

God's Truth About Alliances

by Russell Kelfer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the difference between peer relationships, authority relationships, and alliance relationships, and how Satan's lies can lead to unequal yoking and compromise.

Duration: 31:26

Scripture: Exodus 34:12, Deuteronomy 7:1

Topics: "Alliance"

Description

In this sermon series titled 'How Can Two Walk Together Except They Be Agreed?', the speaker addresses the topic of Satan's lies about holiness, separation, and false alliances. The sermon emphasizes that two people cannot walk together if they are moving in opposite directions, as it leads to hostility, confusion, frustration, and conflict. The speaker also raises important questions about the perfect will of God regarding marriage, the purpose of dating, influencing children's friendships, and relating to unbelieving parents. The sermon encourages listeners to seek God's truth and align their lives with His principles for successful partnerships and spiritual growth.

Transcript

The lesson you're about to hear is designed to help you in your spiritual pilgrimage. We pray that this will be a blessing in your life. Our teacher is Russell Kelfer of the Into His Likeness radio broadcast.

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We also invite you to visit us anytime on the World Wide Web. Again, our Internet address is simply www.dtm.org. We pray God's richest blessing may be yours as He continues to live His life in you. About nine weeks ago, we were looking into the five attributes of a pure heart.

I don't know how many of you were here that long ago, but we were looking into the five attributes of a pure heart. They are, you recall, the absence of hypocrisy, pure motives, the presence of a clear conscience, a single-minded spirit, and a pure thought life. Now it is at this point of a single-minded spirit or single-mindedness that we began looking into the Christian's areas of conflict with the world's philosophies.

And we have found that Satan has developed cunningly camouflaged lies to confuse and undermine the Christian where God's absolutes are concerned, thus creating a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. These lies and the corresponding truths, you may recall, have fallen basically into nine categories. Satan's lies about the character of man, Satan's lies about the nature of God, Satan's lies about the source of happiness, Satan's lies about standards of morality, Satan's lies about marriage and the home, Satan's lies about authority, Satan's lies about responsibility, Satan's lies about idolatry or who are our heroes.

And believe it or not, this morning we come to the final subject, Satan's lies about holiness, separation, or false alliances. Satan's lies, God's truth about alliances or unequal yoking. The title of this series, of this portion, which should take hopefully no more than two weeks, is How Can Two Walk Together Except They Be Agreed? The lesson outlined is as follows.

First of all, there are some basic concepts and definitions. What is a peer relationship? What are authority relationships? And what are alliance relationships? If we can define these three, we can hopefully build a foundation to clear up some of the misconceptions of the doctrine of separation, a doctrine that Satan has tried to distort to one of two extremes. The second Roman numeral is Satan's lies, six big whoppers, that Christians in general and the organized church in particular have to some degree bought and sold.

The third Roman numeral is what is God's truth about alliances and unequal yoking. And it involves basically two parts, the principles and the practical. The principles involve, first of all, the basic truth found in 2 Corinthians 6, 14 through 18.

And then the underlying principles, there are eleven of them that we will hopefully get through some of this morning. And then next week, the practical. Three areas, nationally, personally, spiritually.

Should a nation, nationally, should a nation under God make alliances or agreements with professed godless governments who denounce or deny Jehovah and the Lord Jesus Christ? Question. And then personally, what is the truth about unequal yoking as it relates to marriage? Should you, and what is God's truth concerning dating, partnerships? What is the will of God concerning business partnerships? Are they scriptural and on what basis? Roommates, how important is it that your child's roommate be a Christian? Children's friendships, are there guidelines for helping children select godly friends? And then third, spiritually. We'll ask these questions next week.

Who is your real enemy? And number two, is it possible to retreat in order to win? In other words, how can you make concessions to the enemy? Or can you? And lastly, are you a dove or a hawk in the real battle of life? So that's what we'll deal with next week. This morning we will begin with the basics. Let's begin by looking at the three basic kinds of relationships.

