

Believers

Married to

Unbelievers

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Previously We Noted . . .

- There seems to be no major controversy or disagreement in the use and function of the phrases “in Christ” and “in Him/Whom”
- There is often much debate and strong disagreement among those who teach Scripture within the church concerning the phrase “in the Lord”
- Our desire is that we may all “speak the same thing and that there be no divisions” among us (1 Cor. 1:10)

Previously We Learned . . .

- Understanding similar phrases within Scripture, especially those that are used interchangeably, helps us understand how they function
- The phrases “in Christ,” “in Him/Whom” and “in the Lord” are used repeatedly and as we have shown, interchangeably (e. g. Rom. 16:2-13)
 - Since God uses these phrases ~150x to indicate location, it is important to know what they mean and how they apply to our lives

Previously We Learned . . .

- Some contend that “in the Lord” can function differently than “in Christ”
 - They may point to 2 or 3 occurrences of “in the Lord” (out of ~ 48x) to show a different meaning than “in Christ” (used ~82x)
- Our study helped us see the similarities rather than possible distinctions between the phrases
- We recognized that Christ is the Lord and the Lord is Christ

Previously We Learned . . .

- From Scripture after Scripture we noted that “in Christ”=“in the Lord”=“in Him/in Whom”
- “In the Lord” is used in the same way as “in Christ,” indicating spiritual location “in Him”
- We have seen that some contend that “in Christ” functions differently than “in the Lord,” especially in Eph. 6:1 and 1 Cor. 7:39
- Some think that if it is sinful to marry an unbeliever, the believer would have to leave the unbeliever in order to repent

What Is Repentance?

- “Repentance” is “a change of thinking,” “a change of mind,” “a change of heart”
 - Mounce defines “repentance” (μετάνοια, *metanoia*) as “a change of mode of thought and feeling”
 - The change of thinking (repentance) causes us to change our direction from going in an evil spiritual path to going in a godly spiritual path
 - A true change of thinking requires us to think the way God commands us to think

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #1: People Choose a King
 - **People's thinking**: We want a king (1 Sam. 8:5)
 - **God's thinking**: the people rejected God (1 Sam. 8:7)
 - **God's thinking**: same as forsaking God and serving other gods (1 Sam. 8:8)—ingratitude and rebellion
 - **God's thinking**: Give them what they want but warn them (1 Sam. 8:9)
 - They can still change their mind and conform their thinking to God's thinking (1 Sam. 8:10-18; 2 Cor. 10:5; Rom. 12:2)

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #1: People Choose a King
 - **God's thinking**: The warning against the foolishness/sin of rejecting God's will in choosing a king (1 Sam. 8:10-18)
 - **People's thinking**: “The people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, 'No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations . . .’” (1 Sam. 8:19-20)
 - **God's thinking**: “The Lord answered, 'Listen to them and give them a king’” (1 Sam. 8:22, NIV)

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #1: People Choose a King
 - **God's thinking**: Reminder of the people's foolishness/sin in choosing a king (1 Sam. 12:12-18)
 - **People's thinking**: They change their thinking and ask Samuel to pray so they don't die (1 Sam. 12:19)
 - **God's thinking**: Obey the Lord—If you act wickedly, you and your king will be destroyed (1 Sam. 12:20-25)
 - Repentance did not require getting rid of the king
 - They were to obey God and make the best of it

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #2: People Choose Unbelieving Spouses
[Example #1: People Choose a King]
 - **People's thinking**: We want to marry unbelievers
[Example #1: We want a king]
 - **God's thinking**: A widow must marry “in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39)—must marry “in Christ” [See Slides 16-18, pages 16-18 of this pdf]
 - **God's thinking**: Authority for a man to marry a sister in Christ (1 Cor. 9:5) [See Slide 19, pages 19 of this pdf]

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #2: People Choose Unbelieving Spouses
 - **People's thinking:** It is unwise to marry an unbeliever but not sinful
 - **God's thinking:** “Do not become unwise (foolish) but understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17)
[Example #1: The warning against the foolishness/sin of rejecting God's will in choosing a king]
 - **People's thinking:** What's wrong with believers pursuing marriage to unbelievers?

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #2: People Choose Unbelieving Spouses
 - **God's thinking**: The warning against the sin of rejecting God's will and choosing to become unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14)
[Example #1: The warning against the foolishness/sin of rejecting God's will in choosing a king]
 - **People's thinking**: We married unbelievers, so you're saying we have to separate?

