

Chapel Flock



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Worship Music

[For Such A Time As This-Crystal Lewis](#)

[Come Just As You Are-Crystal Lewis](#)

[Trust Me-Crystal Lewis](#)

Prayer

Lord, I want to run my race victoriously all the way to the finish line. I don't want to quit, give up, or die until I can say I've finished everything You have ever assigned for me to do. Forgive me for allowing thoughts of death to dominate me. I have too much living left to do to dwell on these kinds of self defeating thoughts. Please help me shove aside my exhaustion, grab hold of Your power, and press forward to do what You have called me to do with my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

"Daily Devotional"

Charles Stanley

Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

[KLOVE](#)

Bible Study Sites

[Chuck Smith Through The Bible](#)

[Bob Coy/Teachings](#)

[Mike MacIntosh](#)

[Jon Courson](#)

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[Billy Graham](#)

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[David Wilkerson](#)

[Greg Laurie](#)

[Virtue for Women-Cathe Laurie](#)

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

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Or----

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net

1 THEN ZOPHAR the Naamathite answered, 2 Therefore do my thoughts give me an answer, and I make haste [to offer it] for this reason. 3 I have heard the reproof which puts me to shame, but out of my understanding my spirit answers me. 4 Do you not know from of old, since the time that man was placed on the earth, 5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless and defiled is but for a moment? 6 Though his [proud] height mounts up to the heavens and his head reaches to the clouds, 7 Yet he will perish forever like his own dung; those who have seen him will say, Where is he? 8 He will fly away like a dream and will not be found; yes, he will be chased away as a vision of the night. 9 The eye which saw him will see him no more, neither will his [accustomed] place any more behold him. 10 The poor will oppress his children, and his hands will give back his [ill-gotten] wealth. 11 His bones are full of youthful energy, but it will lie down with him in the dust. 12 Though wickedness is sweet in his mouth, though he hides it under his tongue, 13 Though he is loath to let it go but keeps it still within his mouth, 14 Yet his food turns [to poison] in his stomach; it is the venom of asps within him. 15 He has swallowed down [his ill-gotten] riches, and he shall vomit them up again; God will cast them out of his belly. 16 He shall suck the poison of asps [which ill-gotten wealth contains]; the viper's tongue shall slay him. 17 He shall not look upon the rivers, the flowing streams of honey and butter [to enjoy his wealth]. 18 That which he labored for shall he give back and shall not swallow it down [to enjoy it]; according to his wealth shall the restitution be, and he shall not rejoice in it. 19 For he has oppressed and forsaken the poor; he has violently taken away a house which he did not build. 20 Because his desire and greed knew no quietness within him, he will not save anything of that in which he delights. 21 There was nothing left that he did not devour; therefore his prosperity will not endure. 22 In the fullness of his sufficiency [in the time of his great abundance] he shall be poor and in straits; every hand of everyone who is in misery shall come upon him [he is but a wretch on every side]. 23 When he is about to fill his belly [as in the wilderness when God sent the quails], God will cast the fierceness of His wrath upon him and will rain it upon him while he is eating. 24 He will flee from the iron weapon, but the bow of bronze shall strike him through. 25 [The arrow] is drawn forth and it comes out after passing through his body; yes, the glittering point comes out of his gall. Terrors march in upon him; 26 Every misfortune is laid up for his treasures. A fire not blown by man shall devour him; it shall consume what is left in his tent [and it shall go ill with him who remains there]. 27 The heavens shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him. 28 The produce and increase of his house will go into exile [with the victors], dragged away in the day of [God's] wrath. 29 This is the wicked man's portion from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.

Chapter 20

So Zophar, the third of the speakers, gives his second discourse. And again, he was the guy that was dealing with traditions earlier, and with wisdom and all, so he said to Job,

Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make haste (Job 20:2).

In others words, "I want to be quick to answer you on this."

I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causes me to answer. Don't you know this of old, since man was placed on the earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite is for a moment? (Job 20:3-5)

He won't get off, you know, the same tune. "Job you're wicked. Job you're a hypocrite."

Though his excellency mount up to heavens, and the head reach unto the clouds; Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung: for they which have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. And the eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him. His children shall seek to please the poor, his hands shall restore their goods. His bones are full of the sins of his youth, and he shall lie down with him in the dust. Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, and though he hide it under his tongue; Though he spare it, and forsake it not; but keep it still within his mouth: Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him. He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly. He shall suck the poison of asps: and the viper's tongue shall slay him. He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter. That which he labored for shall he restore, and shall not swallow it down: according to his substance shall be the restitution, and he shall not rejoice therein. Because (Job 20:6-19)

And this is now, here is what Zophar is suggesting that Job's evil was.

Because he has oppressed and has forsaken the poor; because he has violently taken away a house that he did not build (Job 20:19).

"You've repossessed a house, Job. And you've taken away and oppressed the poor people." These are suggestions of Job's wickedness.

Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired. There shall none of his meat be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods. In the fullness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him. When he is about to fill his belly, God will cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating. He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through. It is drawn, and comes out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors are upon him. All darkness shall be hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall consume him; and it shall go ill with him that is left of his tent. The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; the earth shall rise up against him. The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath. This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God (Job 20:20-29).

These guys just keep coming on with Job, insisting that he is wicked, that he is a hypocrite. They have the one tune; they can't get off of it. "And all of your problems are because you are so sinful and so wicked."

Now, you say, "But why does the Lord labor this so much?" Because there are people that are still that stupid today. That if you get in trouble, they'll come around and say, "Well, brother, why don't you repent? You know, so you can be prosperous. Why don't you forsake your sin? Because surely if you are good, God is going to prosper you. And if you're evil, you're going to be cut off." But that is not so. Righteous people suffer. Evil people prosper. Righteous people prosper. Evil people suffer. We don't know. We don't know why righteous people oft times suffer. We don't know. It is wrong to assume things about a person because he's suffering. It's wrong to assume that a person doesn't have the faith, and thus he is sick. It is wrong to assume that if you just had enough faith, you would never be sick, because it just isn't so.

And God allows this point to be pressed over and over from several different directions, to show the folly of seeking with our human wisdom and understanding to try to find out the ways and the reasons and the why's of God. We don't know them. The question of the book of Job is: why do godly people suffer? The question is not really answered. But what we are brought to is the assurance and the understanding that God does rule over our lives. And thus, I don't have to understand the why, all I have to understand is the fact that God is in control, and I rest there. God controls the affairs of my life.

Shall we pray.

Father, help us that we will not be guilty of speaking deceitfully for You. Thinking that we understand more than we do, the causes, the reasons, the whys, the particular things that happen to certain people. Help us, Father, that we will be intercessors. And if a brother be overtaken in a fall, may we restore him in a spirit of weakness. If a brother is down, may we seek to lift him up. May we stretch out our hand of love and understanding to those who have fallen. Give us a heart like Yours, Lord, a heart of compassion for the oppressed and for the needy. In Jesus' name. (Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries, 1979-1986)

The Unequal Yoke; C. H. Mackintosh – Index

Preface.

