

The South Florida Avenue **MESSENGER**

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00 a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching
since 1969

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Marc Veary.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald..Scotland
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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

Sundays @ 8:30 a.m. Check local listings

First Corinthians 7:15

What Is the Meaning Of “Not Under Bondage”?

Brian R. Kenyon

One of the most controversial expressions found in First Corinthians 7 is in verse 15, which reads: “But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.” What exactly does “not under bondage” mean in this context? To be sure, there are quite different views among some members of the church of Christ as well as in the religious world in general. Let us consider this important topic, allowing the context to be the determining factor in our conclusion.

Does Paul Give Another Reason For Scriptural Divorce & Remarriage?

Is Paul’s declaration that “a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases” giving another reason for divorce and remarriage? There are some who would answer, “Yes, Paul is giving another reason for divorce and remarriage in addition to the only reason Jesus gave, which was fornication (Mt. 5:31-32; 19:9).” In many circles this claim is called the “Pauline privilege.” One writer said in no uncertain terms that “the believer is no longer bound in marriage if deserted by an unbelieving companion” (Allen 89).

In examining this view, a reminder of God’s intent in marriage is helpful. Marriage was not instituted with the New Covenant of Christ. God ordained marriage on the sixth day of creation. Because Eve was a special creation for Adam (Gen. 2:18-23), a special relationship was needed, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). From this we note that marriage is to be a monogamous, heterosexual relationship (“a man ... his wife”); a companionship relationship (Eve was to be Adam’s “helper comparable [help meet, KJV; helper suitable, NAS; helper fit, ESV],” not his slave, Gen. 2:18, 20); an interdependent relationship (“leave ... father and ... mother” in order for husband and wife to rely on each other); a commitment relationship (“joined [cleave, KJV; hold fasts to, ESV]”); and a permanent relationship (“one flesh”). While the term “one flesh” certainly includes the privilege of sexual intimacy (1 Cor. 7:3-5), there is more to it than that. The fact that the two become “one flesh” shows that husband and wife are to be permanent as long as they *(continued on page 2)*

are in the flesh. For this reason, when Jesus was asked a question about whose wife a certain woman would be in the afterlife, He said, “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage” (Mt. 22:30). For this reason also marriage vows usually say, “Till death do us part.” For a time, because of the “hardness of ... hearts,” God “permitted you to divorce your wives [suffered you to put away your wives, KJV],” but “from the beginning it was not so” (Mt. 19:7-8 cf. Deut. 24:1-4).

There are only two Scriptural reasons that permit remarriage, and both have to do with the breaking of “one flesh.” First, when a spouse dies, the “one flesh” is broken, and remarriage is allowed for the surviving spouse (Rom. 7:1-4). Second, fornication also breaks the “one flesh” relationship; thus, Jesus gives an option for the innocent of fornication spouse to remarry (Mt. 19:9). The “Pauline privilege” violates the permanency of marriage God intended from the Garden. The mere fact that an unbelieving spouse departs from the marriage in no way breaks the “one flesh” permanency of marriage. Thus, to say that the believer is free to remarry goes against the teaching of God “from the beginning” (Mt. 19:8-9 cf. Gen. 2:18-25).

Paul Gives No More Reason for Divorce & Remarriage

As with any Bible subject, the context of a passage must be allowed to determine its meaning. In First Corinthians 7:15, there are two contextual reasons within the verse itself that refute the “Pauline privilege.”

Vocabulary does not support another reason for divorce and remarriage. The verb translated “under bondage” is from a Greek word (*douloo*) that is nowhere used to refer to the marriage bond! This word is a verb form of a noun that means “slave,” thus it means to be “enslaved” (ESV). However, marriage was *never* intended by God to be a master/slave relationship (1 Cor. 7:3-5)! For additional light, see the use of the noun “slave” (*doulos*, “servant,” KJV) later in the (1 Cor. 7:21-23, see text box on lower right of this page). The Greek word translated “bound” (*deo*) in marriage contexts is from a completely different word (1 Cor. 7:27, 39; Rom. 7:2). Thus, the vocabulary in “not under bondage” does not mean “not bound in marriage”!

