



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Bible, Part 237”

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



Our text for today is **2Corinthians 6:14**:

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

Thank you for listening and thinking with me as we study God's Word to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

As we begin, let me communicate to you that my preaching is based upon the fact that every episode recorded in the Bible is literally true.

We live in a culture in which fantasy and fiction dominate, but we need to resist the allure of made-up stories and intellectually concocted arguments as we develop faith in the meticulously recorded factual history of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ by the eyewitnesses who were present on the scene.

We must do whatever we need to do to develop the personal faith needed to believe that the Bible is the absolute truth, and recognize that every fiction put forth by man or by the devil to contradict or minimize the impact of Biblical accounts is a lie.

As the Apostle Paul completes his sixth thought in his second book to the Corinthian church, Paul continues to make the mundane, everyday decisions of the Corinthians the focal point of his letter. For it is those mundane decisions that we make on an everyday basis that keep us close to Christ.

Signs, wonders and miracles are not, generally speaking, the everyday fare of Christians, but rather those normal, natural, rational decisions that we have to make on a daily basis that set us apart from nonbelievers. So, Paul begins, in this home stretch of instruction, by saying, in **2Corinthians 6:11**:

11 O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open.

Paul wants the Corinthians to know that he is giving them his best instruction as a church father, one who wants to see his church children succeed. I understand Paul's point, for I also have an adult son. He has come to me for advice since he reached the age of maturity when he was at the crossroads of life, and I advised him as best I could, based upon the wisdom that my maturity, experience and the guidance of the Holy Spirit allowed me to. I was at his house, in Charlotte, NC, where he is advising his children in the same way. The one thing that a good father wants for his children is for them to at least duplicate and hopefully exceed his success, and it made my heart rejoice to see my son sitting on his big chair on Sunday morning with his two children at his side, all three of



them listening to the preacher at the church of which he is a member as he gave an exposition of the Word of God.

It is incumbent upon every good father to make sure that his sons and daughters are exposed to the wisdom in the Word of God, without which, the children are destined to go down the primrose path to destruction. Yes, it is possible for the children to avoid the trials and tribulations of this life without the guidance of their father, but it is unlikely that they will do so, which is why Paul tells the Ephesian church, in **Ephesians 6:4**:

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Children's minds are often restrained by their father's discipline. A father's discipline is necessary, but immature children often do not see the reasoning behind the pain involved in that discipline. But the writer of the Hebrews explains to fathers, in **Hebrews 12:11**:

11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

The discipline of a child is like the planting of a fruit tree. Oh, there may be no fruit initially, however, the one that plants the tree must patiently wait for the fruit to develop once the tree matures. In the meantime, the planter must continue to fertilize and water the tree, even though it seems that nothing is developing.

The Apostle Paul plants and waters the Corinthian tree by speaking openly to them, by advising them based upon the Word and Holy Spirit of God. And the Apostle Paul hopes that the adult, mature Corinthians will develop maturity by being open to the Word of God, although Paul knows, from his own experience, that it is sometime difficult for folk who think that they are grown to hear that which the Lord God has to say if the Word of God is not in line with their desires. But Paul admonishes the Corinthians, in **2Corinthians 6:12-13**:

12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections.

13 Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open.

We must all take the discipline. We must all be open to the Word of God. We must all conclude that that which that Word of God tells us is correct, even if the Word disallows us from carrying out our most fervent desires. For the Lord knows the pitfalls of this life for which we are headed, and speaks to us so that we can avoid those negative situations, even if, or especially if we do not see the direction that we are going as negative.

Paul then gives the Corinthian church a piece of advice that I am sure that they do not want. Paul admonishes, in **2Corinthians 6:14**:



14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

Paul was not a killjoy, nor was Paul just talking through his hat. The example is given, in **1 Kings 11:1–3**:

1 But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—

2 from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.

When a man marries, his wife has his heart for however long or for however briefly. And it is possible for a man's wife to turn his heart away from the Lord, just as Solomon's wives turned his heart away from the Lord.

The Lord allowed Solomon to exercise great wisdom in Israel, and to make the nation richer and wiser than any nation had ever been. But Solomon's wives induced Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, to forget that the source of his wisdom, knowledge and riches was the Most High God, and turned he who was the wisest man in the world into a fool. **1 Kings 11:4–8** continues:

4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as did his father David.

7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.

8 And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

The Lord actually appeared to Solomon twice, and spoke to Solomon directly, before giving Solomon his great wisdom. But Solomon forsook the Lord to worship idols at the behest of his wives. As you can imagine, the Lord was not pleased, especially since the Lord specifically warned Solomon not to do this. **1 Kings 11:9–11** informs us:

9 So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice,

10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded.



11 Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.

