**Transformed: 2 Corinthians wk 8 – Make it Right**

**Outside of a relationship with God – the people you do life with are some of the most important things in your life. God uses them to change us, and the enemy uses them to distract and disjoint us.**

**Paul just finished describing his friendship with them. The qualities of Christ centered relationships. Paul as a friend, You as a friend, and the ultimate friend – Jesus!**

**2 Cor 6:11 We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. 12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. 13 In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.**

**After Paul explains his relationship with them, he asks them to open their hearts – as he speaks to them as a father.**

**\*\* We need more fathers to speak into our lives. Men who will speak boldly, honest and loving – without compromise.**

**Paul says, take this to heart… Who are your friends? (list some)**

**2 Cor 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (Deut 22:10) For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, say the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”**

**Paul challenges them – it’s time to do some friendship soul searching and house cleaning.**

**Paul speaking the truth in love says, "Time to take a look at your relationships" Four Friendship Principles – from Paul**

**1 - Our relationships matter for they all shape our walk with God**

**Our Friendships/ relationship can make us or break us.**

**2 Cor 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (lit. Stop yoking up)**

**Explain yoke: two animals put together for pulling, mostly plowing. If two of diff strength/size are aligned/connected – it can ruin a field - tear up soil - and affect future harvests. The same goes for our yoked relationships.**

**It’s from Deut 22:10 “you are not to plow with an ox and a donkey together” Lit means, Don't be mismatched" – You are different!**

**The saved and the unsaved have diff. affections, beliefs, motives, attitudes, and goals. We view life from opposing perspectives.**

**Therefore, how can we be “yoked” with them.**

**\*\* Areas we tend to be unequally yoked: Dating / engaged / business / close friendships – these areas can plunge one into despair.**

**Paul is not suggesting that Christians never associate with unbelievers (1 Cor 5:9-13, 10:27, 14:22-25, 15:33, Ro 12:1-3, Joh 17:14-16)**

**How else can we shine the light of Christ in this world. We are to be around, with and have lost friends. Jesus modeled it...**

**John 17:14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.**

**The principle is, "in the world, not of the world.” Like a ship should be in the water, but the water should not be in the ship! We are a part of it – but separate from it.**

**But not being “in or of it” is half the point - it’s - 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. And - 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.**

**We are to transform the world - not transformed by the world.**

**It does not mean that we cannot enjoy things in this life.**

**But that our views, opinions, convictions and beliefs are not to be shaped or controlled by culture and changing times (Romans 1:1-2), but rather conformed to God's views - sent out to change the world and culture.**

**Paul is asking - Who is influencing who? (5 Rhetorical Questions)**

**2 Cor 6:14b For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?**

* **What partnership? sharing of life – have in common – an Influence.**
* **What fellowship? (koinonia) intimate community - not just who you hang around, but who you're knit to. Deeper than surface friends.**

**15 What accord (harmony) has Christ with Belial? (Jesus and Satan are not friends) Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?**

* **What accord? = Harmony - long lasting agreements – unions.**
* **What portion? = shared possessions or land.**

**16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; (we as the temple cannot continue with idol sin & relationships)**

* **What agreement? = a strong mutual alignment - on the same page - moving forward to know God. Ie. Business partners.**

**Yes - Jesus was a friend of sinners” – but those he walked through life with were his disciples.**

**2 - Our closest relationships should be with true believers.**

**Our closest friends (yokes - connections) should be with Christians.**

**Your deepest confidants - your most transparent relationships.**

**A relationship that leads to compromise of Biblical standards or puts at risk your Christian witness – is unwise, unhealthy, and not a Spirit led friendship.**

**Pro 27:17, As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.**

**Iron sharpens irons as opposed to hitting the blade on a rock.**

**Pro 12:26** **The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.**

**Your closets friends – those who can encourage you in the Lord, pray for you, trust God with you. And give you biblical counsel.**

**I emphasized true believers – because some say they are but are not.**

**1 Cor 5:9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— 10 not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? 13 God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”**

**Heavy words. A couple thoughts:**

* **This is not about dealing with those who are unbelievers.**
* **This is those who say they’re Christians and refuse correction.**
* **This person is a dangerous representative of the body of JC.**

**Fake and false follower’s mis-represent Christ.**

**(back to) 2 Cor 6:16b …as God said, (Ez 37:26-27) “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Therefore (Is 52:11) go out from their midst, and be separate from them, say the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and (Jer 31:9) I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.” (Almighty - only place in NT other than Revelation)**