Verb Tense does not support another reason for divorce and remarriage. The verb “under bondage” is in the Greek perfect tense, and coupled with the word “not” forms what is called a “perfect tense negation” (see Workman 391-397). The perfect tense by itself refers to an action initiated or completed in the past that has continuing results (same tense as 1 Cor. 7:27, 39). However, when the perfect tense is negated, as in “not under bondage” (1 Cor. 7:15), the tense declares that no such action has ever taken place in the past, thus has no continuing results. In other words, “a brother or a sister” has *never* been in the type of “bondage” here contemplated! Notice Paul did not say that a brother or sister was “no longer under bondage,” or that he or she was “set free from bondage.”

What Then Does “Not Under Bondage” Mean?

As shown above, “bondage” cannot refer to the marriage bond because of the vocabulary and verb tense Paul used. Instead, “not under bondage” refers to the fact that when an unbelieving spouse departs, the Christian must not think that his or her spouse (or anyone else) has absolute power over him or her when it concerns faithfulness to God. Because the unbelieving spouse departs from the marriage does not mean that the Christian spouse is compelled (“enslaved”) to also depart the marriage—two wrongs do not make a right! This is exactly what Paul said a few verses later, “You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men” (1 Cor. 7:23). *AE Brian*

Works Cited

- Allen, Jimmy. *Survey of First Corinthians*. 3rd ed. Searcy, AR: Harding College, 1989.
- Workman, Gary. “Key Scriptures: First Corinthians 7:1-40.” *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*. Ed. Jim Laws. Memphis, TN: Getwell Church of Christ, 1992.

First Corinthians 7:20-23

Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. [This, of course, is qualified by those callings that are not sinful. A person cannot remain a thief, though he were taught and obeyed the Gospel while thieving] ²¹Were you called while a slave? [The word “slave” in these verses is from *doulos*, which is the noun form of the verb translated “bondage” (*douloo*)] **Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it.** ²²For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord’s freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ’s slave. [Social status means nothing concerning salvation or serving the Lord. Socially, a person can be a slave while being free in Christ; or be socially free while being Christ’s slave] ²³You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. [This is related to “not under bondage” in that no one, whether earthly master or spouse is to override our obedience to Christ, cf. Jn 12:42-43; Rom. 2:29b.]

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Carlene Long and Ron & Judy Ford were still home sick this week. It was good to have Debra Okolichany and Sharon Egolf back with us. Ginny Hamby, Brenda Murray, Wayne Shearer, Sharon Washington, Dorothy Trice, Faith West, Jim Turner, and Margaret Coone.

Shut In Members: Carol Eason, Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage and Cheryl Barker.

Others: Wayne Shearer's parents, Paulisky Irizarry, Sandra Hutchins, Lynn Stevens, Chrissi Fuesner, Bobby Cole, Paula, (Brenda Murray's sister), Chip Bolding, Tony Seibert (Dotty Fife's brother), Peggy Nabors (member at Orange Street), Richard Coone (Margaret's brother), and Bob Shaw (fiance to Wayne Shearer's sister).

Upcoming Events

Thursday Feb 7th and 14th: No evening Ladies Bible Class!

Sunday Feb 10th: Elders and Deacons Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday Feb 14th: Sweetheart Dinner here at the building at 6:00 p.m. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. There will be baby-sitting. Please list the number of children next to your name on the list.

Saturday Feb 16th: Men's Breakfast here at SFA at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday Feb 16th: Sebring Youth Seminar at 9:00 a.m. Youth group skating at 4:00 p.m.

Feb 17th -20th: Gospel Meeting at the Sebring church of Christ.

Tuesday Feb 19th: Senior Saints meeting at 10:00 a.m. Presentation by the Polk County Sheriff's office.

Tuesday Feb 19th: FSOP Ladie's class at 7:00 p.m.

Feb 22nd-24th: YES weekend. If you plan to attend please sign up and put your t-shirt size on the sheet.

Sympathy

Wanda Bruno passed away Sunday Feb 3rd after a long battle with cancer. The funeral will be Friday Feb 8th at 5:30 p.m. here at SFA. Please keep Beverly Adams and Nicole Dix and the rest of the family in your prayers.

Thank You's

To the SFA church of Christ/Debbie Bush, You certainly know how to make a person feel special! Thank you for your help and prayers. God Bless, Arthur Pickard and family.

