healed by the mercy of a loving Heavenly Father. I warn you now that if you go headlong against the direct command of God in this matter your heart will be broken a thousand times. After all, only one thing brings real trouble, and that is to sin against God. *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.”*

III

The Sin of Christians Joining Lodges

I suppose that half the preachers in some areas are members of lodges and secret orders. They have the Masonic Order to lay their cornerstones, they preach special sermons for Odd Fellows, they act as chaplains for the Ku Klux Klan, and encourage their members, both men and women, to join such secret orders. Probably the average preacher has not studied the Bible prayerfully and seriously enough even to know that to be a member of the lodges violates the explicit command of the Bible!

All over the country an examination would often find the same names on the church roll and the lodge roll. The same faces show up at the deacon's or steward's meeting and the Shriner's dance; the same young men are on the B.Y.P.U. or the Epworth League program and at the revels of the DeMolay. The church and the world, saved and lost, are yoked together all over this country; and the shameful fact is that the world is going to Hell largely because one cannot tell the difference between God's man and the Devil's man, the saved and the unsaved, the redeemed and the condemned.

Once I was in a great revival in Greenville, Texas, and found that young men of the churches had been led into the DeMolay Lodge by older Masons, particularly by some preachers. When I preached plainly on this subject a young man came to me greatly troubled and explained that they always had prayer at every

meeting of the DeMolay.

I had just been told that the DeMolay Lodge regularly had dances, and so I said to him, "Do you have prayer at the dances!"

"Oh yes," he answered, "we begin every dance with prayer. Do you believe that God heard and was pleased? Lodges may have the outward form of righteousness, but they are a snare to any Christian who enters them. May God have pity on the preacher who leads the prayer asking God to bless the dances held by the lodges! It is a sin to be yoked up with unbelievers!

Saved people who yoke up with unbelievers lose their testimony, lose their influence until sinners can tell no difference and see no reason to be alarmed at their own wicked state.

Lodges Filled With Unbelievers

One who joins any of the principal secret orders violates this command of God not to yoke up with unbelievers. I will readily admit that there are many converted men in the secret orders. I know many good men who have done wrong about this matter. Many preachers have. My own father made this mistake. But it is certainly true that not all the men in the lodges are Christian men. They are not required to be, they are not expected to be. A man does not need to profess to have been born again to be a good Mason, Odd Fellow, Elk or Klansman. A man who becomes a Mason must profess to believe there is a Supreme Being in whom he puts his trust. But that God may be the god of Mohammedans, the god of Buddhists or the god of the American Indian or any heathen deity. The orthodox Jew who believes that Jesus Christ is the bastard son of a Jewish harlot, an impostor and deceiver, still

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makes a perfectly good Mason and is received without any request that he take the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

There are Masonic Lodges in India that use the sacred Hindu writings for the Greater Light on the altar, instead of the Holy Bible. The sacred writings of any group which believes in a "Supreme Being" are acceptable enough for Masonic ceremonies. This means that while Masonry is a religion, it is not the Christian religion. The god of Masonry need not be the God of the Bible, the true God, and the bible of Masonry need not be the true Bible. I am simply saying that when one joins a Masonic Lodge, or any other major secret order, he is yoking together with unbelievers, and directly violating the command of God, by binding himself with those, many of whom do not profess to have trusted Christ as Saviour.

When as a young minister I followed the advice of preacher friends and asked to be made a Mason, I was shocked beyond measure to learn that the man who had the leading part in initiating me as an Entered Apprentice, was a man who did not believe in the miracles, the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection nor anything of the kind. He was an out-and-out rationalist and the most influential member of that lodge! He was a man of profane language and infidel belief, yet preachers in that lodge deferred to him and followed him! Young, inexperienced, and not knowing much about what the Bible taught on that subject, yet I felt then that I was out of place in the company of such men. I feel the same now. I asked God to forgive me, and I have never been back since.