The following paper appeared in a recent number of "The Present Testimony;" but, inasmuch as that periodical is out of the reach of a large number of Christian readers, I have been requested by many, in various places, to send it forth, in the form of a separate tract. One shrinks from multiplying books at a time like the present, when it may, in good truth, be said, "of making of books there is no end;" still, if the enemy is making diligent use of the press, for the purpose of diffusing abroad infidelity, profanity superstition, and impurity, I believe the servant of Christ may feel perfectly free to make use of the same powerful engine for the purpose of disseminating doctrinal and practical truth. No doubt, we have to watch against the evil of allowing human writings to usurp that place in our minds which belongs to sacred scripture alone. We have to remember that the soundest and most excellent of such writings are only the pure ore, beaten out into thin plates, and that they owe all their value, and all their truth, to the fact of their being based upon or connected with, the word of God. But how often does it happen that we read scripture over and over again, and fail to apprehend the truth contained therein, until the Lord graciously makes use of the lips or pen of another to point it out? Thus, for example, how many have read the words, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," without ever being aware of their just application? The remembrance of this should be sufficient to keep us from despising human writings. We find God using books and tracts for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of His people; and, assuredly, what He uses, we should not make light of There is a great difference between God's using a book for the purpose of teaching me more of the value, the beauty, and authority of His word, and my abusing the book by allowing it to displace that word altogether. In this, as in everything else, we have to watch against dangerous extremes. We know that "the word of God is quick and powerful," and that the Holy Spirit makes use of it, and it alone, to quicken, enlighten, and build up souls; but we know also that He makes man's lips and man's pen His instruments in bringing that word home to the heart.

In the full confidence that He will graciously use the following pages, I now send them forth to the Church of God C. H. M. Clontarf, March, 1856.

THE UNEQUAL YOKE.

No one who sincerely desires to attain, in his own person, or promote in others, a purer and more elevated discipleship, can possibly contemplate the Christianity of the present day without an indescribable feeling of sadness and heaviness. Its tone is so excessively low, its aspect so sickly, and its spirit so enfeebled, that one is, at times, tempted to despair of anything like a true and faithful witness for an absent Lord. All this is the more truly deplorable, when we remember the commanding motives by which it is our special privilege ever to be actuated. Whether we look at the Master whom we are called to follow — the path which we are called to tread — the end which we are called to keep in view — or the hopes by which we are to be animated — we cannot but own that, were all these entered into, and realised by a more simple faith, we should, assuredly, exhibit a more ardent discipleship. "The love of Christ," says the apostle, "constraineth us." This is the most powerful motive of all. The more the heart is filled with Christ's love, and the eye filled with His blessed Person, the more closely shall we seek to follow in His heavenly track. His footmarks can only be discovered by "a single eye;" and unless the will is broken, the flesh mortified, and the body kept under, we shall utterly fail in our discipleship, and make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

Let not my reader misunderstand me. It is not, here, by any means, a question of personal salvation. It is quite another thing. Nothing can be more basely selfish than, having received salvation as the fruit of Christ's agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, to keep at as great a distance from His sacred Person as we can, without forfeiting our personal safety. This is, even in the judgement of nature, deemed a character of selfishness worthy of unmingled contempt; but when exhibited by one who professes to owe his present and his everlasting all to a rejected, crucified, risen, and absent Master, no language can express its moral baseness. "Provided I

escape hell-fire, it makes little matter as to discipleship." Reader, do you not, in your inmost soul, abhor this sentiment? If so, then earnestly seek to flee from it, to the very opposite point of the compass; and let your truthful language be: "Provided that blessed Master is glorified, it makes little matter, comparatively, about my personal safety." Would to God that this were the sincere utterance of many hearts in this day, when, alas it may be too truly said that, "all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." (Phil. 2: 21) Would that the Holy Ghost would raise up, by His own resistless power, and send forth by His own heavenly energy, a band of separated and consecrated followers of the Lamb, each one bound, by the cords of love, to the horns of the altar — a company, like Gideon's three hundred of old, able to confide in God, and deny the flesh. How the heart longs for this! How the spirit, bowed down at times beneath the chilling and withering influence of a cold and uninfluential profession, earnestly breathes after a more vigorous and whole-hearted testimony for that One, who emptied Himself, and laid aside his glory, in order that we, through His precious bloodshedding, might be raised to companionship with Him in eternal blessedness.

Now, amongst the numerous hindrances to this thorough consecration of heart to Christ which I earnestly desire for myself and my reader, "the unequal yoke" will be found to occupy a very prominent place indeed. "Be ye not unequally yoked together [eterozugountes] with unbelievers: for what partnership [metoch] hath righteousness with unrighteousness [or rather lawlessness — anomia]? and what communion [koinonia] hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath a believer with an unbeliever [apistou] And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. 6: 14-18.

Under the Mosaic economy, we learn the same moral principle. "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together." Deut. 22: 9-11; Lev. 19: 19.

These scriptures will suffice to set forth the moral evil of an unequal yoke. It may, with full confidence be asserted that no one can be an unshackled follower of Christ who is, in any way, "unequally yoked." He may be a saved person, he may be a true child of God — a sincere believer, but he cannot be a thorough disciple; and not only so, but there is a positive hindrance to the full manifestation of that which he may really be, notwithstanding his unequal yoke. "Come out . . . and I will receive you . . . and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." That is to say, "Get your neck out of the unequal yoke, and I will receive you, and there shall be the full, public, practical manifestation of your relationship with the Lord Almighty." The idea, here, is evidently different from that set forth in James: "Of his own will begat he us, by the word of truth." And also in Peter, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." And, again, in 1 John: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God." So also, in John's gospel, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." In all these passages, the relationship of sons is founded upon the divine counsel and the divine operation, and is not set before us as the consequence of any acting of ours; whereas, in 2 Corinthians 6, it is put as the result of our getting out of the unequal yoke. In other words, it is entirely a practical question.

Thus, in Matthew 5, we read, "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; in order that [hupos] ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven; because he causeth his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust." Here, too, it is the practical establishment and public declaration of the relationship, and its moral influence. It becomes the sons of such a Father to act in such a way. In short, we have the abstract position or relationship of sons founded upon God's sovereign will and operation; and we have the moral character consequent upon and flowing out of this relationship which affords just ground for God's public acknowledgment thereof. God cannot fully and publicly own those who are unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for, were He to do so, it would be an acknowledgment of the unequal yoke. He cannot acknowledge "darkness," "unrighteousness," "Belial," "idols," and "an infidel." How could He! Hence, if I yoke myself with any of these, I am morally and publicly identified with them, and not with God at all. I have put myself into a position which God cannot own, and, as a consequence, He cannot own me; but if I withdraw myself from that position — if I "come out and be separate" — if I take my neck out of the unequal yoke — then, but not until then, can I be publicly and fully received and owned as a "son or daughter of the Lord Almighty."