Thank you to each of you who helped with all the stockings and gift items. Many surprised happy faces on Christmas morning due to your blessings. A special thanks to my friend Rene for coordinating and helping. God bless you all, Kathy Lantz.

Visitors

Johnny Davidson, Kaylee Dyal, Alex Szabo, Bobby & Peggy Cole, Clyde & Dolly Griffith, Heath Woodruff, Jerry Green, Eric Bunch and Sherman Williams.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

February

Bobby Sheumaker **Table** Wayne Shearer
Phil Fife..... **Assist** Ken Walker

Sunday, February 10, 2018

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class.....Paul Romine
Prayer.....David Williams

10:30 A.M.

AnnouncementsFred Strickland
Song Leader.....Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer.....John McShane
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer.....David Deal
Sound Booth.....Casey Paulin

6:00 P.M

Song Leader..... Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer..... Kenny French
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer.....Alex Parramore
Sound Booth.....Casey Paulin
GreetersBingle/Faneuf
Att. Cards.....Colby/Sawyer
Open & Close Building Bobby Sheumaker

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

Song Leader..... Matt Willcut
Opening Prayer..... Kyle Bingle
Closing Prayer..... Bobby Sheumaker

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Stacey Paulin so he can get a replacement - (863) 838-8911

Sunday, February 17, 2019

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class.....Jim Turner
PrayerCasey Paulin

10:30 A.M.

AnnouncementsFred Strickland
Song Leader.....Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer.....Wesley Brunson
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer.....Dustin Walling
Sound Booth.....Alex Parramore

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader.....Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer..... Kenny French
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Phil Fife
Sound Booth.....Alex Parramore
Greeters McShane/Smith
Att. Cards..... Willcut boy's
Open & Close Building Bobby Sheumaker

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

Song Leader..... Ken Walker
Opening Prayer..... David Williams
Closing Prayer.....Alex Parramore

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan. 13.....\$5,733.45
Jan. 20.....\$5,397.55
Jan. 27.....\$4,875.62
Feb. 03.....\$6,846.75
Contribution Average.....\$6,040.41
Weekly Budget.....\$6,524.52



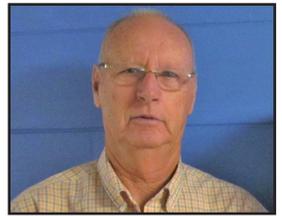
Member Spotlight
Rene' Bingle



Rene' was born and in Lakeland. As a child she wanted to be a wife and mommy. Her first job was bagging groceries at Publix. She is now retired after working 31 years at LRMC and 2 years as Avery's nanny. She has done mission work in Central America. In her spare time, she likes to browse garage sales, do crafts, make scrapbooks, and travel. Her proudest accomplishment is her children. The best advice she's ever been given is "Bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." She and her husband, Jeff, have two children.



Member Spotlight
John McShane



John was born in Northborough, Massachusetts. As a child he wanted to be a fireman. His first job was picking strawberries. He is now retired. He has lived in 9 different states and has traveled to several countries. His most satisfying accomplishment is being a retired USAF E-7. He likes to interact with people, having never met a stranger. He enjoys going sightseeing in his spare time. His hobbies include yard work, recycling, and air shows. The best advice he's been given is "Stick to your convictions." He and his wife, Linda, have 2 children.



South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST
1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .

**Make
Plans
Now To
Attend**

**Feb. 22-24,
2019**



THINK SOULS! Let's invite our family, neighbors, and friends to Bible classes, church services and/or one-on-one personal Bible studies.

God's Plan of Salvation

- Hear God's word** (Rom. 10:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Believe in Jesus as God's Son** (Jn. 8:24)
- Repent of Past Sins** (Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31)
- Confess Faith in Jesus Christ** (Rom. 10:9-10)
- Be Baptized for Forgiveness of Sins** (Acts 2:38)
- Live Faithfully by God's Word** (Rom. 12:1-2), which includes assembling for worship (Jn. 4:24) & encouragement (Heb. 10:25)

**Another Great
Opportunity To
Grow Spiritually**

SAVE THE DATE

PTP **SPARK** 3.10-3.13 2019

ORANGE PARK, FLORIDA
Lakeside church of Christ