

ZOOM

"SATURATED"

2 CORINTHIANS 6:14-7:1

This Week's Core Competency

Identity in Christ – I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God. John 1:12, *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*

Believers in Christ are Christians first. Their dominant identity is found in their relationship to God through Jesus. I say dominant because their identity as children of God supersedes all other ways in which they might identify themselves. They are children of God forever. Identities based on temporal things like what I do for a living, who my friends are, where I live, the stuff I own, the amount of power or influence I have in a community, and so on, are temporal, but I will forever and always be a child of God. Paul speaks to who we are as believers, as Christians, and as children of God in 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1. After approaching the matter through a series of rhetorical questions to indicate that believers' associates include "righteousness," "light," "Christ," other believers, and "the temple of God," he comes out and says outright, "For we are the temple of the living God" (v. 16.) It's a point Paul made repeatedly in his first canonical letter to the Corinthians. In 3:16 he tells them, "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you." And in the following verse, he continues, "If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple." And

Christians are appointed to live every moment of their lives with the Holy Spirit of God.

– Lewis Sperry Chafer

then in 6:19 he writes, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?" implying that "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body." And not only to the believers at Corinth but also to the believers at Ephesus he adds, "In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (2:21-22), indicating that believers, not only *individually* but *corporately*, are the Lord's temple.

Of course, prior to the day of Pentecost, the righteous were, neither individually nor corporately, God's temple, because it was not until that day that the Holy Spirit was "poured out." Peter in his sermon tells his hearers, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (Ac 2:33). So prior to the resurrection Jesus says to the crowds, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him" (Jn 7:37b-38), and John goes on to explain, "By this he meant the Spirit whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." Then later Jesus comforts his disciples, telling them, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him because it nether sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you" (14:16-17). Prior to Pentecost, Jesus tells his disciples that the Spirit will be in them, and after Pentecost, Paul truthfully tells

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his Mars Hill hearers, "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands" (Ac 17:24). He lives in those who believe in him.

Of course, having temple-bodies in which the Holy Spirit lives comes with *benefits* and *responsibilities*. The list of benefits is too long to detail but certainly includes the following: the Spirit comforts, guides, seals, teaches, gifts, fills, helps, sanctifies, prays for, and joins us to the body of Christ. The list of responsibilities includes first and foremost the responsibility to offer our temple-bodies "as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God" (Ro 12:1), and to "honor God" with them, which is only reasonable since we were "bought at a price" (1Co 6:20). What's more, in his classic book on spirituality, *He That Is Spiritual*, Lewis Sperry Chafer lists three additional responsibilities key to true spirituality. The first is "grieve not the Holy Spirit" (Eph 4:30). We grieve the Spirit when we sin. Having grieved him we remedy the problem through confession. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). The second is "quench not the Spirit" (1Th 5:19), which the NIV translates, "Do not put out the Spirit's fire." Chafer explains, "The Spirit is 'quenched' by any unyieldedness to the revealed will of God. It is simply saying 'no' to God" (86). Having quenched him, we remedy the problem by changing our mind and doing his will. Read Jesus' poignant Parable of the Two Sons found in Matthew 21:28-32. The third is "walk in the Spirit" (Gal 5:16), which the NIV translates, "live by the Spirit." Again Chafer explains, "Walking by means of the Spirit is simply walking by a definite reliance upon the ability and power of the One who indwells" (96). It amounts to "an unbroken reliance upon the Spirit to do what He has come to do and what He alone can do. Such is the Father's provision that sin may be prevented in the life of His child. The results of the outworking of this divine provision are beyond our power of estimation: 'Ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh'" (97).

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."

17 "Therefore, come out from them and be separate," says the Lord.

Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

18 "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters," says the Lord Almighty."

7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Circle "yoked together" in v. 14.
- * Circle "unbelievers" in v. 14.
- * Box "for" indicating *reason* in vv. 14, 16.
- * Underline "what" in vv. 14-16.
- * Circle "Belial" in v. 15.
- * Circle "we" in v. 15.
- * Circle "temple of God" in v. 16.

