

Handout: Unequally Yoked?

Topic: Relationships with Non-Believers

Key Texts: 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, 1 Peter 3:1-2

The Challenge

Christians live in a tension. We are commanded to "go into all the world," yet we are warned not to be "yoked" together with unbelievers. How do we love people without compromising our direction?

Part 1: The Principle of the Yoke

2 Corinthians 6:14 *"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"*

The Metaphor: A "yoke" connects two animals to pull a plow. If they are different animals (ox and donkey), they pull in different directions. The work fails and the animals are hurt.

- **It's not about Superiority:** It is about **Direction**.
- **The Danger:** In deep partnerships (marriage, business), if you are pulling toward Christ and they are pulling toward the World, there will be constant friction.

Discussion:

1. What is the difference between a casual *friendship* and a binding *yoke*?
 2. Have you ever seen a partnership struggle because the two people had different "moral compasses"?
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Notes:

Part 2: Winning Without Words

1 Peter 3:1-2 “...if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.”

The Strategy: If you are already in a relationship with a non-believer (family, spouse, close friend), the most powerful tool you have is **Conduct**, not debate.

- Nagging builds walls.
- Holy behavior builds bridges.

Discussion:

1. Why are actions often more persuasive than arguments?
 2. How can we show “reverence” in a way that makes the Gospel look attractive?
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Notes:

Part 3: The Reality Check (Gravity)

1 Corinthians 15:33 “*Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’*”

The Warning: It is usually easier to pull someone down than to pull them up.

- **Self-Check:** Are you influencing them, or are they changing you?
- **The Sign:** If you find yourself compromising your standards to keep the peace, the yoke is too heavy.

Personal Reflection: *List the 3 people you spend the most time with. Are they helping you walk toward Jesus, or are they making it harder?*