This is a solemn and searching principle for all who feel that they have unhappily gotten themselves into such a yoke. They are not walking as disciples, nor are they publicly or morally on the ground of sons. God cannot own them. Their secret relationship is not the point; but they have put themselves thoroughly off God's ground. They have foolishly thrust their neck into a yoke which, inasmuch as it is not Christ's yoke, must be Belial's yoke; and until they cast off that yoke, God cannot own them as His sons and daughters. God's grace, no doubt, is infinite, and can meet us in all our failure and weakness; but if our souls aspire after a higher order of discipleship, we must at once cast off the unequal yoke, cost what it may; that is, if it can be cast off; but, if it cannot, we must only bow our heads beneath the shame and sorrow thereof, looking to God for full deliverance.

Now, there are four distinct phases in which "the unequal yoke" may be contemplated, viz., the domestic, the commercial, the religious, and the philanthropic. Some may be disposed to confine 2 Corinthians 6: 14 to the first of these; but the apostle does not so confine it. The words are "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." He does not specify the character or object of the yoke, and therefore we are warranted in giving the passage its widest application, by bringing its edge to bear directly upon every phase of the unequal yoke; and we shall see the importance of so doing, ere we close these remarks, if the Lord permit.

1. And first, then, let us consider the domestic or marriage yoke. What pen can portray the mental anguish, the moral misery, together

with the ruinous consequences, as to spiritual life and testimony, flowing from a Christian's marriage with an unconverted person? I suppose nothing can be more deplorable than the condition of one who discovers, when it is too late, that he has linked himself for life with one who cannot have a single thought or feeling in common with him. One desires to serve Christ; the other can only serve the devil: one breathes after the things of God the other sighs for the things of this present world the one earnestly seeks to mortify the flesh, with all its affections and desires; the other only seeks to minister to and gratify these very things. Like a sheep and a goat linked together, the sheep longs to feed on the green pasture in the field, while, on the other hand, the goat craves the brambles which grow in the ditch. The sad consequence is that both are starved. One will not feed on the pasture, and the other cannot feed upon the brambles, and thus neither gets what his nature craves, unless the goat, by superior strength, succeeds in forcing his unequally yoked companion to remain amongst the brambles, there to languish and die.

The moral of this is plain enough; and, moreover, it is, alas! of but too common occurrence. The goat generally succeeds in gaining his end. The worldly partner carries his or her point, in almost every instance. It will be found, almost without exception, that in cases of the unequal marriage yoke, the poor Christian is the sufferer, as is evidenced by the bitter fruits of a bad conscience, a depressed heart a gloomy spirit, and a desponding mind. A heavy price, surely, to pay for the gratification of some natural affection, or the attainment, it may be, of some paltry worldly advantage. In fact, a marriage of this kind is the death-knell of practical Christianity, and of progress in the divine life. It is morally impossible that any one can be an unfettered disciple of Christ with his neck in the marriage yoke with an unbeliever.

As well might a racer in the Olympic or Isthmian games have expected to gain the crown of victory by attaching a heavy weight or a dead body to his person. It is enough, surely, to have one dead body to sustain, without attaching another. There never was a true Christian yet who did not find that he had abundant work to do in endeavouring to grapple with the evils of one heart, without going to burden himself with the evils of two; and, without doubt, the man who, foolishly and disobediently, marries an unconverted woman; or the woman who marries an unconverted man, is burdened with the combined evils of two hearts; and who is sufficient for these things? One can most fully count upon the grace of Christ for the subjugation of his own evil nature; but he certainly cannot count, in the same way, upon that grace in reference to the evil nature of his unequal yoke-fellow. If he have yoked himself ignorantly, the Lord will meet him personally, on the ground of full confession, with entire restoration of soul, but in the matter of his discipleship, he will never recover it.

Paul could say, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disapproved of." And he said this, too, in immediate connection with "striving for the mastery." "Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one obtaineth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate [self-controlled] in all things: now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air," &c. 1 Cor. 9: 24-27.

Here, it is not a question of life or salvation, but simply one of "running in a race," and "so running that we obtain," not life, but "an incorruptible crown." The fact of being called to run assumes the possession of life, for no one would call upon dead men to run in a race. I have got life, evidently, before I begin to run at all, and, hence, though I should fail in the race, I do not lose my life, but only the crown, for this and not that was the object proposed to be run for. We are not called to run for life, inasmuch as we get that, not by running, but "by faith of Jesus Christ," who by His death has purchased life for us, and implants it in us, by the mighty energy of the Holy Ghost. Now, this life, being the life of a risen Christ, is eternal, for He is the eternal Son; as He says Himself, in His address to the Father, in John 17, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." This life is not conditional. He does not give us life, as sinners, and then set us to run for it as saints, with the gloomy foreboding, that we may lose the precious boon by failing in the race. This would be to "run uncertainly," as many alas! are trying to do, who profess to have entered upon the course, and yet know not whether they have life or not. Such persons are running for life, and not for a crown; but God does not set up life at the goal, as the reward of victory, but gives it at the starting post, as the power by which we run. The power to run, and the object of running, are two very different things; yet they are constantly confounded by persons who are ignorant of the glorious gospel of the grace of God, in which Christ is set forth as the life and righteousness of all who believe on His name; and all this, moreover, as the free gift of God, and not as the reward of our running. Now, in considering the terribly evil consequences of the unequal marriage yoke, it is mainly as bearing upon our discipleship that we are looking at them. I say, mainly, because our entire character and experience are deeply affected thereby. I very much question if any one can give a more effectual blow to his prosperity in the divine life, than by assuming an unequal yoke. Indeed, the very fact of so doing proves that spiritual decline has already set in, with most alarming symptoms; but as to his discipleship and testimony, the lamp thereof may be regarded as all but gone out; or if it does give an occasional faint glimmer, it only serves to make manifest the awful gloom of his unhappy position, and the appalling consequences of being "unequally yoked together with an unbeliever."

Thus much as to the question of the unequal yoke, in its influence upon the life, the character, the testimony, and the discipleship, of a child of God. I would now say a word as to its moral effect, as exhibited in the domestic circle. Here, too, the consequences are truly melancholy. Nor could they possibly be otherwise. Two persons have come together in the closest and most intimate relationship, with tastes, habits, feelings, desires, tendencies, and objects diametrically opposite. They have nothing in common; so that, in every movement, they can but grate one against the other. The unbeliever cannot, in reality, go with the believer; and if there should, through excessive amiability, or downright hypocrisy, be a show of acquiescence, what is it worth in the sight of the Lord, who judges the true state of the heart in reference to Himself? But little indeed; yea, it is worse than worthless. Then, again, if the believer should, unhappily go in any measure with his unequal yoke-fellow, it can only be at the expense of his discipleship, and the consequence is, a condemning conscience in the sight of the Lord; and this, again, leads to heaviness of spirit, and, it may be, sourness of temper, in the domestic circle so that the grace of the gospel is, by no means commended, and the unbeliever is not attracted or won. Thus it is, in every way, most sorrowful. It is dishonouring to God, destructive of spiritual prosperity, utterly subversive of discipleship and testimony, and entirely hostile to domestic peace and blessing. It produces estrangement, coldness, distance, and misunderstanding;

or, if it does not produce these, it will, doubtless, lead, on the part of the Christian, to a forfeiture of his discipleship and his good conscience, both of which he may be tempted to offer as a sacrifice upon the altar of domestic peace. Thus, whatever way we look at it, an unequal yoke must lead to the most deplorable consequences.

