

## RELATIONSHIP

We all agree that there are bad things in the world. Where we draw the line on BAD is what varies so much. The word *bad* is vague and without lines. With whom our children play, how carefully we should drive, or how short is too short for a skirt -- all these are vague, and our opinion has to make the choice.

Within all the broad lines, there are some facts about BAD. Notice what God says:

2 Corinthians 6:17 "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"

There are things we are to come OUT FROM, things we are to SEPARATE FROM. What should matter here is the result of this coming out and separating. Notice the end of the verse: "...I will receive you..."

There is a unique relationship with God that is found when you separate FROM the things of the world. How and when, where and who all need to be determined by each individual, but let me assure you, the fruit of separation is worth the choice. We will not get close to God while embracing the world and its value system.

The passage continues;

vs. 18 "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

The relationship is likened to a child that is very near and dear to his father. One who obeys and honors his father will have a better relationship with his father than the child who lives by his own choices. Love what your father loves, and you will find an intimacy with him that other children will miss. If a person is saved, he belongs to God; but he gains a closeness to God by separation from the world -- and that is what God teaches here. God is Creator to all men. God is the Saviour to all who have put their faith in Him. But if you want a Father-child relationship, you will need to leave or to separate (come out) from some things and some people.

Notice again:

2 Corinthians 6:17 "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"

vs. 18 "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

The statement does not end there; the chapter break signals us to stop reading, but the grammar and vocabulary says to look at the next verse.

2 Corinthians 7:1 "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

About what promise is Paul writing? The promise is that of a Father-child relationship as seen in the prior verse.

Since God is willing to have a more intimate relationship with those who separate, Paul says... let's get to it!! Paul suggests we "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

No matter what we might like, or what our feelings may be, if we want that personal closeness to God, we better separate from the garbage of the world. Statistics say that the vast majority of young people abandon their parents' faith before they reach the age of 25. This could easily be attributed to a lack of scriptural separation in the home and church. If a young person lives in the world both at home, school, and church, how is he going to enjoy the closeness to God that would draw him into a life of commitment? Commitment results when a young person finds a real relationship with God, and that Father-child relationship is reserved for those who live a separated life. So now we can see why the youth groups attending a rock concert fail to keep those same young people as they age and marry. Of course, there is a falling away before they reach the age of 25: there is nothing but entertainment at those concerts. The youth seek entertainment, and no church can entertain as does the world and the flesh; the most worldly church can not compete with Vegas or Hollywood.

What the church has with which no one can compete is a relationship with God. But that can not be found without separation. No movie, stage show, party, booze, or drug can compete with a personal closeness to God Almighty. Knowing God provides OFF-THE-CHART satisfaction. But without separating from the world, our young people will never find that level of satisfaction. Retaining our youth as well as our own closeness to God demands some separation.

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