Oh, as history tells us, it is a difficult thing for the man of God to resist the allure of a wife that wants to take him away from the worship of the Most High God. Thus, every man of God is admonished to not marry such a woman, but to marry a believer that will worship the Most High God with him. The fellowship of righteousness and lawlessness does not exist. It is most likely that lawlessness will win out in this most intimate of relationships. The communion of light and darkness does not exist. It is most likely that the darkness will extinguish the light in this most intimate of relationships.

It is a strong man indeed that can resist the seductive allure of his wife. Such men do exist, but history shows that the majority of men will be seduced by their wives, as those men were seduced by their wives into making a marital commitment in the first place. And once a woman has the man in the husband position, there is no question that she has the ability to seduce his thinking because after all, she is his wife and their relationship is not illicit, but approved.

Those of us that know our history know of the historical episode of the Trojan Horse. The men of Troy built a giant wooden horse as an offering for their enemies and left the horse at the gates of their enemies' city. The enemies brought the horse into the city, recognizing the horse for the peace offering that it was. But little did the enemies know that the Trojans army put a squadron of their best soldiers inside of the giant wooden horse, and when the enemies brought the horse into the city, thinking it to be a gift, they brought the soldiers into the city as well. And once the Trojan soldiers were inside of the city, they were able to overcome the guards at the city gate and open the gate so that the Trojan army could enter and overcome the city.

A man with an unbelieving wife has a Trojan horse in his city. The enemy is on the inside of the city, and will probably overcome the guards and open the doors of the city so that the invaders can come in, just as Solomon's wives opened the doors for Solomon to become an idolater. Paul admonishes the Corinthians, in **2Corinthians 6:15–16**:

15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

But the Lord God will only walk among the Corinthians as long as the Corinthians remain believers. If the Corinthians allow the Trojan horse of unbelieving wives to enter their city and open the gates to the unbelievers and the Belial worshipers, the Corinthians will likely suffer a similar fate as did Solomon.



The Corinthians live in a city that needs to be evangelized. The gospel needs to be preached whenever the Corinthians have a chance to do so. But the requirement of preaching of the gospel to unbelievers is no reason for Christians to be seduced by unbelievers. The relationship of a believer to the Most High God must always supersede the seductive allure of an unbeliever, no matter how humanly attractive that unbeliever may be. Jesus warned His disciples to not be seduced, in **Luke 9:1–5**:

1 Then [Jesus] called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.

2 [Jesus] sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

3 And [Jesus] said to them, “Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.

4 “Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart.

5 And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”

The disciples were sent to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. But whomever would not receive the Kingdom of God must have the dust of their house shaken off the feet of the disciples, no matter how humanly attractive they are. For the purpose of preaching is to convert unbelievers into believers, not to be seduced, which is why the Lord tells the disciples to take nothing for the journey.

The disciples were not to present a lifestyle that would attract passers-by and hangers-on, as they were commanded to have no resources stored up for their journey. The disciples were to have no substance that they could waste on riotous living, as did the prodigal son. All the disciples were to take with them is the healing power of the Holy Spirit to get them a hearing and the gospel message to deliver to the people. Thus, the disciples' chance of being seduced would be lessened, as they had no resources for the seductress to obtain. And the ability of the disciples to shake the dust off their feet, if appropriate, would be increased, as even the seductress would know why the disciples were there and not chase them.

The Corinthians, likewise, must stick to their knitting. Paul admonishes them, in **2Corinthians 6:17–7:1**:

17 Therefore “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.”

18 “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.”

1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

The Corinthians have the absolute responsibility, as did the disciples, to cleanse themselves. As seductive as the things of the flesh might appear to be, the Corinthians, and we by extension, have the absolute responsibility to only



respond to those who respond to the gospel. We must reject those that respond to our preaching for an ulterior motive of any description, as we know that the devil wants to seduce us away from the spread of the gospel into an inappropriate personal relationship.

As Paul admonishes the Corinthians to cleanse themselves, Paul also admonishes the Corinthians to acknowledge that he, Paul, has presented himself clean before the Corinthians. Paul tells them, in **2Corinthians 7:2–3**:

2 Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one.

3 I do not say this to condemn; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

Paul has presented himself as a good father before the Corinthian church. Yes, Paul has admonished the Corinthian congregation to get back on track and to live in a holy manner, but in so doing, Paul has simply given the Corinthians the discipline that any son would need from a wise father. And a wise father does not condemn his son, but rather chastens him, so that when that son reaches the age of maturity, that son will know how to choose a wife and how to chasten his own son on the appropriate day.