Then, as to its effect upon children, it is equally sad. These are almost sure to flow in the current with the unconverted parent. "Their children spoke half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people." There can be no union of heart in the training of the children; no joint and mutual confidence in reference to them. One desires to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; the other desires to bring them up in the principles of the world, the flesh, and the devil: and as all the sympathies of the children, as they grow up, are likely to be ranged on the side of the latter, it is easy to see how it will end. In short, it is an unseemly, unscriptural, and vain effort to plough with an "unequal yoke," or to "sow the ground with mingled seed;" and all must end in sorrow and confusion.

{There are many cases in which one finds persons united, who, though they cannot exactly be said to be "unequally yoked," are, to say the least, very badly matched. Their tempers, tastes, habits, and views, are totally different; and so different, that instead of maintaining a desirable balance (which opposite tempers, if properly arranged, might do), they keep up a perpetual jar, to the sad derangement of the domestic circle, and the dishonour of the Lord's name. All this might be very much obviated if Christians would only wait upon God, and make His glory more their object than personal interest or affection.}

I shall, ere turning from this branch of our subject, offer a remark as to the reasons which generally actuate Christians in the matter of entering into the unequal marriage yoke. We all know, alas! how easily the poor heart persuades itself of the rightness of any step which it desires to take, and how the devil furnishes plausible arguments to convince us of its rightness — arguments which the moral condition of the soul causes us to regard as clear, forcible, and satisfactory. The very fact of our thinking of such a thing, proves our unfitness to weigh, with a well-balanced mind and spiritually-adjusted conscience, the solemn consequences of such a step. If the eye were single (that is, if we were governed but by one object, namely, the glory and honour of the Lord Jesus Christ) we should never entertain the idea of putting our necks into an unequal yoke; and, consequently, we should have no difficulty or perplexity about the matter. A racer, whose eye was resting on the crown, would not be troubled with any perplexity as to whether he ought to stop and tie a hundred-weight round his neck. Such a thought would never cross his mind: and not only so, but a thorough racer would have a distinct and almost intuitive perception of everything which would be likely to prove a hindrance to him in running the race; and, of course, with such a one, to perceive would be to reject with decision.

{It is important for the Christian to bear in mind the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." whenever I am in perplexity as to my path, I have reason to suspect that my eye is not single; for assuredly, perplexity is not compatible with a "body full of light." we frequently go to pray for guidance in matters with which, if the eye were single, and the will subject, we would have nothing whatever to do, and hence we should have no need to pray about them. To pray about aught concerning which the word of God is plain marks the activity of a rebellious will. As a recent writer has well remarked, "we sometimes seek God's will, desiring to know how to act in circumstances in which it is not His will that we should be found at all; if conscience were in real healthful activity, its first effect would be to make us quit them. It is our own will which sets us there, and we would like, nevertheless, to enjoy the consolation of God's direction in a path which ourselves have chosen. such is a very common case. Be assured that, if we are near enough to God, we shall have no trouble to know His will.... However, 'if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light — ' whence it is certain that if the whole body is not full of light, the eye is not single. You will say, That is poor consolation. I answer, "It is a rich consolation for those whose sole desire is to have the eye single and to walk with God." [See an admirable article in "The Present Testimony," January 1856. entitled, "How to know the Will of the Father." I cannot too highly recommend this paper to the attention of the Christian reader, it is deeply practical]} Now, were it thus with Christians, in the matter of unscriptural marriage, it would save them a world of sorrow and perplexity; but it is not thus. The heart gets out of communion, and is morally incompetent to "try the things that differ;" and when in this condition, the devil gains an easy conquest, and speedy success in his wicked effort to induce the believer to yoke himself with "Belial" — with "unrighteousness" — with "darkness" — with "an infidel." When the soul is in full communion with God, it is entirely subject to His word; it sees things as He sees them, calls them what He calls them, and not what the devil or his own carnal heart would call them. In this way, the believer escapes the ensnaring influence of a deception which is very frequently brought to bear upon him in this matter, namely, a false profession of religion on the part of the person whom he desires to marry. This is a very common case. It is easy to show symptoms of leaning towards the things of God; and the heart is treacherous and base enough to make a profession of religion in order to gain its end; and not only so, but the devil, who is "transformed into an angel of light," will lead to this false profession, in order thereby the more effectually to entrap the feet of a child of God. Thus it comes to pass that Christians, in this matter, suffer themselves to be satisfied, or at least profess themselves satisfied, with evidence of conversion, which, under any other circumstances, they would regard as utterly lame and flimsy.

But alas! experience soon opens the eyes to the reality. It is speedily discovered that the profession was all a vain show, that the heart is entirely in and of the world. Terrible discovery! Who can detail the bitter consequences of such a discovery — the anguish of heart — the bitter reproaches and cuttings of conscience — the shame and confusion — the loss of power and blessing — the forfeiture of spiritual peace and joy — the sacrifice of a life of usefulness? Who can describe all these things? The man awakes from his delusive dream, and opens his eyes upon the tremendous reality, that he is yoked for life with "Belial!" Yes, this is what the Spirit calls it. It is not an inference, or a deduction arrived at by a process of reasoning; but a plain and positive statement of Holy Scripture, that thus the matter stands in reference to one who, from whatever motive, or under the influence of whatever reasons, or deceived by whatever false pretences, has entered into an unequal marriage-yoke. Oh, my beloved Christian reader, if you are in danger of entering into such a yoke, let me earnestly, solemnly, and affectionately entreat of you to pause first, and weigh the matter in the balances of the sanctuary, ere you move forward a single hair's breadth on such a fatal path. You may rest assured that you will no sooner have taken the step, than your heart will be assailed by hopeless regrets, and your life embittered by unnumbered

sorrows. **LET NOTHING INDUCE YOU TO YOKE YOURSELF WITH AN UNBELIEVER.** Are your affections engaged? Then, remember, they cannot be the affections of your new man; they are, be assured of it, those of the old or carnal nature, which you are called upon to mortify and set aside. Wherefore you should cry to God for spiritual power to rise above the influence of such affections; yea, to sacrifice them to Him. Again, are your interests concerned? Then remember that they are only your interests; and if they are promoted, Christ's interests are sacrificed by your yoking yourself with "Belial." Furthermore, they are only your temporal, and not your eternal interests. In point of fact, the interests of the believer and those of Christ ought to be identical; and it is plain that His interests, His honour, His truth, His glory, must inevitably be sacrificed, if a member of His body is linked with "Belial." This is the true way to look at the question. What are a few hundreds, or a few thousands, to an heir of heaven? "God is able to give thee much more than this." Are you going to sacrifice the truth of God, as well as your own spiritual peace, prosperity, and happiness, for a paltry trifle of gold, which must perish in the using of it? Ah! no. God forbid! Flee from it, as a bird from the snare, which it sees and knows. Stretch out the hand of genuine, well-braced whole-hearted discipleship, and take the knife and slay your affections and your interests on the altar of God and then, even though there should not be an audible voice from heaven to approve your act, you will have the invaluable testimony of an approving conscience and an ungrieved Spirit — an ample reward, surely, for the most costly sacrifice which you can make. May the Spirit of God give power to resist Satan's temptations!