- * Highlight "I will" in vv. 16-18 and "promises" in 7:1.
- * Box "therefore" indicating *result* in v. 17.
- * Box "since" indicating *reason* in 7:1.
- * Underline "purify" and double underline "perfecting" in v. 1.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Put what "yoked together" means in your own words.
2. Give an example of what you would consider a *prohibited* contemporary partnership with an unbeliever or unbelievers.
3. Give an example of what you would consider a *permitted* contemporary partnership with an unbeliever or unbelievers.
4. Give the implied answer to the five *rhetorical* questions asked in verses 14-16?
5. Believers and unbelievers have lots of things in common (v. 15), don't they? Explain.
6. What's the point of Paul's *metaphor* in verse 16?
7. The words "come out from them and be separate" (v. 17) can be and have been *misused*. How so?
8. Paul says, "Since we have these promises." *What* promises?
9. **Discussion:** Talk about how believers can go about to decontaminate themselves.

day 3 **EXAMINE** – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Paul's command, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers" in 2 Corinthians 6:14 and his elaboration on it that follows appears rather abruptly in this his letter. As one commentator observes, "its connection with what precedes and follows is not obvious" (Colin G. Kruse, *2 Corinthians*, TNTC, 135). In fact, some have suggested based on this fact that it wasn't written by Paul but by someone else and later inserted into the letter (see Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT, 338-341). Barnett debunks this radical conclusion and offers a more reasonable explanation of its place in the flow of Paul's argument. He explains: "This passage is a specific call for separation from the temple cults of Corinth, in direct continuity with the holiness-separation theme of 1 Corinthians, and is located here as the climax of the apologia for Paul's apostolate. In the immediately prior passage (6:11-13) Paul had called on the Corinthians to widen their hearts to him. Withdrawal from the Gentile cults will be their way of responding to his call to them, demonstrating that they truly are an apostolic church" (341). Another commentator echoes this thought. He writes: "Paul has just appealed to the Corinthians for mutual openness in affection as in speech. His own heart is open wide to them, but he knows and they know why they cannot reciprocate as fully as they ought. Some of them have an uneasy conscience about their continuing pagan associations they know Paul disapproves of" (Murray J. Harris, "2 Corinthians," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 10:359).

The structure of the passage can be delineated as follows: Paul opens with a command in verse 14a and closes with an exhortation that clarifies the point of the command in 7:1. Sandwiched in between in verses 14b-16a are five rhetorical questions, each assuming a negative answer, and in verses 16b-18, three citations of Old Testament passages.

Paul's opening command is worded in general terms and sounds like a prohibition against all associations with unbelievers. But that is evidently not the case. As one commentator observes: "Paul's clarification in 1 Cor 5:9-11 makes it clear, however, that he is not asking them to shun pagans altogether. He assumes that they will shop in the market (1 Cor 10:25) and encourages them to go to dinner at a pagan's home if they are invited and disposed to go (1 Cor 10:26)" (Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT, 345). Nor does he discourage believers from remaining married to

unbelievers (1Co 7:12-15), all of which suggests he must have something specific in mind, that is, joining with unbelievers in the "cultic" life of the city. Here's a list of some of the more likely things he has in mind: eating meat offered to idols in pagan temples, maintaining membership in a pagan cult, attending ceremonies or festivals in pagan temples (related to trade guilds, or to birth, death, and marriage, or the Isthmian games), visiting temple prostitutes, employment in pagan temples, pagan worship in the home (see W. J. Webb, *Returning Home*, JSNT Sup85, 214). Nowadays Paul's command is often taken to forbid mixed marriages, the marriage of a believer to an unbeliever, to which it may have a secondary application.

The five rhetorical questions in verses 14b-16a, each containing a contrasting pair of terms, point to the rationale for the apostle's command by stressing the fundamental *incongruity* and *incompatibility* of believers' and unbelievers' spiritual lives. Righteousness and wickedness are *antonyms*. Light and darkness are *mutually exclusive*. Belial is the *antithesis* of Christ. And while believers have much in common with unbelievers *humanly* speaking, they have nothing in common *spiritually* speaking. "The 'believer' is one who belongs to Christ and enjoys the fellowship of the community of believers in the congregation; the 'unbeliever' has no attachment to Christ or to the congregation, but is domiciled outside in the world of 'wickedness' and 'darkness,' living for 'Belial'" (Barnett, 348). Finally, believers, individually and corporately, are temples *not made with hands* in which the *one true God* lives, while unbelievers worship *many false gods* in idol temples *made with hands*. Could any two groups of people be more incompatible spiritually?