For the best and most important way to evangelize a community is for each Christian member of the community to evangelize their own children. Each Christian father of a son ought produce a Christian young man that a Christian young woman would find appropriate to marry, and a each Christian father of a daughter ought produce a Christian young woman that a Christian young man would find appropriate to marry. And while there are those outside of the ark of safety that need to hear the gospel, each Christian parent must make sure to take the time to develop the Christian experience in the children who park their feet under the Christian parents' table for the eighteen years of infancy, toddlerhood, childhood and adolescence leading to maturity. Paul tells Timothy, his son in the ministry, in **1Timothy 5:8**:

8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Our responsibility to our children is crystal clear. Paul admonishes Timothy, in **2Timothy 3:14–15**:

14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Our children should be taught Scripture from childhood. The wisest man that ever lived put it thusly, in **Proverbs 22:6**:

6 Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.



So, Christians must reteach all of Paul's teaching to the next generation. Our children will only understand Christianity if we teach it to them. No one comes into the world knowing the gospel. Everyone that comes into the world must hear and comprehend the gospel, not as fairy tales, but as fact, even as the Apostle Peter makes it clear to us, in **2Peter 1:16–18**:

16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

17 For [Jesus] received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with [Jesus] on the holy mountain.

Peter heard the voice from heaven with his own ears. Peter saw the resurrected body of the Lord Jesus Christ with his own eyes, and spoke with and was admonished by the Lord Jesus Christ for his denials in the High Priests' Garden.

Paul saw the light from heaven on the Damascus Road, and was blinded by the light. Paul spoke with the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, and then with Ananias, whom the Holy Spirit sent to restore Paul's sight to him and to call Paul to this preaching ministry.

Yet, the Christian experience of these men, and of the other Apostles, is written and recorded in the divinely inspired written Word of God so that we, twenty-one centuries later, can read and believe them, and teach them to our children that the faith might continue, and that men, women, girls and boys might come to the saving knowledge that although the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. And as Paul reviews his experiences with the Corinthians, he makes it clear that the things that he is telling them are true, even as he is relating his experiences through the lens of persecution. Paul tells them, in **2 Corinthians 7:4**:

4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.

Thus, it is of the utmost importance that we can speak boldly about the gospel. We must be fully convinced in our own minds. We must be completely convinced that the things that the Bible tells us are historically true. We must be so convinced that we are not afraid to suffer the trials and tribulations with which those that do not believe may choose to afflict us because of our confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But sometime, despite all of our teaching, our children are seduced by the things of this life. Nevertheless, it is a great day if our children come to



themselves and return to the diligent father that taught them the things of the Lord.

There are many people, who only rejoice...

...when they are making 'big' bucks...

...when they are a big success...

...when they can display their possessions...

...when they can flaunt their 'furs'...

...when they can show off their diamonds...

...when they get a big promotion...

and, others only rejoice...

...when they make the headlines, or when they receive special recognition for their accomplishments...!

Some only rejoice...

...over how much money they have in the bank...

...over the winning of some particular trophy or award...

...over a promotion to a certain position on their job...

...over their collection of valuable antiques...or other collectibles...

...over their fancy or stylish wardrobe of the latest fashions...

...over the high class of society in which they are invited to join...

but the prodigal son has a father who is rejoicing...

...over a wayward, lost, rebellious, disobedient, and rambunctious son who has finally returned home to this father...!

Can you not hear the father repeat over and over again...this is my son...

...who once was lost, but now is found...

...who once was dead, but now is alive...

...who once was gone, but now is home...

...who once was rebellious, but now is submissive...

...who once was selfish, but now is considerate...

...who once was hard-headed, but now is tenderhearted...

and this is my son...

...who once was proud and arrogant, but now is humbled and apologetic...!

Can't you just hear the father say, my son once...

...despised me, but now he loves me...

...rejected me, but now he accepts me...

...denied me, but now he delights in me...

...forgot me, but now he remembers me...

...ignored me, but now he prefers me...



...burdened me, but now he blesses me...
for once he...
...left me, but now he has returned to me...!

I believe that it is remarkable and note-worthy that the father never once mentioned...

...the ragged garments...or,
...the missing money...or,
...the smell of 'pig pen'...or,
...his anxious waiting...or,
...his prayer-filled nights...or,
...his lonely days and weeks...or,
...his many disappointments...!

He was just simply GLAD to have his son back home. And besides this, the father...

...didn't fuss about his son's foolishness...
...didn't criticize his son's appearance...
...didn't condemn his son's immaturity...
...didn't berate his son for his lack of parental respect...
...didn't suggest that his son either 'shape up' or 'ship out'...
...didn't require a financial report from his son...

nor did the father...

...demand a lengthy explanation regarding his son's trip to the 'far country'...! He was just too glad to have his son back home...!

As far as the father is concerned...

...nothing is too good for the returned prodigal...
...nothing is too precious for the one that has come home...
...nothing is too dear for them to sacrifice now...
...nothing is too generous for such a time as this...
...nothing is too thoughtful for this special event...
...nothing is too expensive for this happy occasion...

and, furthermore...