It is hardly needful to remark, here, that in cases where conversion takes place after marriage, the complexion of the matter is very materially altered. There will then be no smittings of conscience, for example; and the whole thing is modified in a variety of particulars. Still there will be difficulty, trial, and sorrow unquestionably. The only thing is that one can, far more happily, bring the trial and sorrow into the Lord's presence, when he has not deliberately and wilfully plunged himself thereinto; and, blessed be God, we know how ready He is to forgive, restore, and cleanse from all unrighteousness, the soul that makes full confession of its error and failure. This may comfort the heart of one who has been brought to the Lord after marriage. Moreover, to such an one the Spirit of God has given specific direction and blessed encouragement in the following passage: "If any brother have an unbelieving wife, and she think proper to dwell with him, let him not put her away: and if any woman have an unbelieving husband, and he think proper to dwell with her, let her not put him away (for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy) for what knowest thou, O wife, if thou shalt save thy husband? Or what knowest thou, O husband, if thou shalt save thy wife?" (1 Cor. 7: 12-16.)

2. We shall now consider 'the unequal yoke,' in its commercial phase, as seen in cases of partnership in business. This, though not so serious an aspect of the yoke as that which we have just been considering, will, nevertheless, be found a very positive barrier to the believer's testimony. When a Christian yokes himself, for business purposes, with an unbeliever — whether that unbeliever be a relative or not — or when he becomes a member of a worldly firm, he virtually surrenders his individual responsibility. Henceforth the acts of the firm become his acts, and it is perfectly out of the question to think of getting a worldly firm to act on heavenly principles. They would laugh at such a notion, inasmuch as it would be an effectual barrier to the success of their commercial schemes. They will feel perfectly free to adopt a number of expedients in carrying on their business, which would be quite opposed to the spirit and principles of the kingdom in which he is, and of the Church of which he forms a part. Thus he will find himself constantly in a most trying position. He may use his influence to christianise the mode of conducting affairs; but they will compel him to do business as others do, and he has no remedy save to mourn in secret over his anomalous and difficult position, or else to go out at great pecuniary loss to himself and his family. Where the eye is single, there will be no hesitation as to which of these alternatives to adopt; but, alas! the very fact of getting into such a position proves the lack of a single eye; and the fact of being in it argues the lack of spiritual capacity to appreciate the value and power of the divine principles which would infallibly bring a man out of it. A man whose eye was single could not possibly yoke himself with an unbeliever for the purpose of making money. Such an one could only set, as an object before his mind, the direct glory of Christ; and this object could never be gained by a positive transgression of divine principle.

This makes it very simple. If it does not glorify Christ for a Christian to become a partner in a worldly firm, it must, without doubt, further the designs of the devil. There is no middle ground; but that it does not glorify Christ is manifest, for His word says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Such is the principle, which cannot be infringed without damage to the testimony, and forfeiture of spiritual blessing. True, the conscience of a Christian, who transgresses in this matter, may seek relief in various ways — may have recourse to various subterfuges — may set forth various arguments to persuade itself that all is right. It will be said that, "We can be very devoted and very spiritual, so far as we are personally concerned, even though we are yoked, for business purposes, with an unbeliever." This will be found fallacious when brought to the test of the actual practice. A servant of Christ will find himself hampered in a hundred ways by his worldly partnership. If in matters of service to Christ he is not met with open hostility, he will have to encounter the enemy's secret and constant effort to damp his ardour, and throw cold water on all his schemes. He will be laughed at and despised — he will be continually reminded of the effect which his enthusiasm and fanaticism will produce in reference to the business prospects of the firm. If he uses his time, his talents, or his pecuniary resources, in what he believes to be the Lord's service, he will be pronounced a fool or a madman, and reminded that the true, the proper way for a commercial man to serve the Lord is to "attend to business, and nothing but business;" and that it is the exclusive business of clergymen and ministers to attend to religious matters, inasmuch as they are set apart and paid for so doing.

Now, although the Christian's renewed mind may be thoroughly convinced of the fallacy of all this reasoning — although he may see that this worldly wisdom is but a flimsy, threadbare cloak, thrown over the heart's covetous practices — yet who can tell how far the heart may be influenced by such things? We get weary of constant resistance. The current becomes too strong for us, and we gradually yield ourselves to its action, and are carried along on its surface. Conscience may have some death-struggles; but the spiritual energies are paralysed, and the sensibilities of the new nature are blunted, so that there is no response to the cries of conscience, and no effectual effort to withstand the enemy; the worldliness of the Christian's heart leagues itself with the opposing influences from without — the outworks are stormed, and the citadel of the soul's affections vigorously assaulted; and, finally, the man settles down in thorough worldliness, exemplifying, in his own person, the prophet's touching lament, "Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire: their visage is blacker than a

coal; they are not known in the streets; their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick." (Lam. 4: 7, 8) The man who was once known as a servant of Christ — a fellow-helper unto the kingdom of God — making use of his resources only to further the interests of the gospel of Christ, is now, alas, settled down upon his lees, only known as a plodding, keen, bargain-making man of business, of whom the apostle might well say, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present age." (ton nun aiona) But, perhaps, nothing so operates on the hearts of Christians, in inducing them to yoke themselves commercially with unbelievers, as the habit of seeking to maintain the two characters of a Christian and a man of business. This is a grievous snare. In point of fact there can be no such thing. A man must be either the one or the other. If I am a Christian, my Christianity must show itself, as a living reality, in that in which I am; and, if it cannot show itself there, I ought not to be there; for, if I continue in a sphere or position in which the life of Christ cannot be manifested, I shall speedily possess naught of Christianity but the name, without the reality — the outward form without the inward power — the shell without the kernel. I should be the servant of Christ, not merely on Sunday, but from Monday morning to Saturday night. I should not only be a servant of Christ in the public assembly, but also in my place of business, whatever it may happen to be. But I cannot be a proper servant of Christ with my neck in the yoke with an unbeliever; for how could the servants of two hostile masters work in the same yoke? It is utterly impossible; as well might one attempt to link the sun's meridian beams with the profound darkness of midnight. It cannot be done; and I do, therefore, most solemnly appeal to my reader's conscience, in the presence of Almighty God, who shall judge the secrets of men's hearts by Jesus Christ, as to this important matter. I would say to him, if he is thinking of getting into partnership with an unbeliever, FLEE FROM IT! yes, flee from it, though it promises you the gain of thousands. You will plunge yourself into a mass of trouble and sorrow. You are going to "plough" with one whose feelings, instincts, and tendencies are diametrically opposed to your own. "An ox and an ass" are not so unlike, in every respect, as a believer and an unbeliever. How will you ever get on? He wants to make money — to profit himself — to get on in the world; you want (at least you ought to want) to grow in grace and holiness — to advance the interests of Christ and His gospel on the earth, and to push onward to the everlasting kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. His object is money; yours, I trust, is Christ: he lives for this world; you for the world to come: he is engrossed with the things of time; you with those of eternity. How, then, can you ever take common ground with him? Your principles, your motives, your objects, your hopes, are all opposed. How is it possible you can get on? How can you have aught in common Surely, all this needs only to be looked at with a single eye in order to be seen in its true light. It is impossible that any one whose eye is filled and whose heart is occupied with Christ, could ever yoke himself with a worldly partner, for any object whatsoever. Wherefore, my beloved Christian reader, let me once more entreat you, ere you take such a tremendous step — a step fraught with such awful consequences — so pregnant with danger to your best interests, as well as to the testimony of Christ, with which you are honoured — to take the whole matter, with an honest heart, into the sanctuary of God, and weigh it in His sacred balance. Ask Him what He thinks of it, and hearken, with a subject will, and a well-adjusted conscience, to His reply. It is plain and powerful — yea, as plain and as powerful as though it fell from the open heavens — Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