Since that time I have read all the authorized Masonic literature I could find, *Monitors*, *Burial Service*, *Masonic*

Encyclopedia, *New Age Magazine*, *The Men's House* and much else besides. And the more I read the Bible, the more certain I become that the religion of Masonry is not the religion of the Bible. It is a religion of being saved by being good, not a religion of being saved by the blood of Christ. Masonry, like other lodges, teaches that God is the Father of all men alike, not requiring people to be born again. The burial service of an unsaved Pharisee, conducted by a Masonic or other lodge, would be the same as for a soul-winning preacher. Masonry does not teach that men need to be born again, does not show a man how to be born again, does not even require a personal faith in Christ and does not ask the applicant for membership to confess Christ as Saviour. The result is that saved and lost alike are in the lodge together. The unsaved have as much influence as the saved, usually more. The Christian man in the lodge is not the highest type of Christian, not the vigorous, aggressive, soul-winning Christian leader. The unsaved group dominates and sets the program for those compromising Christians who join with unbelievers in the lodges.

Other Orders as Bad as Masonry or Worse

I have used as an example the Masonic Order, for several reasons. It is the most ancient, probably the best-known, and one of the best of the orders, but it is unchristian, contrary to the Bible and largely filled with unbelievers. What is true of Masonry is true in like manner of every other secret order with which I am familiar. They all receive members who do not profess to have been born again on the same basis as children of God. All alike encourage lost men to believe that they can be saved without the blood of Christ, that all one needs is to live up to his vows.

Remember that the one, plain, unmistakable command of God on this matter is that Christians should not yoke up with unbelievers. Whatever else you know about the lodges, good or bad, you must admit, and all informed people do admit, that the lodges do not demand a change of heart as a requirement for membership.

Lodges Do Much Good

You may say that lodges do much good and I do not deny it. I am glad for all the orphan children cared for by Masonic and Odd Fellows orphans' homes and all crippled children treated by the Shriners. But if that is the reason for joining a lodge, there would be a far better reason for joining the Roman Catholic Church. While Masons take care of the children of Masons, or of elderly Masons and their wives, Catholics throughout the world have given a wonderful example in the care of orphans and the poor and the old. Honest men must admire the unselfish Catholic sisters who usually make no distinction between the Catholic and Protestant in their benevolent institutions. Yet I cannot agree that New Testament Christians ought to join in with the Roman Catholic Church. While I honor Catholics for all the good deeds they do, yet I do not believe that Roman Catholicism is Bible Christianity, nor that saved people should join them. No, good deeds done by some lodges, whether selfishly or unselfishly, are no reason for Christians joining with them and thus disobeying the plain command of God, *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."*

Good Men in the Lodges

My critics will say that the lodges have many good men, and I

grant it freely. I believe that in most of the lodges, perhaps all, there are many good men, even converted men, men who love God and want to serve Him. I am sorry to say there are thousands of preachers who are members of the lodges. But that does not make it right, and one should not join the lodges because somebody else did. Many preachers use tobacco though it defiles the body, grieves the Holy Spirit and sets a sorry and filthy example before the world. I cannot follow their example. Many preachers attend the lewd and vulgar modern picture show. They ought not to do it, and I cannot follow their example. If there are good men in the lodges, they are there contrary to the plain command of God who said, *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."* We should not follow them in their sin.

There are Christian people in lodges, but I remind you that they are not the happiest nor most useful Christians. Through these many years I have been carefully watching to see if I could find a man active and high up in the lodges and at the same time a successful and fervent soul winner. I find that soul winning and lodge membership do not go together. The man who disobeys God about yoking together with unbelievers loses power, loses testimony, and usually loses his interest in soul winning. How many preachers have left the pulpit to become Masonic lecturers! My own dear father, one of the best men that I ever knew, an humble preacher of the gospel, became so absorbed in Masonic work that for two years' time he did not enter, for regular services, the building of the church where he was a member! What a joy it was to me in a great revival at Decatur, Texas, to enlist my father, preach to him the gospel, and see him again as in former years, go out among men to put his arms around hardened sinners and lead them to Christ. God opened again for him the

fountain of tears over sinners. God turned his feet again in soul-winning ways. But the lodges had dried up his soul until he had well nigh lost faith in the doctrines he had once preached.

