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Reflections on The Great Commission

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Matthew 28:19-20



Here Jesus succinctly sums up the entire purpose of this church, the commission he has given us.

- * **GO.** We are not simply wait for God to bring people across our path that may have an interest in the Gospel. We are to proactively go to all ethnic groups or nations (which includes our own neighbourhood, city, and country) in the wonderful and powerful name of Jesus.



- * **TEACH.** Our job is to disciple those who have never heard the gospel, or who have never seen it lived out seriously and joyfully. Inherent in Jesus' command to disciple is the claim that all faiths are not equal, and that Christianity has an

exclusive and authoritative message – You are to teach others, because in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3).

- * **BAPTIZE.** Our teaching is not simply for the sake of information, it must be a call to action and to bring them to a church. When we accurately and uncompromisingly present the truth of Christ, it will require a public profession of faith. Baptism is only fitting for those who have been disciple, those who have come to believe in the triune God of the Bible and they are to attend a local church.



- * **TEACHING** them. Too often churches focus so much on outreach that they neglect the vital, tough work of ongoing training and biblical instruction. Our goal should be for God's people to teach the Word of God and to actively pursue all things that Jesus has commanded concerning them.

Are we Going?

Are we Discipling?

Are we Publicly Professing Christ?

Deacon Tan Yue Kay



Evangelism Team on 23 Jun 2024
@Macpherson Estate

EXODUS - SUPERNATURAL GUIDANCE IN THE WILDERNESS OF LIFE

LORD'S DAY PROGRAMME FOR JULY - SEPTEMBER 2024

JULY

- 7** Overcoming the Bondage of the World [Exodus 1:1-22]
- 14*** Divine Preservation in the Plan of God [Exodus 2:1-25]
- 21** God's Answers for Man's Excuses [Exodus 3:1-22]
- 28** When God Used Human Vessels [Exodus 4:1-21]

AUGUST

- 4** Powerful Display of Divine Power [Exodus 8:1-28]
- 11*** Typology of the Passover Lamb [Exodus 12:1-27]
- 18** Song of Gratitude & Praise [Exodus 15:1-27]
- 25** When Teamwork & Prayers Matter [Exodus 17:1-16]

SEPTEMBER

- 1** The Wisdom of Collective & United Service [Exodus 18:12-27]
- 8*** Relevance of the Moral Laws [Exodus 20:1-17]
- 15** When An Idol Displaced God [Exodus 32:1-23]
- 22** Using Our Gifts & Talents to Build the House of God [Exodus 35:21-35]
- 29** Why Jesus Matters in This & the Next Life [John 14:1-14]

Be Ye Not Unequally Yoked: A Biblical Perspective on Marriage

Introduction

The doctrine of not being unequally yoked is a principle derived from 2 Corinthians 6:14, which states:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

The Bible emphasises the importance of spiritual unity in relationships. This article will expound on this doctrine, demonstrating that it applies to the relationship between believers and unbelievers and extends to marriage.

This article further contends that Christians should marry *"only in the Lord"* (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:39). Marrying someone who shares the same beliefs is seen as crucial for spiritual harmony and growth in a marriage.

The Principle of Unequal Yoking

The metaphor of being unequally yoked originates from agricultural practices where two different animals, such as an ox and a donkey, are yoked together to plough a field.

Due to their differences in strength and nature, the yoke would be burdensome and ineffective. Similarly, a spiritually mismatched marriage will lead to discord and hinder spiritual growth.

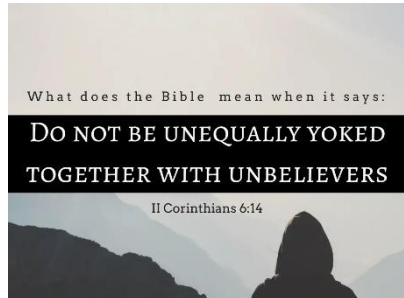
Biblical Separation in Marriage

The Bible underscores the importance of marrying within the faith. Deuteronomy 7:1-4 provides a clear commandment to the Israelites to avoid intermarriage with the pagan nations surrounding them:

*"When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee... thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: **Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.**"*

This passage highlights the spiritual dangers of intermarriage with unbelievers, which can lead to idolatry and departure from the faith. A marriage between a believer and a non-believer is prohibited according to Scripture and will not be blessed by God.

Regrettably, many professing Christians marry unbelievers which is a fatal mistake not only for the Christian in question, but also for any children that come along subsequently. Imagine this: on Sunday the Christian wants to bring his children to church but the unbelieving spouse



wants to bring the children to the beach instead (or to a temple if the spouse is of another religion).

Where is the unity in the marriage in such a marriage?

In the Westminster Confession of Faith, Article II of Chapter XXIV states the following:

II. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, (Gen 2:18); for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed, (Mal 2:15); and for preventing of uncleanness, (1Co 7:2, 9).

Can a marriage between a Christian and an unbeliever fulfil the above? This author respectfully submits that it is impossible since "[c]an two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Instead of being a "mutual help" to each other, husband and wife will be torn in different directions due to differences of belief. Additionally, there is a risk that children may not be raised as the Church's "holy seed" if the unbelieving spouse refuses to allow the children to be exposed to God's Word (although God's sovereign will shall determine whether children in such marriages are the elect and receive salvation from the Lord in due time).

Christians should take heed of the prohibition from Scripture in entering into unequally yoked marriages, for the benefit of their spiritual wellbeing and their soul.

Examples of Unequally Yoked Marriages

The Bible provides examples of men who suffered spiritually due to unequally yoked marriages.

