

Do Not be Equally Yoked

Mixed marriages in the Old Testament Israel was not encouraged but strictly forbidden. Marriages with foreign women did not take place among the Israelites before they had any real appreciation for a sense of national unity and solidarity.

Mixed marriages with foreign women became as a fashion among kings and prominent men but rapidly spread among their people. The settlement of the Jews in Canaan brought the need to protect their religion and high national interests which prompted them to make restriction on mixed marriages (Exodus 34:14, Deut. 7:3-4).

The more rigid prohibition on mixed marriages was enforced from the days of monarchy where national solidarity was vital to their national security. After the restoration from the exile the restrictions ceased to be enforced resulting to numerous mixed marriages that were contracted.

For the nation of Israel, mixed marriages have dangerous and disruptive effects and have contributed much to their national discipline:

- The Jewish homes have become spiritually empty.
- There has been disruption in the Jewish history.
- There has been some missing point of contact for the past, present, and future of Israel.
- General acceptance of mixed marriages resulted to spiritual laxity among Jewish parenthood neglecting the religious training of their children.
- Mixed marriages became the shortcut to national degeneration of the nation of Israel

Satan was able to destroy the nation of Israel using various scheming including mixed marriages to weaken the national solidarity and strength of the Jewish family. The nation of Israel was the most peculiar among nation of the world, with eschatological role to fulfill. Satan was doing everything to disintegrate the nation of Israel. If the nation of Israel is gone, the benefactor of the unconditional promises is gone too. God cannot fulfill His promises without the benefactor.

In the New Testament, the issue of mixed marriages between a believer and an unbeliever has greater consequence and potential for blessings or misfortunes. The majority of Church Age believers are ignorant of this doctrine and some are simply naive and passive. Marriage is one decision that always affect the entire lifetime of a believer and has greater contribution for destiny of every believer.

Marriage is not for everyone (and so is singleness). There are wide advantages and disadvantages in both but there is greater opportunity for the unmarried believers to advance in their spiritual life (1 Cor. 7:8, 32-34). However, marriage or singleness is not a problem when it comes to our relationship with God. The only real issue is the volition of the believer whether he is married or single (1 Cor. 7:35).

When it comes to choosing a lifetime partner for a believer, God leaves almost everything to the desire and preference of the believer except the fact that the partner must be also be a believer. Someone who will be a help mate not a competitor, not a rival and never an enemy but a complement or throughout his lifetime on earth.

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 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." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

There are various ways in which God reveals to us who is the right man or right woman of His choice. Suffice to say that when we are waiting for God, His love's revelation comes in perfect time and is clearly identifiable. Why is it important to marry a believer? What are the advantages of marrying a believer in contrast to the unbeliever?

First: Marrying a believer is an act of obedience of God's choice for us (2 Cor. 6:14). When it comes to God's mandates, we just obey without second thought. Choosing the best the world can offer is no substitute for the will of God. It is the will of God that believers marry a believer not a prospect believer.

A general observation: Seldom we see a believer who has married an unbeliever and after several years also received the free gift of salvation. The unbeliever partner almost always finds salvation after the death of the Christian partner. God will use the unbeliever partner as divine discipline for the Christian partner.

Choosing a believer to marry is an act of rejecting the fellowship with Satan, the world and human viewpoint. It is an announcement of rejection of demonic doctrines, human systems and resources.

Second: Marrying a believer put the believer in position of enjoying God's desire and design for marriage. Marriage is designed and desired by God (Genesis 2:18) for several purposes:

- Human sexual pleasure
- Human partnership
- Human procreation
- Human parenthood (Gen. 1:28)

Marriage is always in danger of sexual immorality without Christ and Bible doctrine in the souls of both couples. The unbeliever is not in a position and lacking capacity to keep marriage in honor (Hebrews 13:4). Some mistake marriage for sexual pleasures, others think that marriage is a place of competition and revenge.

Marriage is determined by God (Gen. 2:21-24). Our minds are distorted by various concepts of marriage contrary to biblical teaching especially by unmarried cultic experts. A wedding has spiritual value or significance only when both the wife and husband are believers. The spiritual bonding of marriage occurred not during the so-called Christian wedding ceremony but the very moment when the two human beings has become one in the sight of God. God is the Advocate and Defender of marriage (Genesis 2:24).

The marriage contract is not the essence of marriage but it is necessary for believers.

Third: Marrying a believer puts you in spiritual capacity for obeying God's purpose for marriage (Ephesians 5:21-31). Only a believer can love his wife or her husband the way Christ's loved the Church:

- Realistically
- Sacrificially
- Willfully
- Absolutely

Only the grace of God operative in the redeemed soul of the husband can make him rule his wife in love. Only the grace of God in the redeemed soul of the wife can make her submit to her husband in love. This virtue impersonal love comes from imputed righteousness at the point of salvation and ignited by daily and progressive intake of Bible doctrine in season or out of season.

Fourth: Marrying a believer can free you from common problems of marriages such as vices, crimes, defiance of rules, laws and regulations, immorality, and many more. Marrying an unbeliever is open invitation for self-made miseries and horrible divine discipline.

Fifth: Marrying a believer puts you in position to receive tremendous blessings of spiritual maturity (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). The opposite is always true for a Christian with an unbelieving partner. An unbeliever husband or wife will always torture and harass the Christian partner. Misunderstanding in many situations is unavoidable and unexplainable. The unbeliever has no spiritual blessings and resources which make life more difficult and torturous. The Christian partner will become the center of all the blames, the escape goat for all the miseries of the unbelieving partner.

Preventions for Problematic Relationship:

- A believer should not enter into a relationship and marry an unbeliever.
- A positive volition believer should not enter into a relationship and marry a negative volition believer.

- Do not enter into a relationship an emotionally unstable person.
- Do not enter into a relationship to solve your present problems.
- Do not enter into a relationship a person because of sexual libido and sexual appetite.
- Do not enter into a relationship to escape an unhappy home.
- Do not enter into a relationship a person for status symbol, popularity or prestige.
- Do not enter into a relationship out of infatuation and attraction.
- Do not enter into a relationship out of pity and compassion.
- Do not enter into a relationship for financial security.
- Do not enter into a relationship because of beauty or physical attractiveness.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person of different spiritual belief and conviction.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person with problematic mentality and thought pattern.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person who has different financial viewpoint and policy.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person who is not physically acceptable to you.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person who has different kinds of recreation.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person who is making you feel guilty or sorrowful.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person who is motivates attention through arousing pity.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person whose priority in life is money.
- Do not enter into a relationship with a person who is only after sexual activities.



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