

Announcements and Church News

Our Sick

Mattie Simmons home doing better; Irene Bernhardt doing better; Rob Schlachter and Grace Vogt sick and unable to be out; Emily George for sciatica; Penny Bevaqua—healing from wrist surgery; Teresa Broyles and Vicky Lube—cancer trmt; Joyce Stanley, Kim Taylor, Nancy VanWinkle, health issues.

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR FAMILY/FRIENDS; Kim Taylor's—brother for recent hip surgery; Regina Hunter's sister, Cynthia for hypertension and friend Kim recovering of knee surgery; Teresa Broyles—Step-mom Mary Jane Wright in rehab and doing better; Samantha Jones daughter Ariel, brother Eddie and son Joshua; Carol Mitchell—tumor on liver; The Stewart's—bro-in-law Russell Holt; Clifton Reynold's son Bryce; Susan Villoch's dad James/heart issue; The Kozola's son Tim; Sam York—recent surgery; David Sain's—wife Phyllis; Yllka Bejo's—mother for broken hip; Van Stewart's—aunt, Linda Parsons; Dianne Stewart's—brother, Bobby Goodfield and sister Lynn Owens; The Stingles—niece's baby; Paula Davis—niece/ lupus; Darrell Broking/for health issues.

PRAYERS FOR CANCER:

Dyianna Thompson's brother-in-law, Rodney; John Benson's friend, Wendell; Ranny Reeves neighbor, Linda Wall; Randall Deily's—uncle; Linda Haddock's niece, June McCray; Carol Untied's stepmother Emily; Debbie Methvin's—friend Michele Fuguero; Deb Adams friends son, Jason; Van Stewart's sister Tracey and cousin Paula; Ronnie Sommerville's dad, Ron; Mattie Simmons friend William; Sandy Caldwell's bro-in-law Larry; Kay Jessup's friends, Lou and Rose Fiores also co-worker Marie Woleck.

INMATES: Antwaun Thompson, Willie Newton & Tom George.

OUR SERVICE MEN: Sam Wagner and cousin Mark Wagner (Navy) Austin Reyes (Marine) Matthew Holleran (Army)

Activities

NEXT LADIES BIBLE CLASS— Friday, January 6th at 1:00pm in the small building.

HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP— Our Holiday Fellowship is today after the morning worship service in the small building. If you are visiting please join us as our honored guest.

REMINDER— The Active Assailants Incidence Class is tomorrow evening, December 5th at 6:00pm here at the building.

FSOP LECTURESHIP— The 48th Annual Lectureship at the Florida School of Preaching in Lakeland is from January 16th-19th. The title is the Rise of the Messianic Kingdom. Flyers are in the foyer.

PLACED MEMBERSHIP— We extend a warm welcome to Rob and Delia Schlachter who have placed membership with us. Please add them to your directory: 1612 Dartmouth St, Clearwater, FL 33755-6401; Phone#:727-688-2269.

RESPONDED— William McRoy came forward last Sunday for forgiveness. Remember William in prayer.

CONGRATULATIONS— To David and Samantha Jones for becoming grandparents of twins.

NEW ADDRESS— Grace Ime Akpakpan has recently moved to: 621 N Keene Rd, Unit D, Clearwater, FL 33755-5611.

REMINDER— Weekly sermons are available on CD, our website and livestream on Facebook and YouTube Sundays at 10:30 & 5:00pm and Wednesdays at 7:00pm.

THOSE SERVING TODAY

Announcements—Joe Bonelli
Song Leaders—Matt Pryor/Jesse Lancaster
Opening Prayer—Van Stewart/James George
Lord's Table—Mark Bernhardt
Closing Prayer—Bob Haddock/David Jones

CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 4, 2022
 centralofchrist@gmail.com
 www.centralofchrist.com

Office: (727) 446-4808
 1454 Belleair Rd. Clearwater, FL 33756-2357

GBN Gospel Broadcasting Network
<http://gbntv.org> **YouTube**
<https://spiritualsword.org/>

SEARCH OF THE LORD'S WAY TV Channel 44 (WTOG) at 7:30am Sunday **YouTube**
 watch & hear Phil Sanders

THE INTERNATIONAL GOSPEL HOUR **YouTube** (24/7) to hear Jeff Archey

House to House Heart to Heart www.HouseToHouse.com

CHILDHAVEN, INC. Childhaven Children's Home in Cullman, AL
www.childhaven.com

FAIR HAVEN CHILDREN'S HOME fairhavenchildrenshome.com

SOARING FOR SOULS soaringforsouls.com

INDIA MISSIONS cocindia.net

www.christiancourier.com

Arnold Town Road Church of Christ—Darrell Broking
 Chalmette Church of Christ—Mark Lance
 South Anchorage Church of Christ—Michael Dale

Elders:

Joe Bonelli Charles Broyles
 James George

Deacons:

Max Herman
 Van Stewart

Preacher: Charles Broyles

Office: 727-446-4808 Cell #: 423-240-9075

Sunday Bible Study—9:30AM
 Charles Broyles

Major Prophets—Ezekiel 34-35

Sunday AM Worship—10:30AM
 Charles Broyles

Restoring Our Focus On Christ
 John 10:22-24

Sunday PM Worship—5:00 PM
 Charles Broyles

Let Brotherly Peace Continue
 Romans 14:19

Ladies Bible Study-Friday
January 6th at 1:00PM

Wed. Bible Study—7:00PM
 Charles Broyles
The Godhead

All of our services are available
 on Facebook Live and
 YouTube Live!