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #2: People Choose Unbelieving Spouses
 - **God's thinking**: “If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she is willing to live with him, he must not leave her. Also, if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he is willing to live with her, she must not leave her husband” (1 Cor. 7:12-13, HCSB)
 - **God's thinking**: “For you, wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Or you, husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?” (1 Cor. 7:16, NKJV)

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #2: People Choose Unbelieving Spouses
 - **People's thinking** [continued]: We married unbelievers, so you're saying we have to separate?
 - **God's thinking** [continued]: Addressed to believing wives, some may have had husbands who were disobedient to the word (1 Pet. 3:1-6)
 - **God's thinking**: Addressed to believing husbands who may or may not have been married to unbelieving wives (1 Pet. 3:7)

What Repentance Requires

- Repentance requires us to think the way God commands us to think
 - Example #2: People Choose Unbelieving Spouses
 - **People's thinking**: To repent of marrying an unbeliever I couldn't stay with the unbeliever
 - **God's thinking**: Many were married to unbelievers and were commanded not to leave (1 Cor. 7:12-16)
 - Repentance does not require leaving
[Example #1: Repentance did not require getting rid of the king]
 - Believers must obey God and make the best of it
[Example #1: They were to obey God and make the best of it]

1 Cor. 7:39 Background

- Divorce Deed, AD 72, Masada (AD72 i.e. DJD II. 19 = P.Mur. 19):42
- [Date, Place] I H divorce and release of my own free will, today you W who had been my wife before this time. You are free on your part to go and become the wife of any Jewish man that you wish. . . . (1 CORINTHIANS 7 IN THE LIGHT OF THE JEWISH GREEK AND ARAMAIC MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE PAPYRI, David Instone-Brewer, p. 238)

1 Cor. 7:39 Background

- “In 1 Corinthians 7:39 Paul cites from the standard Jewish divorce contract: ‘She is free to be married to whomever she wishes, only in the Lord.’ A similar phrase occurs in many Graeco-Roman divorce certificates, but the Jewish certificate puts a religious limit on whom she may marry. In the Jewish certificate she may only marry a Jew, and in the Christian version she may only marry ‘in the Lord’” (Ibid., pp. 238-239)

1 Cor. 7:39 ~ 2 Cor. 6:14

- “This is probably similar to ‘do not be unequally yoked (ἔτεροζυγέω) with an unbeliever’ (2 Cor. 6:14). Although 2 Cor. 6 may refer to more general business and social associations, the terminology of being ‘yoked’ (ζύγιος) as a marriage relationship is very common in the papyri. The verb ζεύγνυμι (yoke, put to, join together) is often used for joining in wedlock, and the noun ζεῦγος (yoke of beasts, pair) often refers to a married couple. . . .” [Ibid., Footnote 46, p. 239]

1 Cor. 9:5

- Many translations have something like this:
 - “Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?” (NKJV)
 - The word rendered “right” is the word *exousia* (“authority”)
 - The word translated “believing” is *adelphē* (“sister”)
 - What is the meaning of “a sister, a wife”?
 - A sister in Christ as wife
 - A believing wife; one who is “in the Lord”

Any Questions?

If you still have questions whether or not a believer should pursue marriage to an unbeliever, the following questions may help answer your questions:

Can you say, “I want to marry an unbeliever because I think the unbeliever will help me _____”? (Fill in the blank)

- “become a better servant of God”?
- “become a stronger Christian”?

Any Questions?

Can you say, “I want to marry an unbeliever because I think the unbeliever will help me _____”? (Fill in the blank)

- “become a more effective teacher of God’s Word”?
- “spiritually grow as a husband or wife”?
- “spiritually grow as a mother or father”?
- “teach our children God’s will”?
- “in deciding what’s right and wrong”?

Any Questions?

Can you say, “I want to marry an unbeliever because I think the unbeliever will help me _____”? (Fill in the blank)

- “exert a strong influence for truth and right”?
- “have more interest in spiritual things, like the study of God’s Word, prayer and worshiping God”?
- “when I need spiritual encouragement”?

Memory Verse Review (2 Thessalonians—Philemon)

- 2 Thess. 3:1—“Finally, brothers...”
- 1 Tim. 3:14-15—“These things...”
- 2 Tim. 2:15—“Do your best...”
- Titus 2:11-12—“For the grace...”
- Philemon 1:20—“Yes, brother...”