

# PRODIGAL

## CHURCH II

A SERIES IN 2 CORINTHIANS



## PRODIGAL CHURCH (SEASON 2)

### Community Group Study Guide 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 - Week of October 24, 2021

#### Introduction

- What is the most dangerous situation that you have experienced?
- Pastor Shane recalled a moment when he was spelunking. He recalled the moment when he was a mile deep inside a cave and was frightened about the potential outcome if the batteries for his light went out. He would have been left to grovel through the darkness not knowing if he was getting anywhere closer to safety. So far, in 2 Corinthians, Paul has repeatedly reminded the Corinth church to remember the darkness out of which they were saved. He does not want them to fall back to such darkness. See 2 Cor. 4:4b-6.
- In our text for this week, Paul provides another reminder to the Corinthians of who they are and where they're going.

#### Completely Cast Off the Yoke of Slavery

- v14-16: The metaphor of being yoked in a negative sense is used in two other places in the New Testament. Looking at these other places helps us understand what Paul is talking about. In Acts 15, there is a warning to the church to not to be yoked to false teachers who proclaim that people need to be yoked to the Mosaic Law in order to be saved. Both passages give a warning to not be yoked to the passions of the flesh/sex. See Acts 15:1, 6-11, 22-29 and Galatians 5:1-26.
- On one hand we can't save ourselves through the law. On the other, the experience of God's grace does not give one license to keep on sinning.
- Do not be yoked to anyone who teaches you that you need to add anything to the work of Jesus Christ in order to be saved. On the other hand, do not be yoked to anyone who says that your freedom in Christ gives you license to commit sin and live an unchanged life. Do not yoked to anyone who promotes or practices idolatry in any form.
- What does it mean to be unequally yoked to these things? Paul gives us 5 descriptors in this text to answer this: righteousness and lawlessness, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, believer and unbeliever, Temple and idols. See James 4:4.
- To avoid being yoked to the world, do we have to live isolated lives like the Amish? No. See Jesus' words in John 17:14-19, and Paul's words in 1 Cor. 5:9-13. Paul is not telling us to leave the world, but that we need to be distinct from the Lord. We should see ourselves as ambassadors of Heaven to the world; the world shouldn't change us, we should change the world. We can't partner in the gospel with those who have not yet received and believed the gospel.
- v14: This text isn't talking about marriage with an unbeliever in a relational sense. Paul is talking about marriage, in the sense of ministry. Marriage is ministry. If you don't understand that, you don't understand marriage. See Eph. 5:22-6:4. Wives should submit to their husbands in order to give the world a glimpse of the gospel. Husbands should love their wives and lay themselves down for them in order to give the world a glimpse of the gospel.
- The principal of being unequally yoked primarily has to do with ministry with the church. Paul wants the church to see that behind the ideas of the false teachers were false Gods and Satan himself. See 2 Cor. 11:13-15.
- False teachers come as angels of light, just like Satan. Christians need to be discerning, need to know God's word, and follow the voice of Christ in order to avoid yoking ourselves to such false believers/teachers.
- We practice church membership, to help each other stay on a straight and narrow path, and avoid coming under the power of false ideas and teachers.
- We need to be careful about who we're yoking ourselves to in our friendships, relationships,

#### DISCUSSION GOALS

##### Head

To understand that Christians should yoke themselves to Christ alone.

##### Heart

To experience renewal as we ponder the freedom and light that Christ has brought into our lives (compared to the slavery and darkness in which we once walked).

##### Hands

To not leave the world, but seek to be distinct from the world as we pursue greater holiness in Christ.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next **Membership 101** meeting will be held on October 31 at 1PM. Interested parties should RSVP here: <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/membership>

Sign up to join a service team here: <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/serve>.

work partnerships, and schooling. Are you strong enough to stand firm in what you believe in in these spheres of life?

- Are you discerning enough to know the difference between education and indoctrination? Christians need to be a light in darkness and stand their ground, or leave and cut their losses short before they're dragged away.
- Parents need to be aware of what their children are learning.
- Kids need to know what they believe, why they believe it, and how they should lovingly stand their ground.
- In business, Christians should seek to build institutions and make partnerships that enable them to honor Christ in their work.
- Employees shouldn't forfeit their souls in order to climb the ladder.
- How do we cast off the yoke of slavery?...

### **Completely Take Up the Yoke of Salvation**

- v16-18: To completely take up the yoke of salvation is to completely understand God as Father. He has loved you so much that he sent his son to redeem you out of slavery and adopt you into his family. This changes everything in your life.
- This series is called "Prodigal Church" because the Corinthians had so much in common with the prodigal son of the popular parable. Both sons in the parable were lost, and had abandoned the father (one in action and one in heart). Both sons were yoked to a false understanding of their father and, thus, God. They saw their father as one who was to be appeased, instead of loved and embraced.
- To completely take off the old yoke, you need to completely yoke yourself to Christ. See Matthew 11:28-30. You're no longer a slave to sin and the Law, but a son or daughter adopted into the family of God. We need to take up that identity and learn from Christ and follow him in every area of life.
- Jesus is the better older brother who set out to find and save both the rebellious and proud brothers, not to cast them away, but to embrace them and welcome them into the family with open arms.

### **Get Completely Yoked with Your Savior**

- 7:1: People cringe at the idea of holiness. They tend to want it for others, but not themselves. Christians desire holiness because holiness, eternity without sin, is our destiny.
- "bring holiness to completion": We look ahead to our future and do what we can to make it a reality right now.
- We should want people to look at our spiritual growth in holiness like they did at 1990s baseball players on steroids. We want people to say, "there's no way that's natural." We want them to see that the Spirit of God is living in us and changing us.
- Jesus could say that his yoke was easy and burden is light because he bore the burden for our salvation, the yoke of the cross, for us. He now invites us to take his yoke and take up our crosses daily as we share the gospel and seek to bring holiness to completion.
- Are you yoked fully to Jesus Christ?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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### **Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1.**

1. What does it mean to be yoked to someone or something?
2. In the context of this passage, to whom did Paul not want the Corinthian believers to yoke themselves? Why?
3. What does Paul's caution to "not be unequally yoked" reveal about the level of danger that he saw in the ideas of the opposition?
4. Did this sermon help you identify any ways that you are yoking yourself to something or someone that could pull you away from God?
5. If Christians should not completely withdraw themselves from the world in order to maintain their devotion to God, how should they engage the world?
6. How does understanding God as Father enable a person to take up the yoke of salvation?
7. **Read Matthew 11:28-30.** Why can Jesus call his yoke "easy" and burden "light"?
8. **Read 2 Corinthians 7:1.** Many people in the world cringe at the idea of pursuing holiness. What, actions, gestures, calls to action, in society, however, suggest that most people desire holiness (at least in others)?
9. Why does a Christian pursue holiness in this life?