I have held revival campaigns in thirty-two states these last twenty years. Everywhere I have gone, I have found that those active in lodge work were not active in revivals. The chairmen of the boards of deacons, the Methodist stewards, the Sunday School teachers who were active lodge members, remained away from the revival on lodge night. My experience proves that God's Word is right. But experience or no experience, I know that the only safe guide is the Word of God, and it commands, "*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.*"

What Should the Lodge Member Do?

The Scripture at the beginning of this message tells us what to do:

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. – II Cor. 6:17, 18

God tells you what to do and He said, "*Come out from among them.*"

Leave the silly trappings of the lodges. You are not a child, to dress up in a cowboy suit and ride a "stick horse" nor to wear an Indian suit with feathers down the back. God does not mean His people to help unbelievers in such foolishness.

Come away from the secret things, the things taught behind closed doors, the things you are not free to share with other

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Christians, those secret things that God will one day bring to light.

Come away from those lodge oaths. They are blasphemy. The yoke is real; It is oath-bound. The oath you take upon you in the lodges binds you by oath to favor lodge members, even if they are unsaved, above Christians who are not lodge members. When Jesus commanded us to "*swear not at all*" (Matt. 5:34), then it is poor business for a Christian to take such blasphemies upon his lips and to bind himself in a yoke with unbelievers. "*Come out from among them,*" God says! And then we have the promise of God that He will receive us, He will be to us a Father and we shall be truly His sons and daughters. If you want the joy of the Spirit's presence, the joy of unbroken fellowship with God, then break your yoke with unbelievers today. Come out and be separate and God will bless you. (The author's 88 page book, *Lodges Examined by the Bible*, 25¢, gives much fuller help on this question.)

IV

To Yoke Up in Churches and Denominations With Unbelievers Is a Sin

The Bible has much to say about God's people living a life of separation from sinners, but the greatest emphasis is always placed on the teaching that Christians should not mix with unbelievers in the matter of religion. If it is wrong for a Christian to yoke up with unbelievers in marriage and for God's people to join with unbelievers in oath-bound lodges, it is even more important that Christians should have no "yoke, no "fellowship," no "agreement," no "part," no "concord," with unbelievers in churches and religious programs.

Years ago it was taken for granted that every man in the church believed the Bible. It is not so now. Unsuspecting Christians sometimes think that all preachers and Christian leaders certainly believe the Bible. The shocking fact is that many preachers are practically infidels.

Infidelity Among Preachers

A few years ago the following account of a questionnaire sent out to preachers, concerning the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, was published in the public press.

“Existence of Real Hell and Devil Denied by Pastors in Questionnaire”

Chicago, Feb. 8—Existence of hell as a real place was denied today by 69 of each 100 Protestant ministers in answer to a Northwestern university school of education questionnaire that disclosed many modifications in religious belief.

That ‘there is no devil’ was the assertion of 54 percent of the clergymen. A majority of the pastors were opposed to having children taught that so-called God-sent punishment such as earthquakes, fires and floods were punishment for sin.

Eighty percent voted against teachings that ‘hell is a place of burning.’

Of the 500 ministers who answered the questionnaire only 48 percent said they would teach junior high school pupils that judgment day is really coming. Thirty-nine percent said it would not come to pass.

The existence of heaven was doubted by 41 percent who recommended that it be eliminated from church instructions. Sixty percent believed in angels.

All were virtually unanimous in their belief that ‘God still runs the world.’ On the question of a future life 92 percent recommended teaching that those who die go right on living.