- **Samson:** Despite being a judge of Israel, Samson's marriages to Philistine women led him away from God's commands and ultimately to his downfall. His relationship with Delilah, in particular, demonstrates the spiritual peril of being unequally yoked (Judges 16). Though Samson was mentioned as a man of faith (cf. Hebrews 11:32), he was also a man who yielded to the flesh and intermarried with the heathen.
- **King Solomon:** Despite all his wisdom, Solomon fell into idolatry due to his marriages to foreign women. He took for himself *"seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart"*, and he did *"evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father"*, building high places for pagan gods and angering the Lord (1 Kings 11:1-10 KJV).
- **Lot:** Whilst Lot was described as *"just"* (2 Peter 2:7), the same cannot be said about his wife. This author believes Lot's wife is likely not born again. When fleeing from Sodom, she *"looked back"* and *"became a pillar of salt"* (Genesis 19:26). Lot did not cover himself with glory either, as he offered his daughters to the wicked men of Sodom who wanted to *"know"* the two angels (cf. Genesis 19:5-8). Eventually, he lost his wife, children and possessions except for two daughters who were corrupt in their thinking and committed incest with him (Genesis 19:31-38 KJV). Lot truly paid a heavy price for marrying an unbeliever!

New Testament Teachings

The New Testament reinforces the importance of spiritual unity in marriage. In addition to 2 Corinthians 6:14, other scriptures emphasize the necessity of shared faith:

- **1 Corinthians 7:39:** *"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."*
- **Ephesians 5:31-32:** *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be **one flesh**. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

These verses highlight that marriage should reflect the relationship between Christ and the Church, characterized by spiritual unity and mutual faith.

The Doctrine of Biblical Separation

The doctrine of biblical separation goes beyond marriage, encompassing the broader principle of maintaining holiness and avoiding relationships that can lead one away from God. Christians are called to live distinct and holy lives, avoiding partnerships that compromise their faith.

- **1 Peter 2:9:** *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."*
- **James 4:4:** *"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."*

Conclusion

In conclusion, the doctrine of not being unequally yoked is a vital biblical principle, particularly in marriage. Christians are called to marry within the faith, ensuring spiritual unity and growth. The Bible provides clear commandments and examples demonstrating the dangers of marrying unbelievers, underscoring the importance of maintaining spiritual harmony in all relationships.

May the Lord help Christians desiring marriage to uphold this sacred principle of only marrying fellow Christians, and not yield to the lust of the flesh in marrying unbelievers. **Proverbs 3:5-6:** *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."*

Marcus Chui

Camp Thanksgiving & Sharing

By the Assistant Camp Commandant – Dn Paul Tan

This year we are privileged and thankful to God for bringing Rev David Khobal from Myanmar to be our camp speaker. Indeed, it was a time of study and learning God's Word on the camp theme of Biblical Pathway for Church Growth and Health.

When I first received Rev Khobal's notes to prepare myself as a group discussion leader, I thought I have received his dissertation for a doctoral degree. Later he mentioned to the campers that it took him 4 months to research and prepare the almost 50 pages of materials found in the camp book. We thanked him dearly for his comprehensive coverage of the topics assigned to him. I had gained a deeper understanding of various aspects of his thematic messages on worship, prayer, stewardship, fellowship and evangelism during his time of teaching.



We are also grateful to have new campers joining us. Elder Habakkuk Mang came together with Rev Khobal from Myanmar. From both we learned of the work for God they are doing in Yangon. Elder Habakkuk shared of his vision for Gilead Balm Home, and he requested prayers for God's provisions for the needs of the orphanage. I am truly touched by the generosity of the campers in answering God's call in this regard.

Other campers I got to know included bro Foo KJ where he shared of his empathy for sick people during consecration night. Got to know Philip, Janice, Albert, Janet and Angie a little better as we belong to the same prayer and discussion group. Glad also to touch base one more time with Elder Jeffrey Cheong of Gospel Light since the trip to Bangalore and Hyderabad last year.

I believe the annual church camp provides an opportune time to fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ. And in fact, we can put into practice the principles of worship, prayer and evangelism learned in the camp itself.

Lastly, we thank God for His Presence and protection throughout the period of the camp as well as safety for our bus journey to and from Lotus Desaru Beach Resort.

Psalm 37:3-6.



Dn Paul Tan

Memory Verse

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor Jack is ministering God's Word at Grace Reformed Evangelical Church in Hong Kong this morning and conducting a seminar on "*How Should Christians Cope with Psychological & Mental Health Problems*" on 1 Jul. While Pastor is away, Rev Tan Eng Boo will provide pastoral assistance if needed.
3. Rev Koh Hock Heng brings us God's Word this morning on "***Discipline of Responsible Evangelism/Missions [Acts 8:25-40]***", concluding the quarterly series on "*Christian Disciplines in the Lord*".
4. Next Sunday, Pastor will preach on "***Overcoming the Bondage of the World [Exod 1:1-22]***", starting a new quarterly study on the "***Book of Exodus – Supernatural Guidance in the Wilderness of Life***".
5. Sunday School classes after the worship service continue as follows:
 - Fulfilling One's Duty as a Soldier of Christ (Marcus)
 - Studies in Ezra (Dr Kwong Leen)
6. Chinese Fellowship meets on every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. We have systematic studies on Old Testament Foundations and the 10 Commandments. Join us for a time of profitable learning. **[Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178]**.
7. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. **[Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551]**.
8. Pray for:
 - Pray for journey mercies and protection for Pastor & Angie in Hong Kong & Country X from 28 Jun – 6 Jul.
 - Medical: Samuel Wong [multiple health conditions], Aunty Chwee Lian [hip fracture], Daniel Phang [high blood pressure], Kin Hoong [monitoring of heart and lungs pressure], Anthony [lung cancer].
9. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.