But, if, unhappily, my reader is already in the yoke, I would say to him, disentangle yourself as speedily as you can. I am much mistaken if you have not already found the yoke a burdensome one. To you, it were superfluous to detail the sad consequences of being in such a position; you, doubtless, know them all. It is needless to print them on paper, or paint them on canvas, to one who has entered into all their reality. My beloved brother in Christ, lose not a moment in seeking to throw off the yoke. This must be done before the Lord, on His principles, and by His grace. It is easier to get into a wrong position than to get out of it. A partnership of ten or twenty years' standing cannot be dissolved in a moment. It must be done calmly, humbly, and prayerfully, as in the sight of the Lord, and with entire reference to His glory. I may dishonour the Lord as much in my way of getting out of a wrong position, as by getting into it at the first. Hence, if I find myself in partnership with an unbeliever, and my conscience tells me I am wrong, let me honestly and frankly state to my partner, that I can no longer go on with him; and having done that, my place is to use every exertion to wind up the affairs of the firm in an upright, a straightforward, and business-like manner, so as to give no possible occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully, and that my good may not be evil spoken of. We must avoid rashness, headiness, and high-mindedness, when apparently acting for the Lord, and in defence of His holy principles. If a man gets entangled in a net, or involved in a labyrinth, it is not by bold and violent plunging he will extricate himself. No; he must humble himself, confess his sins before the Lord, and then retrace his steps, in patient dependence upon that grace which can not only pardon him for being in a wrong position, but lead him forth into a right one.

Moreover, as in the case of the marriage yoke, the matter is very much modified by the fact of the partnership having been entered into previous to conversion. Not that this would, in the slightest degree, justify a continuance in it. By no means; but it does away with much of the sorrow of heart and defilement of conscience connected with such a position, and will also, very materially, affect the mode of escape therefrom. Besides, the Lord is glorified by, and He assuredly accepts, the moral bent of the heart and conscience in the right direction. If I judge myself for being wrong and that the moral bent of my heart and conscience is to get right, God will accept of that, and surely set me right. But if He sets me right, He will not suffer me to do violence to one truth while seeking to act in obedience to another. The same word that says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," says also, "render, therefore, to all their dues" — "owe no man anything" — "provide things honest in the sight of all" — "walk honestly toward them that are without." If I have wronged God by getting into partnership with an unbeliever, I must not wrong man in my way of getting out of it. Profound subjection to the word of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, will set all to rights, will lead us into straight paths, and enable us to avoid all dangerous extremes.

3. In glancing for a moment at the religious phase of the unequal yoke, I would assure my reader that it is, by no means, my desire to hurt the feelings of any one by canvassing the claims of the various denominations around me. Such is not my purpose. The subject of this paper is one of quite sufficient importance to prevent its being encumbered by the introduction of other matters. Moreover, it is too definite to warrant any such introduction. "The unequal yoke" is our theme, and to it we must confine our attention. In looking through scripture we find almost numberless passages setting forth the intense spirit of separation which ought ever to characterise the people of God. Whether we direct our attention to the Old Testament, in which we have God's relationship and dealings with His earthly people, Israel; or, to the New Testament, in which we have His relationship and

dealings with His heavenly people, the Church; we find the same truth prominently set forth, namely, the entire separation of those who belong to God. Israel's position is thus stated in Balaam's parable, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned amongst the nations." Their place was outside the range of all the nations of the earth; and they were responsible to maintain that separation. Throughout the entire Pentateuch, they were instructed, warned, and admonished as to this; and, throughout the Psalms and the Prophets we have the record of their failure in the maintenance of this separation, which failure, as we know, has brought down upon them the heavy judgements of the hand of God. It would swell this little paper into a volume were I to attempt a quotation of all the passages in which this point is put forward. I take it for granted that my reader is sufficiently acquainted with his Bible, to render such quotation unnecessary. Should he not be so, however, a reference, in his Concordance, to the words "separate," "separated," and "separation," will suffice to lay before him at a glance the body of scripture evidence on this subject. The passage just quoted, from the Book of Numbers, is the expression of God's thoughts about His people Israel: "The people shall dwell ALONE."

The same is true, only upon a much higher ground in reference to God's heavenly people, the Church — the body of Christ — composed of all true believers. They, too, are a separated people.

We shall now proceed to examine the ground of this separation. There is a great difference between being separate on the ground of what we are, and of what God is. The former makes a man a Pharisee; the latter makes him a saint. If I say to a poor fellow sinner, "Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou," I am a detestable Pharisee and a hypocrite; but if God, in His infinite condescension and perfect grace, says to me, "I have brought you into relationship with Myself in the person of My Son Jesus Christ, therefore be holy and separate from all evil; come out from among them and be separate;" I am bound to obey, and my obedience is the practical manifestation of my character as a saint — a character which I have, not because of anything in myself, but simply because God has brought me near unto Himself through the precious blood of Christ.

It is well to be clear as to this. Pharisaism and divine sanctification are two very different things: and yet they are often confounded. Those who contend for the maintenance of that place of separation which belongs to the people of God, are constantly accused of setting themselves up above their fellow-men, and of laying claim to a higher degree of personal sanctity than is ordinarily possessed. This accusation arises from not attending to the distinction just referred to. When God calls upon men to be separate, it is on the ground of what He has done for them upon the cross, and where He has set them, in eternal association with Himself, in the person of Christ. But if I separate myself on the ground of what I am in myself, it is the most senseless and vapid assumption, which will sooner or later be made manifest. God commands His people to be holy on the ground of what He is: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." This is evidently a very different thing from "stand by thyself, I am holier than thou." If God brings people into association with himself, He has a right to prescribe what their moral character ought to be, and they are responsible to answer thereto. Thus we see that the most profound humility lies at the bottom of a saint's separation. There is nothing so calculated to put one in the dust as the understanding of the real nature of divine holiness. It is an utterly false humility which springs from looking at ourselves — yea, it is, in reality, based upon pride, which has never yet seen to the bottom of its own perfect worthlessness. Some imagine that they can reach the truest and deepest humility by looking at self, whereas it can only be reached by looking at Christ. "The more thy glories strike mine eye, the humbler I shall be." This is a just sentiment, founded upon divine principle. The soul that loses itself in the blaze of Christ's moral glory, is truly humble, and none other. No doubt, we have a right to be humble when we think of what poor creatures we are; but it only needs a moment's just reflection to see the fallacy of seeking to produce any practical result by looking at self. It is only when we find ourselves in the presence of infinite excellency, that we are really humble.