Nineteen percent held that God keeps a record of the individual’s bad deeds in a book, while 74 percent disagreed. Seventy-two percent supported the deity of Jesus Christ while 26 percent were in opposition.

Sixty-nine out of every hundred of these preachers believed that there is no real Hell! More than half of them said, “There is no devil”! More than half did not believe in teaching that

judgment day is really coming, and nearly half doubted the existence of Heaven! Eighty percent did not believe Hell was a real place of burning. Of these five hundred Protestant preachers, only one out of five believed what the Bible says about Hell, and others doubted the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ and even the fact of immortality of the soul! It is a startling fact that many preachers, many professors in so-called Christian colleges and denominational leaders, are unbelievers. They do not believe the Bible, they do not believe Christ, many of them have not trusted Him as Saviour. What does the Bible say about yoking up with these unbelievers?

False Teachers and False Prophets Were Foretold

It is not surprising to one who knows the Bible, that some preachers should prove false to their sacred trust and preach their unbelief. The Bible has plainly forewarned us of the coming of such preachers. Paul, leaving the great church at Ephesus with tears, warned the elders or preachers of that church as follows:

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. – Acts 20:28-31.

Paul knew that men, even preachers, would turn away from the faith.

In I Timothy 4:1 the same warning is given again:

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Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

“In the latter times” this departing from the faith will be worse than before, we are told!

Again in Paul’s second letter to Timothy, II Timothy 3:13, Paul warns the young preachers, *“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”* In the next chapter this warning continues, that the time should come when people will *“turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”*

“There Shall Be False Teachers Among You, Who Privily Shall Bring in Damnable Heresies”

Poor, blind weaklings that we Christians are, the Lord saw that we needed to be warned again and again concerning false teachers! In II Peter 2:1-3, is the following passage:

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

The Scripture does not use soft words in talking about false teachers. It says that they *“shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them,”* and we are told that this false teaching will be brought in *“privily”* and *“with feigned words.”*

What an accurate picture that is of modernists! They pretend to believe in the Bible, the miracles, salvation, Heaven, etc. But when they say the Bible is inspired, they mean just like other good books are inspired. They say that Jesus is the Son of God, but they say that so are we all the sons of God! They may say they believe in miracles, but in the next breath they say that the radio and printing press are miracles. Actually their words are “feigned words,” for secretly, that is privily, they are bringing in damnable doctrines that deny the Lord that bought them, deny the Bible, God’s Word. When you read the news clipping above concerning the five hundred preachers, most of whom do not believe the Bible, and read this passage of Scripture, you will see that the Lord knew what He was talking about! What the Lord foretold in His Word has now come to pass.

The sad truth is told, in verse 2 above, that “*many shall follow their pernicious ways*”! In these wicked, modern days, many people follow unbelievers and modernists. Verse 3 tells us that such modernists and unbelievers still claim to be preachers, still claim to be Christians, though they do not believe the very fundamentals of the Christian faith, sometimes deny the Lord Himself and would take away from His head the crown of deity. But they hold on to the form of Christianity, while they preach their wicked unbelief “*through covetousness*.” They want to deceive common Christian people so they can receive their nice salaries! How true the Bible proves itself to be! Before our eyes today we find these words fulfilled.

What Should Christians Do?

What should Christians do when they find such false teachers,

preachers and Christian people untrue to the Bible, unbelievers in the Bible, the blood atonement, the deity of Christ, the miracles, and a literal Hell? That question is plainly answered in the Scriptures. Christians should not be yoked together with unbelievers. Particularly they should not be yoked with unbelievers in the churches and religious work. To be in a church with unbelievers, skeptics and doubters is to disobey the plain command of Christ. To support such a preacher or teacher is a sin against God for which one will certainly have to give an account to God when he stands at the judgment seat of Christ.

