

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
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

First Corinthians 7:25-31

Concerning Virgins (Part 1)

Brian R. Kenyon

Up to this point in First Corinthians 7, Paul had reminded his readers of the general principles of marriage (1 Cor. 7:1-5), the preferred state of being single under the “present distress” (1 Cor. 7:6-7), and the implications this had for various marital states (1 Cor. 7:8-16). Now, in the longest section of this chapter, Paul addressed the feasibility of marriage for those who have never been married. Although different views exist on “virgins,” the normal meaning best fits here, including those betrothed.

Remaining Unmarried Is Best, But . . .

“Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy” (1 Cor. 7:25). “No commandment of the Lord” best refers to something that Jesus (or any Scripture) did not explicitly address (i.e., whether virgins should marry in the midst of this particular “present distress”). Jesus certainly did not command all people to be single, and neither did Paul. However, Paul’s inspired teaching was just as relevant and appropriate. “Judgment [opinion, NAS]” refers to a deliberately formed decision, not a mere passing whim (cf. 1 Cor. 8:10) (Robertson 131). Clearly, Paul wrote by the inspiration of God (1 Cor. 14:37 cf. 2 Pet. 1:20-21; 3:15-16). Through God’s mercy, Paul was qualified to give faithful, God-inspired teaching regarding this issue (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6-16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3-4).

Paul said, “I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—that it is good for a man to remain as he is” (1 Cor. 7:26). Given the circumstances in Corinth as Paul wrote, it was best for virgins not to marry. “Suppose [think, NAS]” does not show uncertainty, but Paul’s inspired instruction for this situation. The reason why Paul said it was good to remain single was because of the “present distress,” which refers to unusually difficult circumstances, most likely persecution related. God commanded Jeremiah not to marry for similar reasons (Jer. 16:1-4). Because of the situation, it was best for virgins to remain as they were—unmarried!

This preferable state of being single, however, did not mean that one should put away his or her spouse. “Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife” (1 Cor. 7:27). Marriage is intended by God to be for life (Gen. 2:18-24; Mt. 19:3-9). Thus, for those who were already married, it was too late to choose to be single. For those who were single, a spouse should not be sought (except to avoid fornication, 7:2; or to keep *(continued on page 2)*)

from “burning,” 7:9). As mentioned in a previous article, “are ... bound” here is from the Greek word *deo*, which refers to marriage (same word is in 1 Cor. 7:39; Rom. 7:2). However, the Greek word translated “under bondage” in First Corinthians 7:15 is from *douloo*, a word that means to be enslaved. Thus, “not under bondage” (1 Cor. 7:15) cannot refer to the marriage bond as does “Are you *bound* to a wife?” (1 Cor. 7:27).

If one did marry, Paul said, “you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned” (1 Cor. 7:28a). Because one went against Paul’s inspired judgment in marrying under such difficult circumstances did not mean that he or she sinned. Remember, Paul was not commanding that everyone be single (cf. 1 Cor. 7:2-9). “Nevertheless,” Paul said to those who decided to marry, “such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you” (1 Cor. 7:28b). When unusually difficult circumstances from the outside are added to an already difficult situation of newlyweds adjusting to each other, a marriage can end in disaster. Paul was not proposing to restrict their lives out of meanness, but he was trying to make their potential burden lighter.

Christians Must Not Be Consumed With Temporal Circumstances

God’s people are never to be so preoccupied with things of this world that they have no room to serve Him (Mt. 16:24-26; 1 Jn. 2:15-17). This is especially true in times of severe distress, such as was being experienced in Corinth. The apostle continued, “But this I say, brethren, the time is short” (1 Cor. 7:29a). The time of the present distress was about to reach its climax. “Is short [shortened, ASV; very short, ESV]” is translated from a word that means to draw together, limit, shorten (Bauer 795), and here says that “the time has been drawn together into a brief compass” (Thayer 608). Although some consider the “time” here to refer to the Second Coming, this meaning does not fit the context nor the total teaching of the Bible. First, no one knows the time of Christ’s return (Mt. 24:36). Second, Paul never gave the subsequent advice elsewhere in connection with the Second Coming (but cf. 1 Thes. 5:1-5). Third, there is no reason to think that the last generation of Christians should live so drastically different from every other generation of Christians.

Since the culmination of the present distress is not far away, their remaining time must not be engrossed with temporal activities. In what some think are the most difficult verses in the chapter to understand, Paul said, “so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, ³⁰those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, ³¹and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away” (1 Cor. 7:29b-31). It seems best to understand these verses in the context of the Corinthians’ not being engrossed in temporal matters as a way to help them through their severe trial. In other words, while not neglecting their marital duties (1 Cor. 7:3-5), those who were married must live as devotedly to God as if they were not married (cf. 1 Cor. 7:33-35). Since mourners are engrossed with their mourning, they must live as though there was nothing about which to mourn. Since those who rejoice are engrossed with their joy, they must live as though there was nothing over which to rejoice. Since those who buy are engrossed with their possessions, they must live as though they had not bought. Since those who make use of this world are engrossed by it, they must live “as not using it to the full” (1 Cor. 7:31a, ASV). The Corinthians’ focus must now, more than ever, be upon the eternal, for this present world will pass away (1 Cor. 7:31b cf. 1 Jn. 2:15-17)! For this reason, we also should focus on the eternal!