First of all, there's a peer relationship. This is where much of the confusion comes from. Remember, as Christians we must live in the world, administer to the world, and yet not become of the world.

And that's the tough part. What is a peer relationship? A peer relationship is where two or more people, two or more groups, or two or more nations, possessing neither common authority or mutual commitment, but they have a relationship. Two or more people who possess neither common authority or mutual commitment.

The people you work with are your peers. The neighbors that live next door to you are your peers. They may be Christians, they may not.

Nationally, the United States and Mexico are peers. The United States and Sweden are peers. The United States and Canada are peers, at least to a certain degree.

I can pick out somebody here this morning. We will influence one another depending on the intensity of our friendship and the amount of time we spend together. We will transmit both good and bad habits to one another, again, proportionate to the time we spend together, but we are not yoked together in any way.

The Bible says these relationships can be extremely helpful. It says two are better than one. They have a good reward for their labor.

Or extremely harmful. We must use discernment on the level of our friendships and the quality of our friends, but must reach out properly to everyone that needs us. It's a tough area.

The second are authority relationships. By definition, this is two or more people, groups, or nations in a system of order where one has the authority or responsibility over another. Totally different.

On the job, you are under your boss's authority. It is an authority relationship. As a citizen, you are under the authority of the government.

It is an authority relationship. You may work for a non-Christian. He exerts certain authority in your life.

You are not only to work just for Christians. By virtue of your contact with him, you receive wages for services rendered, and your work must glorify God to him. Your response to him must glorify God, even if he is unfair in his dealings with you.

Authority relationship. The people you buy from and sell to are Christians and non-Christians alike. There is no yoking.

There is no commitment to their morals or to their gods. Money is received through products or services rendered. That is an authority relationship.

The authority relationship is where you are under someone, and under their authority, they may or may not be Christians, but you are not yoked together with common responsibility. But the third area is where we will spend most of our time. It is called an alliance relationship.

If we can understand the difference between these three, I think it will help us understand the concept of separation. This is two or more people, groups or nations, who join together in union with shared authority and shared responsibility. This kind of a relationship requires common objectives.

That is, you must have the same goals and priorities or it won't work. It carries with it assumed harmony, compatibility that allows each to achieve the common objective. And thirdly, it involves mutual commitment, commitment to each other and commitment to the task.

And lastly, it involves a common bond, some mutual relationship that ensures unity of purpose. Now the best illustration is marriage. A husband and wife have an alliance relationship.

They are sharing authority and responsibility over the children and in the home. They require common objectives. They must be going in the same direction.

They require an assumed harmony. They must try to be at peace with one another. It involves mutual commitment.

Marriage is an alliance relationship. As we will see next week, dating is an alliance relationship. A business partnership is an alliance relationship.

Nations who sign treaties with other nations enter into an alliance relationship. A church joining a group of churches or a council of churches enters into an alliance relationship. That's the difference.

Those are the three kinds of relationships. And we must differentiate between them or we'll be caught in a real web of confusion by these principles. Now one more time, what are the lies we are prone to believe about relationships? These are the lies.

Number one, Satan says you have to join them to win them. You've got to wear their clothes, use their lingo, use their music. The lie is you'll fascinate them by being conformed.

But the scripture says be not conformed to this world but rather be transformed by the renewing of your mind. It's a lie. The second lie Satan gives, and this is a tough one, he says God is in you.

So you are stronger than they are. And we're going to deal with this in a minute. But that's a misquote.

You're not stronger than they are. God is stronger than they are. And God is in you.

But the flesh is in you also. And you may not be strong enough to withstand the temptations. Instead the scripture says flee from evil.

Make no alliances with the enemy because you will be destroyed by them. You see, it's a lie. The third lie says that Christ and Satan can coexist peacefully.

And that's a lie. You can't have peaceful coexistence in time of war. And Satan and God are locked in bitter conflict to the end over control of the destiny of the world and the lives of people.

