



## Corruption in Corinth: Paul's Dissertation on Separation, 2 Cor 6:14-17; the Shulammitte & the Sybarite: Loyalty to Right Man Trumps Solomon's Power

13. Without the restraint of divine policy in the souls of men material prosperity is always followed by degeneracy. The Corinthian renaissance was no exception and Paul's two epistles to the city's Christians were designed to infuse doctrinal restraint into their souls.
14. In order to accomplish this objective these people who were products of the lascivious lifestyle of Corinth were commanded to come out of the environment that was corrupting their conscience and to separate themselves from those who populated it.
15. 2 Corinthians 6:17 contains commands for these two things to take place. However, they do not recommend separation over trivial issues. Doctrine is designed to enable us to be flexible over nonessential but inflexible over essential doctrines.
16. What distinguishes between the two is relative to the individual and is primarily determined by one's level of spiritual growth.
17. What is detrimental to an adolescent believer's conscience and spiritual life may not be to a more mature believer's. Doctrine enables mature believers to be in an unhealthy environment but not be influenced by it. This is often the case in social, business, and religious gatherings.
18. However, this would not necessarily be the case for a young believer who could be very easily influenced by those who might be classified as evil associates.
19. Children and adolescents are required by law to place themselves into the sensuous environment created by sex education curricula where subjects are discussed that tempt their lust patterns beyond their souls' capacity to control.
20. In the case of the Shulammitte woman, she is pursued by a sybarite \syb-a-rit'\: a man of great power driven by an obsessive desire for hedonistic, self-indulgent, and voluptuous pleasures.
21. The Shulammitte has the soul inventory to remain loyal to her right man but is tempted to join Solomon's harem in order to escape her over-protective brothers and reunite with her shepherd lover.
22. In order to accomplish this, the Shulammitte must first separate from her restrictive brothers and then escape from Solomon's harem.
23. It's interesting to observe that her brothers are trying to prevent their sister from marrying down into a monogamous relationship with the shepherd lover while unwittingly creating a situation in which she is tempted to marry up into Solomon's polygamous harem.
24. Solomon has the power and the means to force this woman into his harem. The shepherd lover trumps Solomon's regnant assets by simply being the Shulammitte's right man.
25. The Shulammitte has the power to resist Solomon's advances by simply being loyal to her soul-mate regardless of the outside pressures imposed.
26. Therefore she is able to separate from her brothers and from Solomon which takes us to a study of the biblical doctrine of separation.