

# Discerning New Evangelicalism

## Lesson Nine

### The Scriptural Basis for Fellowship

“This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (I John 1:5-7).

“Fellowship” means partnership or co-operation with someone. True Christian partnership must function within the boundaries of truth. To say we are in partnership with God and walk disobedient to His Word is to contradict ourselves, because a partnership with God is a partnership in truth.

A partnership in truth immediately ceases to exist if we bring any “darkness” or error into that relationship. God’s relational partnership with His Saints is one of “light.” The saints must always be careful that anyone they bring into the relational partnership they have with the Lord also have the same relational partnership of “light.” God must end His partnership with anyone or any local church that fails to maintain its separation unto Him and from the world.

“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is a partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 10-11).

The word “come” in II John 10 refers to an official or teacher coming claiming authority to teach or the right of support. That right of respect and support is given on the sole basis of doctrinal correctness. In fact, if a person holds to doctrinal error the saints are not even to “bid him God speed.” This means they are not to even give him words of encouragement let alone support of any kind. Any individual, missionary or any other ministry that is not true to the Word of God must be totally rejected. To fail to do so is to become a “partaker {participator} of his evil deeds” {acts of disobedience}.

“<sup>3</sup> Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of Peace . . . <sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:3 & 13).

The “unity of the Spirit” and the “unity of the faith” cannot exist unless and until we have unity of doctrine.

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14).

Doctrine cannot, and must not, be minimized in order to promote fellowship. Even though we may gain the friendship and fellowship of men of error, we immediately lose fellowship with God. That includes His authority and the power of His Spirit in our lives.

“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:15-16).

It is on the basis of doctrinal correctness and separation from worldliness that the Church can be optimistic in its expectations of Christ’s “effectual working” in every individual part of His body. Doctrinal correctness includes intellectual understanding and application as well as practical implementation of those truths by “speaking” them “in love.” Godward, manward and inward must be the trilogy of purity and worship in order for God to bless.

## Touch Not The Unclean Thing

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers [see Duet. 22:9-11]: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord {symphony or harmony} hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth {belief implies a pledge of fidelity to what is believed} with an infidel? 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” (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

The central idea and the underlying principle of Scripture is that God cannot bless duplicity in practice or complicity with unrighteousness. Whether we like that or not, that is the way it is and we have no right of objection. We must accept what God says by faith, believing that He knows what is best for us and for His cause.

Since believers do not see the warfare that is constantly taking place in the spiritual realm, we cannot comprehend the necessity for what appears to us as very drastic actions in regard to our fellow man. It is beyond our scope of understanding because we are without a point of reference. The reality is that there is a warfare going on in that spiritual realm

“<sup>8</sup> Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place *shall be* my camp. <sup>9</sup> And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down. <sup>10</sup> And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice. <sup>11</sup> Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us *is* for the king of Israel? <sup>12</sup> And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that *is* in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber. <sup>13</sup> And he said, Go and spy where he *is*, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, *he is* in Dothan. <sup>14</sup> Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. <sup>15</sup> And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? <sup>16</sup> And he answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. <sup>17</sup> And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha” (II Kings 6:8-17).

Everyone in this world has joined hands with one of two sides, righteousness or unrighteousness, light or darkness, Christ or Belial, believers or unbelievers. This is what Christ meant when He said, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad” (Matthew 12:30).

The application of II Corinthians 6:14-18 is one of a military relationship in warfare. To fail to understand it and practice it is to become a traitor to the warfare of the believer against the forces of evil manifested in apostasy and Antichristism. When we lose this perspective we will eventually fail God in our service and defile our sanctification. New Evangelicalism has lost this perspective. Resultantly it has joined hands (fellowship) with individuals and apostate Christianity in direct and hostile opposition to the things of God.

The New Evangelicals’ measurement of success is how effective they are in changing society as a whole; how they influence society. This of course is the reason New Evangelicals constantly are involved in political issues and social programs. Their goal is to influence society by changing society’s laws to correspond with Biblical values.

To them, Christ is the bat and society is the ball. He becomes an instrument in their hands rather than they in His. Christ's emphasis for success was always measured by how He changed and influenced individuals, not societies. Of course, when enough individuals were influenced society is influenced.

II Corinthians 6:17-18 relates to us that the conditional blessings of the Fatherhood of God upon believers are based upon their separation from this world system as it opposes the righteousness of God. The blessings of God come from joining hands in righteousness with Him. That can only happen when sin (including the failure to separate from worldliness) is repented of and confessed to God (I John 1:5-9).