The best treatment of Paul's use of the Old Testament in verses 16b-18 has been done by J. W. Olley ("A Precursor of the NRSV? 'Sons and Daughters' in 2 Cor 6:18," *NTS* 44 (1998) 204-12). He argues that all of the passages cited amount to protests in one way or another against pagan worship. The first one, Leviticus 26:11-12, belongs to a chapter that opens with these words: "Do not make idols or set up an image or a sacred stone for yourselves, and do not place a carved stone in your land to bow down before it. I am the LORD your God" (v. 1) and contains God's promise to be with his people if they listen to him and obey his covenant. The second one, Isaiah 52:11, instructs people returning from the exile with articles of the

temple seized by Nebuchadnezzar to "come out" from pagan Babylon and "touch no unclean thing," thereby avoiding contamination by anything smacking of idolatry. Finally, on 2 Samuel 7:14 and Deuteronomy 32:14, one commentator explains: "In the citation, the third person singular 'he,' referring to the son of David, becomes a second person plural 'you,' referring to the church. 'Son' is put into the plural and 'daughters' is added . . . The promise, originally addressed to the male king, is now applied to males and females, who in Christ the king have equal status before God" (David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, NAC, 339, 40). The addition of "daughters" comes from Deuteronomy 32:18 which reveals that God rejected his people because

"he was angered by his sons and daughters," whose idolatry provoked his judgment. So Olley concludes regarding the use of "Lord Almighty" in verse 18: "If all the OT passages cited or alluded to in 2 Cor 6:14-18 thus contain an undercurrent of warning against treating God lightly by combining the worship and service of him with that given to other gods, it is appropriate that the more awesome title for God is then used, *kurios pantokrator* [Lord Almighty]" (210).

Paul closes with an exhortation that clarifies the point of his opening command. Because of God's promises that he just mentioned, he exhorts believers to pursue complete holiness by avoiding partnerships with unbelievers that might contaminate them.

The Message of the Passage

Don't partner with unbelievers in ways that contaminate your whole being and undermine your quest to be completely holy.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 *living questions* to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following *living questions*:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 14 *yoked together* "This prohibition is in the form of a metaphor based on two OT texts, one that banned cross-breeding of animals (LXX Lev 19:19), and the other that forbade the yoking together of an ox and an ass for plowing (Deut 22:10). The force of the metaphor lies in the recognition that the 'unbelievers' are of a different 'breed' and that care must be taken as to the nature of the relationships one might enter with them. Some scholars have suggested that the notion of incongruity catches the idea of the image; believer must not be incongruously joined to unbelievers; they must selectively disengage from them" (Barnett, 344). "Paul was not saying that Christians should break off all association with unbelievers (cf. 1 Cor. 5:9-10; 10:27). He had previously encouraged the saved partner in a mixed marriage to maintain the marriage relationship as long as possible (1 Cor. 7:12-16). He had also urged his fellow Christians, as ambassadors of Christ, to evangelize the lost (5:20). Rather, here Paul was commanding that Christians form no binding interpersonal relationships with non-Christians, that resulted in their spiritual defilement" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 2 Corinthians," 2017 ed., 74, www.soniclight.com). "What sort of partnerships did he [Paul] have in mind? Were they marriage partnerships (cf. 1 Cor. 7:39), or was it the more general notion of partnership in pagan practices (cf. 1 Cor. 10:14-22)? In the light of what follows (vv. 15-16) the latter seems more likely" (Kruse, 136).

v. 14 *unbelievers* Although some have argued otherwise, "unbelievers" should be understood to mean those who do not believe in Christ (see Barnett, 344-45 and Garland, 331-33).