“Earnestly Contend for the Faith”

Every Christian who wants to please Christ should be a campaigner, a sincere crusader for the true gospel. Jude, verses 3 and 4, gives us the instruction that we should *“earnestly contend for the faith”* and warns us again of evil men who will creep in unawares, denying the only Lord God. Read these verses:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God in lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

There will be some Christians who will contend for “peace.” But this Scriptures does not tell us to have peace with modernists, rationalists, unbelievers, false teachers who deny the Lord Jesus Christ. Some people do not like “contentions” they say. But whether we like it or not, to contend for the faith is the plain duty

commanded for every Christian. Any kind of Christianity that wants peace with unbelievers and agreement with doubters and fellowship with modernists, goes against the plain command of II Corinthians 6:14-16. Read again what God says about having “peace” or “fellowship” or “communion” or “concord” or “part!” or “agreement” with such unbelievers:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?

According to this Scripture, it is sin to seek peace with such company. They are the enemies of Christ and the Bible. Honest Christians may differ as to some details of Bible interpretation, but honest Christians cannot differ about the deity of Christ nor whether the Bible is all God’s Word, infallibly true, nor about the blood atonement nor about the miracles such as the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection of Christ, the creation of the world by the direct act of God, etc., nor about a literal Hell. When a man dissents from what the Bible says on such great fundamentals of the faith, then that man has no right to call himself a Christian, much less a preacher of the gospel or a teacher of the Bible. Such a man is an impostor, a deceiver, a false prophet. An honest infidel one might somewhat respect, even though the Bible calls him a fool. But an infidel in the garb of a preacher with language of deceit because of covetousness, is a wolf in sheep’s clothing, a base hypocrite. He forfeits the respect of decent people and should have open scorn and public exposure at the hands of true Christians everywhere. The Bible commands us to contend earnestly for the faith.

Do Not Receive False Teachers Into Your House nor Bid Them God Speed

The attitude of an honest Bible-believing Christian toward unbelievers and those who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ is plainly told in the Second Epistle of John, verses 9 to 11:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God, speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

You can see from the above Scriptures that the Lord here means not simply an unsaved man, but one who brings the wrong doctrine about Christ, one who does not believe what the Bible teaches about Him. Here is the proper attitude for a Christian toward an unbelieving preacher, one who does not hold to the great fundamentals of the faith: **"RECEIVE HIM NOT INTO YOUR HOUSE, NEITHER BID HIM GOD SPEED!"** Do not let a modernist preacher eat at your table. Do not let him sleep on your bed. Do not pay his railroad fare. Do not wish him prosperity. Do not do anything to endorse or support a modernist. If you do, the Bible says that you are a partaker of his evil deeds and will certainly suffer part of his punishment. This is another way of saying, *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."* Any yoke that binds a believer in the Bible with one who does not believe the Bible is an unequal yoke, and it is wicked for a Christian to be bound by such ties.

If Your Pastor Is a Modernist, What Then?

Suppose you are a member of a church whose pastor is a modernist. I do not mean the pastor who may be wrong on some interpretation of Scripture. That is not modernism. I do not mean a pastor who is worldly. Worldliness is wrong, but that is not modernism. A modernist does not believe that the Bible is what it claims to be, the very Word of God. A modernist does not believe in the virgin birth of Christ, does not believe in His bodily resurrection. A modernist does not believe in the substitutionary death of Christ, that Christ actually died in the sinner's stead and paid for our sins on the cross. The modernist does not believe in a personal regeneration, salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ. The modernist does not believe in a literal Hell for Christ-rejecting sinners. Now supposing that your pastor is a modernist, an unbeliever in the Bible sense, and therefore is Satan's man instead of God's man, and brings Satan's doctrine instead of Christ's doctrine. What should a Christian do in such a case?