Hence, therefore, a child of God should refuse to be yoked with an unbeliever, whether for a domestic, a commercial, or a religious object, simply because God tells him to be separate, and not because of his own personal holiness. The carrying out of this principle, in matters of religion, will necessarily involve much trial and sorrow; it will be termed intolerance, bigotry, narrow-mindedness, exclusiveness, and such like; but we cannot help all this. Provided we keep ourselves separate upon a right principle and in a right spirit, we may safely leave all results with God. No doubt, the remnant, in the days of Ezra, must have appeared excessively intolerant in refusing the co-operation of the surrounding people in building the house of God; but they acted upon divine principle in the refusal. "Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you; for we seek your God as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him, since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Assur, which brought us up hither." This might seem a very attractive proposal — a proposal evidencing a very decided leaning toward the God of Israel; yet the remnant refused, because the people, notwithstanding their fair profession, were, at heart, uncircumcised and hostile. "But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel." (Ezra 4: 1-3.) They would not yoke themselves with the uncircumcised — they would not "plough with an ox and ass" — they would not "sow their field with mingled seed" — they kept themselves separate, even though, by so doing, they exposed themselves to the charge of being a bigoted, narrow-minded, illiberal, uncharitable set of people.

So, also, in Nehemiah, we read, "And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers." (Neh. 9: 2.) This was not sectarianism, but positive obedience. Their separation was essential to their existence as a people. They could not have enjoyed the divine presence on any other ground. Thus it must ever be with God's people on the earth. They must be separate, or else they are not only useless, but mischievous. God cannot own or accompany them if they yoke themselves with unbelievers, upon any ground, or for any object whatsoever. The grand difficulty is to combine a spirit of intense separation with a spirit of grace, gentleness, and forbearance; or, as another has said, "to maintain a narrow circle with a wide heart." This is really a difficulty. As the strict and uncompromising maintenance of truth tends to narrow the circle around us, we shall need the expansive power of grace to keep the heart wide, and the affections warm. If we contend for truth otherwise than in grace, we shall only yield a one-sided and most unattractive testimony. And, on the other hand, if we try to exhibit grace at the expense of truth, it will prove, in the end, to be only the manifestation of a popular liberality at God's expense — a most worthless thing. Then, as to the object for which real Christians usually yoke themselves with those who, even on their own confession, and in the judgment

of charity itself, are not Christians at all, it will be found, in the end, that no really divine and heavenly object can be gained by an infringement of God's truth. *Per fas aut nefas* can never be a divine motto. The means are not sanctified by the end; but both means and end must be according to the principles of God's holy word, else all must eventuate in confusion and dishonour. It might have appeared to Jehoshaphat a very worthy object, to recover Ramoth Gilead out of the hand of the enemy; and, moreover, he might have appeared a very liberal, gracious, popular, large-hearted man, when, in reply to Ahab's proposal, he said, "I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war." It is easy to be liberal and large-hearted at the expense of divine principle; but how did it end? Ahab was killed, and Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped with his life, having made total shipwreck of his testimony.

Thus we see that Jehoshaphat did not even gain the object for which he unequally yoked himself with an unbeliever; and even had he gained it, it would have been no justification of his course.* Nothing can ever warrant a believer's yoking himself with an unbeliever; and, therefore, however fair, attractive, and plausible the Ramoth expedition might seem in the eye of man, it was, in the judgment of God, "helping the ungodly, and loving them that hate the Lord." (2 Chr. 19: 2.) The truth of God strips men and things of the false colours with which the spirit of expediency would deck them, and presents them in their proper light; and it is an unspeakable mercy to have the clear judgment of God about all that is going on around us: it imparts calmness to the spirit, and stability to the course and character, and saves one from that unhappy fluctuation of thought, feeling, and principle which so entirely unfits him for the place of a steady and consistent witness for Christ. We shall surely err, if we attempt to form our judgment by the thoughts and opinions of men; for they will always judge according to the outward appearances, and not according to the intrinsic character and principle of things. Provided men can gain what they conceive to be a right object, they care not about the mode of gaining it. But the true servant of Christ knows that he must do his Master's work upon his Master's principles and in his Master's spirit. It will not satisfy such an one to reach the most praiseworthy end, unless he can reach it by a divinely appointed road. The means and the end must both be divine. I admit it, for example, to be a most desirable end to circulate the scriptures — God's own pure, eternal word; but if I could not circulate them save by yoking myself with an unbeliever, I should refrain, inasmuch as I am not to do evil that good may come.

{*The unequal yoke proved a terrible snare to the amiable heart of Jehoshaphat. He yoked himself with Ahab for a religious object and, notwithstanding the disastrous termination of this scheme, we find him yoking himself with Ahaziah for a commercial object, which likewise ended in loss and confusion; and, lastly, he yoked himself with Jehoram for a military object. Compare 2 Chr. 18; 2 Chr. 20: 32-37; 2 Kings 3.}

But, blessed be God, His servant can circulate His precious book without violating the precepts contained in that book. He can, upon his own individual responsibility, or in fellowship with those who are really on the Lord's side, scatter the precious seed everywhere, without leaguering himself with those whose whole course and conduct prove them to be of the world. The same may be said in reference to every object of a religious nature. It can and should be gained on God's principles, and only thus. It may be argued, in reply, that we are told not to judge — that we cannot read the heart — and that we are bound to hope that all who would engage in such good works as the translation of the Bible, the distribution of tracts, and the aiding of missionary labours, must be Christians; and that, therefore, it cannot be wrong to link ourselves with them. To all this I reply, that there is hardly a passage in the New Testament so misunderstood and misapplied as Matthew 7: 1: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." In the very same chapter we read, "Beware of false prophets by their fruits ye shall know them." Now, how are we to "beware," if we do not exercise judgment? Again, in 1 Corinthians 5 we read, "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Here we are distinctly taught that those "within" come within the immediate range of the Church's judgment; and yet, according to the common interpretation of Matthew 7: 1, we ought not to judge anybody; that interpretation, therefore, must needs be unsound. If people take, even in profession, the ground of being "within," we are commanded to judge them. "Do not ye judge them that are within?" As to those "without," we have naught to do with them, save to present the pure and perfect, the rich, illimitable, and unfathomable grace which shines, with unclouded effulgence, in the death and resurrection of the Son of God. All this is plain enough. The people of God are told to exercise judgment as to all who profess to be "within;" they are told to "beware of false prophets;" they are commanded to "try the spirits:" and how can they do all this, if they are not to judge at all? What, then, does our Lord mean, when he says, "Judge not?" I believe He means just what St. Paul, by the Holy Ghost, says, when he commands us to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart: and then shall every man have praise of God." (1 Cor. 4: 5) We have nothing to do with judging motives; but we have to judge conduct and principles; that is to say, the conduct and principles of all who profess to be "within." And, in point of fact, the very persons who say, "We must not judge," do themselves constantly exercise judgment. There is no true Christian in whom the moral instincts of the divine nature do not virtually pronounce judgment as to character, conduct, and doctrine; and these are the very points which are placed within the believer's range of judgment.