v. 15 *Belial* "Belial is a Hebrew word (*bēlyyaʿal*) that may mean 'worthlessness' (see 1 Sam 25:25), 'ruin,' or 'wickedness.' In the Intertestamental period it was used as a name for Satan, much as Lucifer was once a popular name for Satan in English. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, Belial appears as the arch enemy of God (1QM 13:11 the 'angel of enmity; his domain is darkness, his counsel is for evil and wickedness'). Paul possibly chose the term Belial because he wanted a personal name as the antithesis of Christ. In 1 Cor 10:20 he warns them that participating in pagan feasts is to share in the worship of demons. Christ and demons do not belong at the same table" (Garland, 335).

v. 15 *we* Believers in Christ, both individually and corporately, seems to be the implied sense (see Constable, 75).

v. 16 *temple of God* "The call for separation which this whole passage makes should then be related not to the day to day contacts that believers have with unbelievers (cf. 1 Cor. 5:9-10), but to the matter of pagan worship. What agreement has the temple of God with idols? This final question with its worship imagery offers extra support for the view that the earlier questions reinforce a call to have no involvement in pagan worship" (Kruse, 137). "What kinds of relationships should not be entered into with 'unbelievers'? The rhetorical questions that follow give the answer. The Corinthians believers must not be joined with Corinthian 'unbelievers' *in the cultic life of the city*, but rather 'come out' from among them" (Barnett, 345, italics added).

v. 16 *I will live with them* A quotation from Lev 26:11-12 (see Garland, 336).

v. 17 *come out from* A quotation from Isa 52:11 with Eze 20:34 (337).

v. 17 *I will receive* A paraphrased quotation from Ezek 20:41" (337; cf., The NET Bible, 28sn on v. 17).

v. 18 *I will be a Father* A paraphrased quotation from 2 Sam 7:14 and Dt 32:18-19 (337).

7:1 *contaminates* "Paul is probably implying that the Corinthians had become defiled, perhaps by occasionally sharing meals at idol-shrines or by continuing to attend festivals or ceremonies in pagan temples (cf. 1 Cor 8:10; 10:14-22), or even by maintaining their membership in some local pagan cult. If they make a clean break (cf. *katharisomen*, aorist) with pagan life in any and every form, they would be bringing their holiness nearer completion by this proof of their reverence for God. The Christian life involves separation (6:17), familial fellowship (6:18), and sanctification (7:1)" (Harris, 10:360-61).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

In our text this week, false teachers were spreading lies in the church, but denying the truth doesn't change the facts. This quote reminds me that truth doesn't change. The truth isn't dependent on popular opinion or what feels right. In our culture today, many do not believe in absolute truth. Our society says truth is relative. Thankfully, as believers, we have access to absolute truth. God's Word is completely inerrant and eternal. God's Word tells us what to do and what to believe. How can you teach your kids to love and use the Bible as the truth for their lives? (1) Pray for your child. (2) Practice what you teach about the Bible. (James 1:22) (3) Incorporate Biblical truths into your everyday life. (Deuteronomy 6:7) (4) Make scripture memory fun. (Deuteronomy 12:12). (5) Use the Bible as a resource to solve life problems. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) It's amazing how many answers you can find in the Bible to life's everyday problems. (6) Have a yearly/monthly scripture theme for your family. (Deuteronomy 6:9) Learn the verse together. Post it around your home and in the car. (7) Begin to practice reciting scripture to each other. (1 Peter 4:11) I frequently remind my kids of Ephesians 6:1-3. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right...so that it will go well with you and you may enjoy long life on the earth." In parenting, we can use all the help we can get!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 2Co 6:14-7:1

1. What question is Paul asking in verses 14-16?
2. Who does Paul say we are in verse 16?
3. As God's temple, what are we to do?

What Do You Think

How can you live separate from the world but still be a light to the world? Talk about it with your parents.

What R U Going To Do

The best way to not be led astray by false teaching is to know the truth. How has your time been in God's Word this summer? If it's been lacking, set a goal to be in His Word. Write it down and show it to your parents so they can help you meet your goal.

Core Comp

Identity in Christ - I believe I am special because I am a child of God.

Memory Verse

2 Co 4:18 - *So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed *Scrolls* _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.

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30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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