The answer is plainly given in the Bible. Have no part or lot or agreement or concord or fellowship with such a man. Give not a penny to his salary for in so doing you would bid him God speed and be a partaker of his evil deeds. That is the first thing. The second is to openly expose his modernism and *"earnestly contend for the faith."* Christians ought not to be quiet and cowardly when it is plain duty to be like Paul, *"set for the defense of the gospel"* (Phil. 1:17). The third duty, I think, is obvious. If you cannot put out such a leader from the pastorate of the church where your fellowship is, then only one thing remains to be done and that is to leave it immediately. You cannot please God and remain yoked up with such unbelievers.

To listen to a modernist without protest is a sin. To pay his salary is wickedness. To associate with him is to put righteousness with unrighteousness, light with darkness, Christ with Belial, and the temple of God with idols. *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."* Modernists often cry, "Peace, peace," but there is no peace.

It is important that we use terms correctly. A man is not a modernist because he differs with you on baptism, though he may be wrong. To be untaught or to be mistaught on the second coming of Christ is not modernism. It is true that modernists are post-millennial in their belief, but not all post-millennialists are modernists. It is wrong, unbrotherly and misleading to call people modernists because you believe them to be wrong on some matter of Scriptural interpretation. But on some major matters there is no room for essential disagreement among real Christians. On the fact of the inspiration of the Bible, on the deity of Christ, on the blood atonement, on salvation by faith, real Christians agree. They may differ in the way they express those doctrines, and may differ on some corollaries of those doctrines, but real Christians must believe that the Bible is what it claims to be, the inspired Word of God, and that Christ is what He claims to be, the virgin-born Son of God, who died for our sins. Christians must believe that salvation is by the blood of Christ. One who does not so believe is a modernist, and Christians should not be yoked with modernists.

There can be no peace on religious grounds between believers and unbelievers, children of God and children of Satan.

Should a Christian Support Modernistic Denominational Programs?

Here is a most serious question which many Christians have to face. Suppose your church is in the main true to Christ. Your pastor believes the Bible and preaches it. He preaches salvation by the blood of Christ. He warns sinners that they must repent and be born again, or be lost forever. Your pastor is a man of God and the church members are, generally, real Christians; but your church is affiliated with a denomination which supports modernistic schools, perhaps, or which sends out modernists, unbelievers, as “missionaries.” What is the duty of a Christian in such a sound, Bible-believing church, affiliated with the denomination whose leadership is modernistic?

Some would say that it is a sin for any Christian to remain in a church connected with one of the main denominations. I do not say so. I do not believe the matter is that simple. Certainly it is not right for a Christian to compromise. Certainly it is not right for a Christian to support modernism. Prayerfully, I make some suggestions.

1. No Christian should give a single penny of money to the support of modernism. If a denominational secretary denies the essentials of the Christian faith, then you should make sure that you do not participate in his support in any wise. If your denomination supports a school where professors break down the faith of students, where they teach that the Bible is not the infallible Word of God, and that Christ Jesus is not the virgin-born Son of God, God incarnate, then make sure that none of your gifts

ever go to support such a school. If a foreign mission board or society of your denomination sends out some “missionaries” who are modernists, then make sure that none of your money supports such missionaries. Make sure that the money God has put in your hands does not go to strengthen any such modernistic mission board. Do not yoke up with such a modernistic mission board in the Lord’s business. To do so is a sin. To yoke up with a modernistic foreign board violates the command, *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.”*

If your pastor believes the Bible, then likely provision is made in your church so that those who give to the support of the local church give to a separate fund which is not used for the denominational budget. Likely members of the church are invited to designate their gifts to sound missionary objects. If there is one general church budget, and if a definite percentage of that budget goes regularly to a modernistic denominational church program, so that by giving to the church budget one would be supporting modernism, then in my humble judgment, it would be wrong to give your money to such a church budget. Christian money should go to support work that is true to Jesus Christ and true to the gospel. Even at the risk of misunderstanding and persecution, a Christian should not support modernism with his money. Surely, on this, Christians can agree.