**This relationship challenge comes from the all-knowing, all unchanging, Almighty one! We are to be different and be set apart in our life and relationships.**

**I love that last part - (Jer 31:9) I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”**

**Adopted by the Sovereign creator of all. Family thru Christ.**

**2 Cor 7:1 Since we have these promises, (that we are His and He is our Father) beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body (our actions) and spirit, (our heart) bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.**

**This is not earning salvation (we are cleansed by Christ) - but rather – it’s time to clean our house.**

**Some Christians, like the Corinth church, struggle to make a clean break from idolatrous and immoral lifestyles of our past. This includes unhealthy habits and even people in our life.**

**\*\* God has called us as ones who are now holy, to walk in holiness. Paul is challenging them (us) to cut the cord of demon-dominated idolatry and practice.**

**1 Cor 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons.**

**Light and darkness are mutually exclusive – adding Jesus to something God forbids, or calls sin does not make it holy.**

**Unfortunately, that is what many do either intentionally or not.**

**Some just add the love of God without renouncing the ideas of Satan and the world. Paul quoting OT – come and be separate.**

**Paul repeats this in - Romans 6, Ephesians 4, Colossians 3 – take off the old life and put on the new life. The result of salvation!**

**Btw, “let us cleanse ourselves” - something we are all working on.**

**Similarly in regard to relationships he writes - 2 Cor 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?**

**3 - Some of our relationships might need to be realigned**

**Some might need to be at arm’s length – others possibly ended.**

**If a relationship is influencing you in a negative way more than you are influencing them in a positive way - you might need to realign it for a season – until you are not influenced by them.**

**Paul said this in - 1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.” 34 Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.**

**You need someone who will point you to Jesus - pray for you - encourage you in Christ and in God's Word.**

**Pro 13:20 Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.**

**Don't go with them after work - to their house – to that party.**

**Don't go over there and try to resist temptation - avoid the temptation!**

**2 Cor 7:1 …let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.**

**A few thoughts: If you're single:**

* **Beware: Don't date them if you wouldn’t marry them**

**Pro 4:23 - Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.**

* **If you're dating an unbeliever you're headed for spiritual heartache**

**2 Cor 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.**

**\*\* Have you truly given that relationship over to God?**

**A few thoughts: If you're married: 1 Cor 7:39, Proverbs 5:1-23, 1 Cor 7:17**

* **Beware: Most affairs are with friends not strangers**

**Prov. 5 is a father speaking to his son about resisting affairs. He writes of the blessing of faithfulness and the disasters of affairs.**

**Pro 5:15 Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well.**

**\*\* Give your spouse absolute veto power on your relationships**

* **If you're married to an unbeliever - stay married and pray for them**

**1 Cor 7:12 To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. 13 If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, (if he does not cast her out) she should not divorce him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.**

**You are to stay married - your presence in that house brings God's presence in that home and to your children.**

**God is glorified and the family are set apart.**

**\* If there is abuse of any kind, do not stay in the home.**

**15 But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. 16 For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?**

**Pray for them and live a godly life before them.**

**You might be instrumental in their salvation.**

**Back to 2 Cor 7:2 Make room in your hearts for us. (similar to 6:13) We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one.**

**You’re hearing a lot of trash about us, but we have been nothing but loving and honest with you. Let's get things right between us - let's start over.**

**3 I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. (Paul’s version of – you are my ride or die) 4 I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with comfort. (I am being honest and stepping out on a limb - I care for you and I’m proud of your growth) In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy. (In all of the troubles we've faced has friends, you still bring me joy when I think of you)**

**Paul is building a bridge – let's make things right.**

**4 - Some of our relationships might need to be reignited**

**I have some of those friends - as I get older - I lose track - get busy - get offended - I need to reach out and stir it up.**

**Maybe you’re in a position to influence them - instead of being influenced by them - it’s time to call them up.**

**Two simple challenges today:**

* **Do you need to make things right with some relationships.**

**Maybe you need to end one - or renew an old one.**

**\*\* Who are you yoked to?**

* **Do you need make things right with God.**

**You have allowed people to lead you astray - and you know you need to get things right with God today.**

**There is a friend that we all crave. A friend who is loyal / committed / trusting and trustworthy / encourages with perfect counsel / truthful and loving. If there is a friend, I am looking for - it’s Jesus.**

**He is the friend we all need.**

**Have you trusted him with your life?**