



# Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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## Three Students Complete Studies



Danny Cook

Daniel Cook came to us from the Central church of Christ in Winter Haven. He served in the United States Navy until 1997. He earned an AA from Polk Community College and attended Freed-Hardeman University. He has been working with the Eagle Lake church of Christ during his two years of school. He and his wife, Karla, have been married since December 17, 2005. At the time of this printing he is interviewing with congregations, looking for full-time work as a preacher. Daniel's father, Tom Cook, serves as an elder of the Central church of Christ in Winter Haven, Florida, and his grandfather, Blaine Cook is a gospel preacher,



Rick Kenyon

Rick Kenyon came to us in the Fall after his graduation from high school. He was a member of the North Jackson Avenue congregation in Bartow. While a student here, he served as interim preacher for the Southside church of Christ, Zephyrhills, Florida, and for the Spring Hill church of Christ. At the time of this printing, he is planning to fill-in preach as needed, go on a mission trip to Africa, and continue his education at Freed-Hardeman University in the Fall. Rick is not married, and is the son of Brian Kenyon, the Associate Director of the Florida School of Preaching.



Jeffery McNeal

Jeffery Wade McNeal came to us from the Niceville church of Christ. He worked in the field of construction after his high school years. After being severely injured on the job, he had plenty of time to reflect and evaluate the direction of his life. As a result he enrolled in the school of preaching and has steadily progressed since. Jeffery has accepted the full time preaching position with the Paxon church of Christ in Jacksonville, Florida. Like Rick, Jeffery is also single.



**W**e are confident that these three men are capable of presenting the truth, love the truth, and will continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. Any congregation wishing to have capable teachers of the truth of the gospel, and men who love the souls of others will find these men to be a great blessing to them.

It has been a pleasure to see the growth and development of Daniel, Rick, and Jeffery. Their maturity and development is obvious to all who know them. We will miss having them in our classes, but we look for fruitful labors in the Lord from them.

Anyone desiring additional information about these brethren should feel free to contact the school. We will be happy to expand upon the items we have stated here. —Director

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[The following two articles are printed as an indication of the writing skills of Daniel and Rick. These were a part of their assignment for the Computer and Churches class. They were printed in the Eagle Lake Bulletin, Eagle Lake, Florida, March 5 and 12, 2006. Editor]

## Are We “Unequally Yoked”? (2 Cor. 6:14)

By  
Daniel Cook

Paul’s statement, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Cor. 6:14), has been a point of discussion over the years. In this article, we will consider one common misapplication of this phrase, and then consider the true applications of it.

### Not Referring To The Marriage Bond

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (6:14a). A common misunderstanding of this passage is that it applies to marriage. However, three verses later we are told to “come out from among them, and be ye separate” (6:17a). If we try to apply being “unequally yoked together” to marriage, that would be saying that we

should be separated from an unbelieving spouse, but in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians he tells the husband of an unbelieving wife: “let him not put her away” (1 Cor. 7:12), and to the wife of an unbelieving husband he wrote: “let her not leave him” (1 Cor. 7:12). In both cases it was the unbelieving spouse that chose to remain or go, not the Christian. Being “yoked together” here does not refer to the marriage bond.

### Between A Believer And An Unbeliever

Adam Clarke thought that it was a military term, telling us not to leave the Christian ranks (Adam), but most other commentators would disagree with this interpretation, choosing the more natural and commonly accepted interpretation of the yoking of animals. The most common type of yoke that would have been used in Palestine in those days was one “that rested on the neck (Ge 27:40, etc.). It was provided with straight ‘bars’ (Le 26:13; Eze 34:27) projecting downward, against which the shoulders of the oxen pressed, and it was held in position by thongs or ‘bonds’ (Jer 2:20; 5:5; 27:2; 30:8; Isa 58:6, ‘bands’), fastened under the animals’ throats” (Burton). Using “yoke” in a figurative way was done in the Old Testament, in passages such as Jeremiah 27, 28; 5:5; and Lamentations 3:27. In the New Testament, Jesus said: “...my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Mt. 11:30). He was not talking about a literal yoke, or using a “military term.” He was talking about the yoke of godly service. In Second Corinthians 6:14, Paul is telling the Corinthians not to be “unequally yoked together with unbelievers” because a Christian does not bear the same yoke as an unbeliever!



### A Christian Does Not Bear The Same Yoke As Others

The load that a Christian carries is one that works for righteousness. The work of an unbeliever produces unrighteousness.

How could such be “yoked together?” They would be working in opposition to one another. Either both of them will get nowhere, or one will have to give into the other, and unfortunately, it is usually the Christian that gives into the path of least resistance and follows after the unbeliever. What fellowship can such have with one another, and “what communion hath light with darkness” (2 Cor. 6:14)? “Can two walk together, except they be agreed” (Am. 3:3)? It is like putting a lamb in a pen with a hungry wolf, they just do not belong together.

### “Be Ye Separate, Saith The Lord”

It is not the case that we are to have no interaction with people of the world at all. How could we convert anybody if we were not supposed to have anything to do with a person that is not a Christian? Did not Jesus eat with “publicans and sinners” (Mt. 9:10)? He was not, however, in fellowship with such. It would be hard to even imagine such a thing, but he still loves, and died for us all. In defining “fellowship,” the Dictionary of Theology says: “Fellowship implies sharing common interests, desires, and motivations. Fellowship requires that time be spent with another communicating, caring, etc. It carries with it a hint of intimacy” (Dictionary). When we spiritually

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separate ourselves from people of the world, it is not a physical separation. Paul said: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world" (1 Cor. 5:9-10). The interests of a person of the world and those of a Christian should not be in common, neither desires, nor motivations. There are business dealings that go on in the world that a faithful Christian cannot participate in, not to mention certain recreational past-times. This is not a choice we make, but rather, a command that is to be obeyed: "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" (2 Cor. 6:17, 18).