Conclusion

A valuable practical lesson from this section of First Corinthians 7 is that marriage is serious business! More needs to be considered than just “loving” one another. Outward circumstances must also be factored into the decision. In order for a marriage to start right, couples may need to wait for some outward circumstances to improve. May we love God enough to do what is best for our standing in harmony with His will! *AE Brian*

Works Cited

- Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 2nd rev. ed. Eds. William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- Robertson, A. T. *The Epistles of Paul*. Word Pictures in the New Testament. Vol. 4. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1931.
- Thayer, Joseph Henry. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. 1889. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1977.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: 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, Kim, (Daniel Stump's cousin), Paula (Brenda Murray's daughter), Gloria Nelson (former member), Stan Mitchell (Freed Hardeman teacher), Cheryl, (Melody Baxter's sister), Debbie Bush's son, Linda Sheffield (Ginny Hamby's sister in law), Chip Bolding, Tony Seibert, Peggy Nabors (member at Orange Street), Richard Coone (Margaret's brother), and Bob Shaw (fiance to Wayne Shearer's sister).

Upcoming Events

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.

Feb. 24th-28th: Gospel Meeting at North Lakeland church of Christ. The speaker will be George Beals.

Feb. 24th-27th: Gospel Meeting at the Okeechobee church of Christ.

Saturday March 2nd: Ladies Day at the church of Christ of Venice at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday March 3rd: Fellowship In-Service after evening service.

Saturday March 9th: Ladies Day at the Maricamp Road church of Christ in Ocala at 8:30 a.m.

Thank You

A special thank you to everyone for all the cards, calls, food and for keeping my family and I in prayer during a very difficult time.
Love, Debbie Bush and family

Visitors

Jerry Green, Eric Bunch, Sherman Williams, Cornelius Entwistle, Wanda Powell, Alex Szabo, Denise Gulizia and Jennifer Wilson.

~ Communion to Shut-ins ~

February 24th.....Van Allen
March 3rd.....Shearer

We still need Volunteers!!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

March

David Anderson **Table** Kyle Faneuf
Jeff Bingle **Assist** Frank Hamby

Sunday, February 24, 2018

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Kyle Bingle
Prayer..... David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Fred Strickland
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... Kyle Faneuf
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Wadi Khoury
Sound Booth..... Casey Paulin

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer..... Tucker Sweeney
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Jeff Bingle
Sound Booth..... Casey Paulin
Greeters Fife/Sweeney
Att. Cards..... Caelen/Cam'ron
Open & Close Building Bobby Sheumaker

Wednesday, February 27, 2019

Song Leader..... Jim Turner
Opening Prayer..... David Deal
Closing Prayer..... Wayne Shearer

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

Sunday, March 3, 2019

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Tucker Sweeney
Prayer Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Matt Willcut
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... Jimmy Sweeney
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Wayne Shearer
Sound Booth..... Phil Fife

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... Paul Romine
Opening Prayer..... Alex Parramore
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Casey Paulin
Sound Booth..... Phil Fife
Greeters McCarter/Bingle
Att. Cards..... Colby/Sawyer
Open & Close Building Wayne Shearer

Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Song Leader..... Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer..... Kenny French
Closing Prayer..... Bobby Sheumaker

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan. 27.....\$4,875.62
Feb. 03.....\$6,846.75
Feb. 10.....\$12,749.03
Feb. 17.....\$4,789.25
Contribution Average.....\$6,820.05
Weekly Budget.....\$6,524.52



Tune into AM 1330 (station WWAB) with your friends and neighbors every Sunday at 4:00 p.m. for the "Way of Truth" program. This is a joint effort to evangelize involving Terrance Brownlow-Dindy (6th Street) and Hiram Kemp. Let's point our community to the Bible!



Member Spotlight
Sharon Egolf



Sharon was born in Flint, and also lived in Grand Blanc and Burton, Michigan. She also resided in Fort Worth, Texas. Her first job was working in a shoe store. She enjoys walking, swimming, reading, watching movies, and browsing garage sales. In her spare time, she likes to be with family and friends. She is also helpful in cleaning-up after church functions. Her most satisfying accomplishments are her children and being a grandmother. Her favorite season is fall in Michigan (which is winter for Florida). She has 3 children and 1 granddaughter.



Member Spotlight
Brian Kenyon



Brian was born in Tampa, and grew up in Apollo Beach and Bradenton. As a child, he wanted to be an underwater explorer. His first job was picking tobacco in Connecticut at 14 (to get out of the house). He serves as director of FSOP, starting as an instructor in 1996. His most satisfying accomplishment is allowing God to use him in His service, no matter the task. When he has free time, he likes to spend it with family. The best advice he's been given is "Stay ready to keep from having to get ready." He and his wife, Jagie, have 6 children and 4 grandchildren.



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 . . .

We Look Forward To A Great Weekend
Feb. 22-24, 2019



We'll meet at the building on Friday, Feb. 22, at 12:30 pm to eat pizza, load the vehicles, then leave for Valdosta. Remember to be patient, flexible, and don't drink so much that we have to visit every rest area :) Let us thank God (and our elders) for this spiritually fun opportunity!



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

Thanksto **"Cupid" John McShane & Those Who Helped with the Sweetheart Banquet!**