There can be no fellowship between light and darkness, between God and the devil. The fourth lie says that the world's methods are adequate to accomplish God's purposes. This is a lie.

The world says organize the task, promote your strengths, and you can do it. God says my ways are higher than your ways. Agonize rather than organize in prayer.

Yield up your weaknesses rather than promote your strengths. You can't do it. But God can.

And the fifth lie is that alliances with godless nations can be fruitful. God says alliance with godless nations can be fatal. You don't have to read your Bible, although that's the best place to start.

You only have to read the daily newspaper. And lastly, Satan says you can make a deal with the devil. And God says you cannot believe a liar.

And Satan cannot tell the truth. They're lies. And we'll see how God's truth unfolds as we go through these principles.

Now, if you don't mind my oversimplifying it a bit, the Bible has clear admonitions on how the Christian should relate to his peers. Some of these will surface in this lesson. The Bible is also very clear on how Christians are to deal with authority relationships.

We've talked about that in the past few weeks. But perhaps the most important area of all lies in the realm of alliances, when two people or groups unite from a common purpose. We've heard the lies of Satan.

Now, what is the truth about yoking or alliances? Well, the first basic truth is found in 2 Corinthians 6, 14 through 18. And it is an answer to a question asked in Amos 3, 3. The question is, how can two walk together except they be agreed? The truth is, they can't. Two people cannot move in opposite directions while being bound to one another without conflict.

You try to tie them together and then let them move, and you have four things. Hostility, confusion, frustration, and conflict. You have hostility because each one is questioning the other's moves.

You have confusion because no one knows for sure where the other one is going. You have frustration because each wants to be with the other, but they want to get where they're headed. And then lastly, you have conflict because sooner or later you have to come to a choice.

You're going to let go or be torn apart. What 2 Corinthians 6 says in a very clear language is this. No, two cannot walk together except they be agreed.

And it goes on to say a Christian and a non-Christian cannot be agreed. Where alliances or yoking is concerned. Now remember, yoking is a relationship where two share authority and by its nature involves common objectives, assumed harmony, mutual commitment.

One example is marriage. Another is business partnership. National alliances.

These are the things we're talking about. Now Paul says there's one basic criteria for any of these things to work. Do you know what it is? The common bond must be Jesus Christ.

That's the only way. Now let's read 2 Corinthians 6, 14 through 18. I'm going to read it in the Wiest translation.

It's difficult to follow, but it's important because it's very accurate. Stop being joined as with a yoke to unbelievers in a common state or endeavor, which latter are of a character different from and diametrically opposed to the state of a child of God, in any endeavor in which he may properly engage. For what partnership does righteousness have with lawlessness? Or what does light have in common with darkness? Or what harmony does Christ have with Belial, the devil? Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever? And what agreement does the inner sanctuary of God have with idols? For as for us, we are an inner sanctuary of the living God.

Even as God said, I will dwell in them and fellowship with them, as in a home, and I will live my life in and through them. And I will be their God, and they themselves will be my people. And you will wherefore come out at once from their midst and separate yourselves, says the Lord, and stop touching that which is unclean.

And as for myself, I will receive you kindly and treat you with favor. And I will be to you a father, and as for you, you will be to me sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. What it says basically is diametric

opposition.

Paul is saying that it is as easy for darkness to be compatible with light as it is for the Christian to have a compatible partnership with an unbeliever. And you turn out the light where it's totally dark, and then you turn on a light. And if you can maintain a spirit of darkness while the light is in the room, you've performed a miracle.

Because the scripture says light and darkness are non-compatible. Now remember, we're not talking about friendships here. We're talking about yoking relationships.

Satan says, a little give and take, and you'll make it. God says, it will not work. Paul goes on to say, if you could wed righteousness with lawlessness, that is, if you could take perfect purity and blend it with total sin, then you could successfully wed believers and unbelievers in a meaningful alliance.

Ever tried to do that? It's impossible. You see, because perfect purity cannot tolerate sin. And when sin touches purity, it ruins it.