#### Works Cited

*Dictionary of Theology*. Online Bible CD. Version 2.00.02. Winterbourne, Ontario: Larry Pierce, 2005.

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#### "Fornication"

By

Rick Kenyon

The most important relationship on this earth (aside from mankind's relationship with God) is the relationship between a husband and his wife. From the beginning God has set forth this principle (Gen. 2:18-24). The husband and wife relationship is a relationship which is to not only take priority over the relationship between father and mother (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:5), but also over the relationship between parents and children (it is the parents who are joined together as one flesh, not

the children and parents). It would then be logical to conclude that since marriage is so important, the unlawful breaking of that relationship is not lightly taken by God.

#### What Is "Fornication"?

"Fornication" (from the Greek, *porneia*) is defined by Thayer as "illicit sexual intercourse in general."<sup>1</sup> This definition is placed within the broadest sense of the meaning. Too often, people limit "fornication" to "adultery," which, according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, means voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a person who is not his or her spouse. It is true that fornication includes adultery, but does not necessarily limit fornication to adultery. Every form of literal fornication involves the use of the body (1 Cor. 6:18-20). Therefore, fornication includes a variety sexual sins such as adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, pre-martial sex, etc.

#### Why Is Fornication the Only Scriptural Grounds for Divorce and Remarriage?

Jesus said in Matthew 19:9, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery...." This statement was so profound that those who were listening to Jesus said in response, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is good not to marry" (Mt. 19:10). It should not surprise the reader that the response was startling, and seemingly negative. The setting in which Jesus answered the Pharisees' questions was a setting of fake sincerity. Verse 3 reveals to the reader that the Pharisees came to Jesus "tempting him."

The idea of the Pharisees was to trap Jesus in taking sides with one of two Jewish schools: the school of Shammai (which taught that the only cause for a man to put away his wife was for whoredom) or the school of Hillel (which taught that a man could put away his wife for practically any reason imaginable).<sup>2</sup> However, Jesus does not "take sides" as the tempting Jews had assumed. Instead, He takes their question back to the beginning

(Gen. 2:21-24) and continues to preach to them that breaking a husband and wife relationship violates God's original commandment. Although God allowed Moses ("because of the hardness of your hearts," Mt. 19:8) to record in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 conditions that included divorce, this was not a command given by Moses. The Pharisees misapplied a passage in order to trap Jesus in His own words.

"Except it be for fornication" means exactly what it says. There is no hidden meaning or metaphorical device used in Matthew 19:9. The only Scriptural reason for a man to divorce a woman or a woman to divorce a man is for fornication.

#### Conclusion

The Bible clearly teaches that divorce and remarriage for any other cause than fornication is wrong. Jesus, speaking to the Samaritan woman in John 4, told her that the man whom she was currently with was not her husband. John the Baptist rebuked Herod for the woman which he unlawfully had (Mt. 14:3-4). Even during the time of Ezra many Israelites had unlawful wives. However, these Israelites were taught their wrongs and put away their unlawful wives (and some cases even involved children, Ezra 10:18-44). God wants us to be as faithful to Him as a man is to his

wife and a woman is to her husband. The church is the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:22-32), and Christians are in the church (Acts 2:47 cf. 1 Cor. 12:13). For a Christian to go against Christ is for the Christian to commit spiritual fornication with the world. If one spouse can divorce the other spouse for any cause and still have authority to remarry, then why should the Christian worry about spiritually fornicating against God?

#### End Notes

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (1889; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977) 532.

<sup>2</sup> *Adam Clarke's Commentary*. Ed. Gary Gallant. Online Bible CD. Version 2.00.02. (Winterbourne, Ontario: Larry Pierce, 2005).

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## Gene Burgett Report

May, 2006

We often learn of the good works large churches support. Large churches usually have large budgets, providing opportunities to be a part of many efforts. Several large churches support the Florida School of Preaching and we are thankful for their help in training men to preach.

A glance at our monthly financial report reveals that many of the churches that make our work possible are smaller congregations with less than one hundred in attendance. The help we receive from these smaller congregations is of such a magnitude that our work would be greatly hindered without their support.

I recently visited the Lord's church in Greenville, Florida. Greenville is about thirty miles east of Tallahassee, in the panhandle of Florida. Vast acres of pasture reveal that it is an agricultural community. Perhaps its biggest claim to fame is that the entertainer Ray Charles lived there several years in his youth.

The Greenville church is not large in numbers, but they have supported the Florida School of Preaching in a very generous way through the years. Paul's words come to mind: "For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability they were freely willing...And not only as we had hoped, but first they gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God" (2 Cor. 8:3, 5).

I appreciate their kindness in allowing me to speak, for they had no warning that I would even be with them that Sunday morning. Despite my surprise visit their preacher, Bill Curry, along with the men of the congregation, very graciously allowed me to give them an update of the work of the Florida School of Preaching, as well as thank them for the assistance they have rendered through the years.

We appreciate all of our supporters, and we especially want smaller churches to know that their generous contributions to the work of the Florida School of Preaching do not go unnoticed.

Any churches or individuals that would like a report on the work of the school are urged to contact me.

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