From the Preacher's Pen

Living Together While Not Married

Most of the unbelieving world does not have a problem with couples living together outside of marriage. To them, it's not sin. It's normal. But, living together without marriage does not mean Christians need to partake in such liberal lifestyles. Christians represent Christ and they are also entrusted with the Gospel (1 Thess. 2:4). So, as a Christian goes through this world, they represent the kingdom of the Lord (Jn. 18:36) and it is a Christian's responsibility to reflect their King, that kingdom and what it stands for. Thus, a Christian's influence is very important.

Shacking up is not marriage. It is not acceptable to God. It is sin!

In the Bible, Christians are called to be holy as God is holy (1 Pet. 1:16) and so they should never do anything to bring shame (reproach) upon the Church. Christians are also called the salt of the earth because the world is morally corrupt and it needs Christians to be a light to the world of darkness and to show them who Christians are so that the world will glorify God (Matt. 5:13-16). This is why Paul wrote, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31). And, this is also why Christians are told by Peter to keep their conduct honorable before all so that when evildoers speak against them, they may see your good deeds and glorify God (1 Pet. 2:12).

Now, many who are not Christians know that adult males and females should not live together unless they are related or married. Even when we look at parents, they don't want their children to live together with others of the opposite sex. So, why are there Christians, of the opposite sex, who think they can live together and not bring the Church under the community's reproach where its future effectiveness is put in doubt? Also, most neighbors assume that since two people of the opposite sex are living together, then they are having sex with each other. And, what's worse here is that the neighbors know that they are Christians. So, how are they influencing others for good? Furthermore, by living together as man and woman, it allows everyone the right to live together as man and woman, for whatever reason. But, is this living Godly (1 Pet. 1:7)?

Consider that "the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him . . . Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." (Gen. 2:18, 24). God's first institution was marriage, not cohabitation. Thus, God has only one plan for a man and woman living together and that is marriage. God gives no indications that a man and woman, who are not related, to live together under any circumstances. In the Bible, the Jews throughout history understood this as well as Jesus and his apostles. And so, "Does the Bible say it is wrong for unmarried, unrelated men and women to live together?" Well, this is not the right question. The right question to ask is "What is God's will concerning a male and female living together?" It is between husbands and wives (Gen. 2:24). Now, why does God say this? The answer is because living together is an intimate, bonding experience. Living together in the same home where men and women share the same

kitchen, bathroom, etc., where they see each other early in the morning and late at night intimacy and bonding naturally develops. So, we learn from these verses that living together as a man and woman does not reflect the commitment that God instituted and ordained via marriage. It is something else.

Now, Christians are commanded to abstain from every appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). So, how can a man and woman live together and not have people thinking that nothing is happening? They can't. So, the result is that these individuals bring shame on the Church and on Christ. Christians need to remember that they are to live holy lives and this includes being above reproach. And, just because some do not see living together as a problem, Christians should know better than to promote anything that would appear evil or sinful. And, as Paul warned Christians, they should not give Satan (adversary) any occasion to slander the name of Christ (1 Tim. 5:14).

You know, as we consider appearances, Christians know that God designed us to desire companionship. And, living together puts natural temptations in front of us. But still, men and women may attempt to rationalize or justify living together. They think that God would not care and that He would understand. And surely, some may cohabit unmarriage because of financial challenges. But, where some attempt to excuse themselves from making a public and legal commitment to one another for budgetary reasons, others will excuse themselves for other reasons. And so, Christians become a stumbling block to others, which is sin (Rom. 14:13; Matt. 16:23; 1 Cor. 8:9). And, it is also worrisome that Christians living together like this say they believe in God. The same God who created the universe and everything in it from nothing and who raised Christ from the dead yet, they don't trust Him enough to take care of their financial needs if they got married on a fixed income. So, does this display their seeking first their own agenda or seeking first the Kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33)? I mean, why are Christians more worried about making it financially than in obeying God and trusting in Him to provide? God promised to meet our needs and even Paul penned, "my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). Trusting the Lord and following His will is what we are all about as Christians. Christians should never allow financial problems to determine their morality.

All in all, God is angered when we attempt to justify our sins by rationalizing them. And, Christians must remember that circumstance never ever determines what is right and what is wrong. God does. And so as Christians, we should follow whatever glorifies God. Thus, The Bible seems to be clear that for a man and woman to live together outside the bounds of marriage is sin...even if there is no sex. And, a Christian should know better. Living together outside of marriage causes all sorts of problems and it is against God's pattern for living together, it gives off the appearance of evil, which is sin, it causes others to stumble, which is also sin and will cause some people to lose their souls because they think that it is okay for Christians to live together without a marriage covenant. As a Christian, be careful of your influence because we are not to live like the world (Rom. 12:2). - Robert Notgrass