The Blood of Christ is the basis of our fellowship with God. It is what reconciles us to God and what cleanses us once we are there. That fellowship is the basis of our communion with God and His acceptance and blessing of our service (II Tim. 2:21; "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.) and worship (Heb. 13:13-15; "<sup>13</sup> Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. <sup>14</sup> For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. <sup>15</sup> By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.").

Any failure in separation lets go of the Father's hand and joins hands with this world's system.

"<sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. <sup>13</sup> Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; <sup>15</sup> And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; <sup>16</sup> Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. <sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: <sup>18</sup> Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; . . ." (Ephesians 6:10-18).

"<sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: <sup>9</sup> Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. <sup>10</sup> But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*. <sup>11</sup> To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Peter 5:8-11).

## Ecclesiastical Separation

"<sup>1</sup> Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; <sup>2</sup> Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; <sup>3</sup> Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (I Timothy 4:1-3).

Apostasy is willful disobedience to known revelation of God's Word as a governing force, but without recognition of that disobedience as sin. It is the acceptance of a contradiction in practice, in deviation from known truth, as normal.

**The nature of apostasy is religious defection.** Many people without spiritual discernment, hail apostates as great religious leaders on the basis of how greatly they influence society, regardless whether that influence is good or bad. At the same time these same people will condemn the separatists and label them as uncooperative, divisive and unloving.

“<sup>7</sup> For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. <sup>8</sup> Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought {worked to accomplish}, but that we receive a full reward. <sup>9</sup> Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not {does not live} in the doctrine of Christ {all the teachings of Jesus}, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. <sup>10</sup> If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive {do not invite him into your home and treat him as a guest} him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed {do not even give him words of encouragement}: <sup>11</sup> For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 7-11; see also I John 4:1-6 and II Tim. 4:1-5).

Apostasy is the continual and willful rejection of the Lordship (sovereign authority of Jesus Christ over a life), His Deity and full and complete redemption through His finished work in the Incarnation. Although apostates frequently accuse those who practice Biblical separation as being divisive and unloving, it is actually unloving to refuse to practice separation because doing that is unloving toward God.

“<sup>1</sup> Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him {other genuine brethren}. <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments {one of which is separation}. <sup>3</sup> For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (I John 5:1-3).

God’s measurement of our love for others (and for Him) is the degree by which we set the right example by obedience to His word. When we obey His commands, we love the brethren and Him. When we disobey His commands, we fail to love the brethren and Him.

The apostate has used the term *under grace* as a means to condone all practices that are contrary to the Word of God and to condemn the separatist as legalistic. Grace is a word used to describe God’s dealing in mercy with sinful people when what we deserve is His wrath.

God’s grace is not blanket coverage, or justification for willful acts of disobedience (see Romans 6:1-2). Grace never gives liberty to disobey God’s commands. Grace is a term that denotes divine enablement. Grace is the God-given power to enable the believer to obey that which is divinely brought to his understanding by the illumination of Scripture by the Holy Spirit (see II Peter 1:2-9 and Romans 6:12-13).

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### The Scriptural Basis for Fellowship

1. Define the meaning of the word “fellowship” from I John 1:6. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. According to I John 1:7, what is the definitive criterion for that “fellowship”? \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. What is the word “light” a metaphor of? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Read II John 10-11. Detail God’s expectations of faithful Christians regarding preachers/teachers proclaiming or promoting doctrine errors that lead people astray from God’s expectations. \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. Read Ephesians 4:3 and 13. Discuss the basis for the “unity of the Spirit” and the “unity of the faith.” \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. Read Ephesians 4:14-16. Discuss the importance of doctrine to true biblical “fellowship” (ministry working partnerships)? \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. Read II Corinthians 6:14-18. Discuss what defines someone that is “unclean” and the central idea underlying truth of the doctrine of separation. \_\_\_\_\_  
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8. Read II Kings 6:8-9. What is the reality revealed in these verses of Scripture that all human beings are blinded too? \_\_\_\_\_  
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9. How does a New Evangelical measure the success of his/her ministry and how is that self-deceptive compared to how God measures success? \_\_\_\_\_  
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10. What is wrong with using religion to fulfill our purposes as opposed to God using Christians to accomplish His purposes? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Read I Timothy 4:1-3. Define apostasy and its nature. \_\_\_\_\_  
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12. Read II John 7-11. From verse 7, what is God’s two chosen words describing all apostates? \_\_\_\_\_  
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13. Do you think you can be a faithful Christian and partner (to any degree) in ministry with apostates? \_  
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