2. A Christian should not help in the support of modernistic literature and propaganda. In some churches where the Bible is believed and preached, Sunday School literature is

tainted with modernism. Mark it carefully, that I speak not of shallowness nor worldliness, and not of mistakes in lesser doctrines, but of real modernism on the essential doctrines. If your Sunday School literature denies the inspiration of the Bible and its accuracy, denies salvation by the blood of Christ, denies the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His miracles or His bodily resurrection, then no Christian should have his children taught from such literature, and no Christian should cooperate in the spread of such literature and propaganda.

Once I planned to join a certain church which had a good pastor, true to the Word of God. But denominational promotional literature was regularly given out in the church. This literature minimized the importance of the Bible, insisted on cooperation with modernistic denominational leaders, the support of schools which deny the faith, and the support of a foreign missionary society which is principally controlled by modernists and their friends. I could not in good conscience put my family under the influence of such literature. I was not willing to be a member of a church which regularly spread such propaganda, written by enemies of Christ and the Bible.

What can an earnest Christian do in such a matter? If your pastor believes the Bible and your church is a Bible-believing church, and yet if hurtful and dangerous and wicked propaganda, denying the essential doctrines of the Christian faith, are circulated in your church, either in the Sunday School literature or denominational promotional literature, what should you do? First, be a real Christian. Your pastor is probably just as anxious as you are to do right. Prayerfully and with humility, talk to your

pastor. Your judgment might be wrong about what is modernism and what is not. Or your pastor very probably would gladly take his stand against any outright modernism. Take time, be prayerful, do not accuse others, and usually God's people, as they are informed and properly led, will get rid of the offending literature and stay true to Christ and the Bible.

There will be some sad cases when Christians must suffer for Christ. Sometimes Christians must leave the church where they have worshipped since childhood, the church where there are many lovely Christians and where the fellowship has been sweet. If that is clearly one's Christian duty, then do it for Christ in love and faith, knowing that He will reward.

But let each Christian make sure that he does not break fellowship over his own opinions and whims. Sometimes those who make the loudest cry about "modernism" are simply those who lost a place of leadership in the church and then accused others. Be sure that you act only for Jesus' sake. To accuse people of modernism is a most serious thing, and a Christian should not do so except on definite proof. To bring division or dissension in a church, to arouse contention, is a grievous sin, except where it is really necessary for one to "earnestly contend for the faith," as Jude clearly commands us.

If a Christian cannot stay in a church without supporting modernism, then he should leave the church and put his influence and labor and offerings where they will honor Christ and support work that is true to the Bible.

Open Rebuke for Sin Is Necessary

To Yoke Up in Churches and Denominations With Unbelievers Is a Sin

In Galatians 2:11-14 Paul tells us how he found even the Apostle Peter dissembling, and that he *“walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel.”* Paul withstood him to the face *“because he was to be blamed.”* Paul says,

I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

Paul was right about it. There is only one course for Christians and that is to earnestly contend for the faith and have no fellowship with the evil things that surround us.

Jehoshaphat, the good king of Judah, pleased God in many ways, but he sinned in having fellowship with the wicked king of Israel (the northern kingdom). In II Chronicles 19:2 we find the words of God's displeasure carried to him by a faithful prophet, Jehu:

And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.

Should Christians help the ungodly? Should we who are bought with the precious blood of Christ love them that hate the Lord? Surely that matter ought not to be hard for us to decide. James 4:4 gives us plain words about compromising Christians who yoke up with unbelievers. Hear what God's Word says:

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Those who are married to this wicked world are spiritual

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adulterers. Even the friendship of this world is the enmity of God.
To be a friend of this world is to be the enemy of God!