He says, to unite a believer with an unbeliever is to take the temple of God and pollute it with idols. But the last description is the most graphic. Paul says, to yoke a Christian and a non-Christian in the same harness is to take Satan and Christ and try to unite them for a common purpose.

Perfect truth, perfect lie. Perfect light, perfect darkness. God and Satan married.

Can you picture that? It's not a very popular truth to talk about, and we have to be careful because it's so easily misunderstood. Oftentimes, it develops into some kind of a separatist philosophy where Christians hide under a blanket of fear lest they become contaminated and cease to become salt and light. That misses the point.

What this passage says is that to be salt, you must remain pure salt. To be light, you must remain pure light. And there is no sound basis for union with unbelievers in the home, in the business, in the religious world, or in the international world.

And this is not a popular doctrine. God's people are to steer clear with alliances, yoking relationships with those who are not His. Now, Satan's most popular argument, especially to young Christians, is if Christ is in you and He is greater than Satan, greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world, right? Then why, by joining with an unbeliever, aren't you guaranteed to win them over? Evangelism by association.

Using this argument, Satan has filled Christian counseling rooms to the brim. Broken marriages, broken business relationships, confused dating, close friendships have been built on this sand. And when the winds come, and the rains come, and the floods come, and they beat upon it, great is the fall of it because it is not built on the Word.

Now, granted, one believer in a relationship is better than none, and that is why Paul says a Christian who is married to a non-Christian should not seek to dissolve the marriage for the sake of the children and possibly for the salvation of the other partner. You are to remain together. But what Paul is saying is you don't knowingly enter into those kinds of relationships.

They usually bring disaster and compromise to the Christian. Why does it work that way? Why doesn't it work the other way? Well, I'd like to give you at least two reasons. At least two reasons I don't think it

works.

Number one, you see the rather crudely drawn picture. He's filled with power because he's in the will of God. Now, in that sphere of power, when he is in the will of God, obedient to the Word of God, there's power.

But what happens when he steps out of the sphere of power? He loses it, doesn't he? He loses the potential power that he has. And why? When you enter into an alliance with an unbeliever, you are violating the Word of God. It says, be not unequally yoked.

So you step outside the will of God by disobeying the Word of God, and then you wonder where the power of God went. It went when you went, contrary to principles of Scripture. But the second reason I think is even more simple, or simpler.

The Christian on the left is drawn in two directions. There is the magnet of the Word drawing him to the Spirit. There is the magnet of the world drawing him to the flesh.

He joins hands and puts his arms around and unites with an unbeliever, as the one you see on the right. This person has his--he is drawn like a magnet. Only to the world.

So the Christian is drawn to the Word and the world, and the unbeliever is drawn only to the world. Now simple arithmetic, plus the law of gravity, ought to explain to you what happens when the two get together. You see? The principle is not, if you were ready, if you were in glory, and the flesh did not exist in you, then the principle that you could enter into a relationship with a nonbeliever and win that person might be true, but because the flesh still exists and because we are still at war internally, you cannot enter into that kind of a relationship and make it work.

But don't take my word for it. Let's journey through the Scriptures and try to extract the principles of God's position on linking His children with the unbelievers. Principle number one.

Our God is a jealous God, as far as relationships are concerned. Turn to Exodus chapter 34, verse 12. Exodus 34, verse 12.

Let's start with verse 10. And he said, Behold, I make a covenant before all the people, I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation. And all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord, for it is a terrible thing I will do to thee.

Observe that which I command you this day, I will drive out before thee the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for snare in the midst of thee. But rather you destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves.

For thou shalt worship no other God. For the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the lands, and they go after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice.

And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go after their gods, and make their sons go after their gods. The living Bible says be very, very careful never to compromise with the people in the land you are going. For if you do, you will soon be following their evil ways.

Instead, you must break down their altars, cut down their idols, for you must worship no other gods but Jehovah. He is a God who claims absolute loyalty and exclusive devotion. Do not make a peace treaty of any kind with the people living in the land.