...nothing is too merciful for this son who has just returned from the 'far country'...!

As a matter of fact, I believe that the father was determined to REJOICE...

...even if he had to rejoice alone...
...even if nobody understood his rejoicing...
...even if others didn't want him to rejoice...
...even if it were to greatly cost him in order to rejoice...



...even if there were other things that were a burden to him...
...even if he had to rejoice in private...
and, I believe that he was DETERMINED to rejoice...
...even if he would be criticized for doing it...!

For the father to rejoice meant that he...
...was appreciative of what had taken place...
...was pleased with what had just occurred...
...was happy with what had just happened...
...was excited that his son had returned...
...was blessed to have his son home again...
...was delighted for the prodigal to be back home...
and, it meant that he...
...was glad that his son had not forgotten his way back home...!

As Christians, it ought to cause us to rejoice when we see a sinner...
...come away from 'the broken cisterns that can hold no water', and come to the 'fountain of living waters'...
...come away from the 'wilderness of this present world', and come to 'the place of God's choosing'...
...come away from the 'dungeons of defeat', and come to the 'courts of the Conqueror'...
...come away from the 'seat of the scornful', and come to the 'throne of God'...
...come away from the 'broad way that leads to destruction', and come to the 'narrow way that leads to life everlasting'...
...come away from the 'life of emptiness', and come to the 'life of abundance'...
and, it ought to cause us to rejoice when we see a sinner...
...come away from 'spiritual poverty', and come to the 'unsearchable riches' that are in Jesus Christ, our Lord...!

How the saints ought to rejoice...
...when a backslider leaves the 'valley of despair', and returns to the 'mountaintops of victory'...
...when a backslider leaves the 'far country', and returns to the 'Father's house'...
...when a backslider leaves the 'husks of the pig pen', and returns to the 'table over-laden with heavenly manna'...
...when a backslider leaves the 'bondages of Egypt', and returns to the 'land flowing with milk and honey'...



...when a backslider leavens the 'paths of wickedness', and returns to the 'highway of holiness'...

...when a backslider leaves the 'shadows of Sodom', and returns to the 'Gateway of Glory'...

and, how we ought to rejoice...

...when a backslider leaves behind the 'lusts of the flesh', and returns to the 'fullness of the Spirit'...!

It is a happy day indeed, when...

...a dad gets out of the 'pig-pen'...

...a mother forsakes the 'pig-pen'...

...a sister withdraws from the 'pig-pen'...

...a brother leaves out of the 'pig-pen'...

...a son comes away from the 'pig-pen'...

...a daughter removes herself from the 'pig-pen'...

or even when...

...a stranger bids 'good-bye' to the 'pig-pen' and heads for home...!

When a sinner, or a backslider, comes home, I believe that EVERYBODY ought to be happy and rejoice. I believe that even...

...the altars ought to weep for joy...

...the rafters ought to tremble for joy...

...the shingles ought to clap for joy...

...the piano ought to play for joy...

...the bells ought to ring for joy...

...the lights ought to shine for joy...

and, even...

...the foundations ought to shake for joy...!

Nevertheless, we must realize that not everybody will be happy, or will rejoice when you get saved, and return to the Father's house. Yet, at the same time, you can be fully assured that...

...your Heavenly Father will rejoice...

...the Son of God will rejoice...

...the Holy Spirit will rejoice...

...the angels in heaven will rejoice...

...those saints that have gone on to meet the Lord will rejoice...

and, I'm sure that there will also be...

...somebody, somewhere around when you get saved, that will rejoice with you too...!

Would not...



...the firemen rejoice if the burning building was saved from total destruction...?

...the lifeguard rejoice if the drowning victim was saved from a watery grave...?

...the owner rejoice if his nearly bankrupt business was saved from going under...?

...the physician rejoice if his critically ill patient was saved from death...?

...the farmer rejoice if his crop was saved from a severe drought...?

...the child rejoice if his/her endangered pet was saved from tragedy...? and, did not...

...the father rejoice in that his long lost son returned home, and was saved...?

So, why wouldn't our Heavenly Father rejoice when an eternal soul became saved from eternal destruction and hell...? Yes, he DOES rejoice...!

So, why not come home, and find out for yourself...? I believe that YOU will also discover that YOU will be doing some rejoicing YOURSELF also...! Try it...and see...!

The Lord Jesus Christ invites us all to come home. Whether we have gone to the far country and wasted our substance, or whether we have stayed at home and worshiped Him, the Lord Jesus Christ is more than ready and able to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We have but to believe His gospel, as He tells us, in **John 3:16–17**:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh but after the Spirit. So let us so walk after the Spirit, and teach our children to walk after the Spirit as well, so that on that day when the Lord Jesus Christ comes back for His Church, the circle might be unbroken.

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