Conclusion

As a closing thought, let me remind you that the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, is praised by Holy Writ as one *“who is holy, harmless, undefiled, SEPARATE FROM SINNERS”* (Heb. 7:26). Jesus is fitted to be a High Priest because He is separate from sinners. This world was no friend to the Lord Jesus Christ; why should it be a friend to me? Jesus said, *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you”* (John 15:18). Surely the servant is no better than his master nor the disciple than his Lord. Why should I seek the friendship and keep fellowship with a wicked world that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ? Why should I be yoked with men who hate Him today and will not take Him into their hearts? Whether it be in business or society or lodge or church, or anywhere else, the man who is the enemy of Christ would be my enemy if I were enough like Jesus. *“All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”* (II Timothy 3:12). No wonder the Bible says, *“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!”* (Luke 6:26). No wonder we are commanded to rejoice and be exceedingly glad when men revile us and hate us for Jesus’ sake!

I May Witness to Sinners but Not Be Yoked With Them

Jesus died to save sinners and yet the Scripture says that He was *“separate from sinners.”* Jesus was called *“the friend of publicans*

and sinners," and yet his denunciation of their sin was so great that the jeering crowd mocked Him while He died on the cross.

I may preach to sinners as Peter did at Pentecost, boldly denounce their sin, but if I would please God and keep my testimony, I must not sit down as he did with the soldiers who would crucify Jesus!

I may oppose the Philistines as Samson did, but I must not lie, as he did, with my head in the lap of Delilah if I would retain my God-given strength!

I may go like the man of God out of Judah unto Jeroboam with his false altar at Bethel and then cry against the idolatry of that idolatrous king and that unconsecrated place. If I am true to the Word of God, then God will protect me from the wrath of Jeroboam and make my prophecy come true. But I dare not stop to eat or drink in that place lest I should meet a lion in the road to destroy me, as did that man of God in I Kings chapter 13.

If you let this clear teaching of separation keep you from loving sinners, keep you from seeking them, weeping over them, yearning, pleading, winning them, you will have utterly misunderstood this Bible teaching. Oh, we must love sinners as Jesus loves them, and must run after them for Him and compel them to come in and be saved. But we must not bind ourselves to their ways nor yoke up with them.

No Distinction Between Saint and Sinner, Between Saved and Lost

Surely the reason for our troubles is this, that Christians have sold out to the world, have compromised with sin, have yoked up

Conclusion

with unbelievers, so that God cannot bless us and sinners will not hear us. I find the average church member lives the same kind of life as a self-confessed, Hell-bound sinner. The deacon and the bootlegger often have much in common. The one is as mad for money as the other. They lie, they steal, they work on Sunday, they sell beer, they rent their property for immoral purposes, very much alike. Money is the god of both. What is the difference?

The church member and the worldling go to the same rotten picture show, see the same scenes of lust and gangland and murder. What is the difference?

Both saint and sinner tell the same dirty yarns. Both smoke the same brand of cigarettes; both smell just the same. The Christian is yoked up with the world.

The bootlegger does not have family prayer, but neither does the average Christian! What is the difference? The harlot woman does not teach her children the Bible, but neither does the woman church member. The unsaved woman bobs her hair in defiance of the plain command of I Corinthians chapter 11, but so does the president of the Women's Missionary Union or Ladies' Aid of the church and the solo singers in the choir. What is the difference?

The Devil's crowd dances and so do the church members.

The children of darkness go to the night clubs, and there they drink their beer, but there they meet at the same tables with members of the church from the town where they live! And why should they not? Wasn't the beer voted in largely by church members? God have mercy!

The saved marry the unsaved. They join with them in lodges, take the same blasphemous oaths, take part in the same unholy

amusements. False prophets arise to lead away our young people from the Bible, and church members support them with their money.

God's Invitation: "Come Out From Among Them"

Christian, have you missed the joy of the Holy Spirit's presence in your life? Have you lost the joy you had in early years? Are you hungry for more fellowship with God, more power? Would you like to win souls? Then God's answer is, do not be yoked up with unbelievers:

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. – II Corinthians 6:17,18.