For they are spiritual prostitutes, committing adultery against me by sacrificing to their gods. If you become friendly with them, and one of them invites you to go with him and worship his idol, you are apt to do it. And you would accept their daughters who worship other gods as wives for your sons, and your sons would commit adultery with me by worshiping their wives' gods.

You must have nothing to do with idols. The Scripture is very clear. By jealous, it does not mean that self-centered kind of jealousy that wants something another can't have.

Scriptural jealousy is that precious kind of sacrificing love that watches over another with a jealous love, guarding, if necessary, at its own expense to see that harm doesn't come. A mother has a jealous love when she sees her child out in the garden and a rattlesnake comes up. A father has a jealous love over his child when he sees them developing wrong friendships, wrong relationships.

A pastor, a teacher, a friend has a jealous love over a young Christian when they see them making wrong decisions and getting involved in wrong involvements. And this passage teaches that God is jealous over the possibility that His children might be ensnared through unholy alliances. The second principle is, God therefore demands that believers make no alliances with unbelievers.

As the prior verse explained, and as we learn from Amos 3.3 and 1 Corinthians 6, two cannot walk together without agreement, and Christ and Satan cannot agree. Therefore, we are commanded more than 20 times in the Scripture not to join with unbelievers in any form of alliance. Let's just look at one more passage in the Old Testament, which is a portrait of the principle.

It's found in Deuteronomy 7. When the Lord brings you into the promised land, and soon He will, He will destroy the seven nations, all greater and mightier than you are. And He names them. And when the Lord your God delivers them over to you to be destroyed, do a complete job of it.

Don't make any treaties, or show them mercy. Do not intermarry with them, nor let your sons and daughters marry their sons and daughters. That would surely result in your young peoples beginning to worship their gods.

And the anger of the Lord would be hot against you and destroy you. You must rather break down their altars, cut up the shameful images, and burn the idols. For you are a holy people dedicated to the Lord your God.

He has chosen you from all the people on the face of the earth to be His own. He didn't choose you and pour out His love because you are a larger nation. You are the smallest of all.

It was just because He loves you, and because He keeps His promises. So once again, He gives us the command, and then He gives us the reasons. You will be drawn to them if you make alliances with them.

You will be affected by their gods, by what they choose to worship. And He says you are a separated people. You are chosen people by God among all the peoples of the earth.

You weren't chosen for your size. You weren't chosen for your strength. You were chosen because He loves you and because He wants to keep His Word.

So He says keep away from binding alliances with those who are not God's own. Unequal yoking is clearly defined in Scripture and the consequences are clearly defined. And there are at least five of them, and we'll deal with those next week.

But at least we've looked at some of the problems and some of the principles. Please do not draw too many conclusions until we have dealt with the practical. Next week we will conclude looking at the principles and hopefully complete the study by answering the following questions.

Number one, is it ever the perfect will of God for a Christian to marry a non-Christian? Two, what is the purpose of dating? How can you control who your daughter dates? Three, what are the ingredients that make a partnership succeed? Four, are there some steps from their earliest years to influence and control who your children's friends are? Five, should a nation under God sign a treaty trusting a nation who defies the living God? Six, is it scriptural to be at war with God's enemies? Seven, how can we relate properly to unbelieving parents? Eight, what is the devil's biggest lie of all? Please keep in mind and memorize God's pointed question. It goes like this. How can two walk together except they be agreed? And keep in mind God's pointed answer.

They can't. Our Father, we thank You for the clarity of Your Word, for the beauty of Your holiness, and for Your desire to separate us unto Yourself. May we not misunderstand this concept and cease to reach out to a lost and dying world.

But Father, may we come to understand more perfectly that we cannot join ourselves in harmony with those who are not in harmony with You. Give us wisdom in the weeks to come, Father, to make practical use of this truth and to recognize the lie that Satan tells wherever he decides to tell it. For we pray in the sweet and precious name of Jesus.

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