All, therefore, that I would press upon the Christian reader is, that he should exercise judgment as to those with whom he yokes himself in matters of religion. If he is, at this moment, working in yoke or in harness with an unbeliever, he is positively violating the command of the Holy Ghost. He may be ignorantly doing so up to this; and if so, the Lord's grace is ready to pardon and restore; but if he persist in disobedience after having been warned, he cannot possibly expect God's blessing and presence with him, no matter how valuable or important the object which he may seek to attain. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

4. We have only now to consider the philanthropic phase of the unequal yoke. Many will say, "I quite admit that we ought not to mingle ourselves with positive unbelievers in the worship or service of God; but, then, we can freely unite with such for the furtherance of objects of philanthropy — such, for instance, as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, reclaiming the vicious, in providing asylums for the blind and Lunatic, hospitals and infirmaries for the sick and infirm, places of refuge for the homeless and houseless, the fatherless and the widow; and, in short, for the furtherance of everything that tends to promote the amelioration of

our fellow-creatures, physically, morally, and intellectually."

This, at first sight, seems fair enough; for I may be asked, if I would not help a man, by the road-side, to get his cart out of the ditch? I reply, Certainly; but if I were asked to become a member of a mixed society for the purpose of getting carts out of ditches, I should refuse — not because of my superior sanctity, but because God's word says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." This would be my answer, no matter what were the object proposed by a mixed society. The servant of Christ is commanded "to be ready to every good work" — "to do good unto all" — "to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction;" but then, it is as the servant of Christ, and not as the member of a society or a committee in which there may be infidels and atheists, and all sorts of wicked and godless men. Moreover, we must remember, that all God's philanthropy is connected with the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the channel through which God will bless — that the mighty lever by which He will elevate man, physically, morally, and intellectually. "After that the kindness and philanthropy (philanthropia) of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Titus 3: 4-6) This is God's philanthropy. This is His mode of ameliorating man's condition. With all who understand its worth the Christian can readily yoke himself, but with none other.

The men of the world know naught of this, care not for it. They may seek reformation, but it is reformation without Christ. They may promote amelioration, but it is amelioration without the cross. They wish to advance, but Jesus is neither the starting-post nor the goal of their course. How, then, can the Christian yoke himself with them? They want to work without Christ, the very One to whom he owes everything. Can he be satisfied to work with them? Can he have an object in common with them? If men come to me and say, "We want your co-operation in feeding the hungry, in clothing the naked, in founding hospitals and lunatic asylums, in feeding and educating orphans, in improving the physical condition of our fellow mortals; but you must remember that a leading rule of the society, the board, or the committee, formed for such objects, is, that the name of Christ is not to be introduced, as it would only lead to controversy. Our objects being not at all religious, but undividedly philanthropic, the subject of religion must be studiously excluded from all our public meetings. We are met as men, for a benevolent purpose, and therefore Infidels, Atheists, Socinians, Arians, Romanists, and all sorts, can happily yoke themselves to move onward the glorious machine of philanthropy." What should be my answer to such an application? The fact is, words would fail one, who really loved the Lord Jesus, in attempting to reply to an appeal so monstrous. What! benefit mortals by the exclusion of Christ? God forbid! If I cannot gain the objects of pure philanthropy without setting aside that blessed One who lived and died, and lives eternally for me, then away with your philanthropy, for it, assuredly, is not God's, but Satan's. If it were God's, the word is, "He shed it on us abundantly THROUGH Jesus Christ," the very One whom your rule leaves entirely out. Hence your rule must be the direct dictation of Satan, the enemy of Christ. Satan would always like to leave out the Son of God; and when he can get men to do the same, he will allow them to be benevolent, charitable, and philanthropic.

But, in good truth, such benevolence and philanthropy ought to be termed malevolence and misanthropy, for how can you more effectually exhibit ill-will and hatred toward men, than by leaving out THE ONLY ONE who can really bless them, for time or for eternity. But what must be the moral condition of a heart, in reference to Christ, who could take his seat at a board, or on a platform, on the condition that that name must not be introduced? It must be cold indeed; yea, it ,proves that the plans and operations of unconverted men are of sufficient importance, in his judgment, to lead him to throw his Master overboard, for the purpose of carrying them out. Let us not mistake matters. This is the true aspect in which to view the world's philanthropy. The men of this world can "sell ointment for three hundred pence, and give to the poor;" while they pronounce it waste to pour that ointment on the head of Christ. Will the Christian consent to this? Will he yoke himself with such? Will he seek to improve the world without Christ? Will he join with men to deck and garnish a scene which is stained with his Master's blood? Peter could say, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Peter would heal a cripple by the power of the name of Jesus; but what would he have said, if asked to join a committee or society to alleviate cripples, on the condition of leaving that name out altogether? It requires no great stretch of imagination to conceive; his answer. His whole soul would recoil from such a thought. He only healed the cripple for the purpose of exalting the name of Jesus, and setting forth its worth, its excellency, and its glory,

in the view of men; but the very reverse is the object of the world's philanthropy; inasmuch as it sets aside His blessed name entirely, and banishes Him from its boards, its committees, and its platforms.

May we not, therefore, well say, "Shame on the Christian who is found in a place from which his Master is shut out?" Oh! let him go forth, and, in the energy of love to Jesus, and by the power of that name, do all the good he can; but let him not yoke himself with unbelievers, to counteract the effects of sin by excluding the cross of Christ. God's grand object is to exalt His Son — "that all should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." This should be the Christian's object likewise; to this end he should "do good unto all;" but if he join a society or a committee in order to do good, it is not "in the name of Jesus" he acts, but in the name of the society or committee, without the name of Jesus. This ought to be enough for every true and loyal heart. God has no other way of blessing men, but through Christ; and no other object in blessing them but to exalt Christ. As with Pharaoh of old, when the hungry Egyptians flocked to his presence, his word was, "Go to Joseph;" so God's word to all is, "Come to Jesus." Yes, for soul and body, time and eternity, we must go to Jesus; but the men of the world know Him not, and want him not; what, therefore, has the Christian to do with such? How can He act in yoke with them? He can only do so on the ground of practically denying his Saviour's name. Many do not see this; but that does not alter the case for those who do. We ought to act honestly, as in the light; and, even though the feelings and affections of the new nature were not sufficiently strong in us to lead us to shrink from ranking ourselves with the enemies of Christ, the conscience ought, at least, to bow to the commanding authority of that word, **BE NOT UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS.**

May the Holy Ghost clothe His own word with heavenly power, and make its edge sharp to pierce the conscience, that so the saints of God may be delivered from everything that hinders their "running the race that is set before them!" Time is short. The Lord

Himself will soon be here. Then many an unequal yoke will be broken in a moment; many a sheep and goat shall then be eternally severed. May we be enabled to purge ourselves from every unclean association and every unhallowed influence, so that, when Jesus returns, we may not be ashamed, but meet Him with a joyful heart and an approving conscience!

C.H.M.

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