

Prayer List

- Of Our Number
- ♦ Janice Carnley—Shoal Creek
 - ♦ Jennifer Derrick—vertigo
 - ♦ Larry Derrick—health problems
 - ♦ Rick Hemphill—dental procedures
 - ♦ Jeff Mashburn—blood press. issues

- Others in Need
- ♦ Francis Adams—health problems
 - ♦ Terri Adams—cancer
 - ♦ Glen Brooks—clot in carotid artery
 - ♦ Fran Carlos—back surgery
 - ♦ Louise Douglas—health problems
 - ♦ Kim Dunn—cancer
 - ♦ Joyce Faulk—health problems
 - ♦ Jennifer Foxworth-health problems
 - ♦ Annette Garrett - Non-H. lymphoma
 - ♦ Kiptyn Gillis—non-cancerous tumor
 - ♦ Lucinda Lingor—heart problems
 - ♦ Jerry Madden—cancer
 - ♦ Paul Mays—Lyme disease
 - ♦ Dan Sikes—back pain, surgery
 - ♦ Michael Totoro—cancer

Continued in next column...

- ♦ Pray for Christians overseas, such as those facing persecution in Pakistan and certain parts of India.
- ♦ Pray for peace, pray for the bereaved, the persecuted, sick/suffering, civil leaders, military, 1st responders, the lost, enemies.
- ♦ Pray for our evangelistic efforts and for more opportunities.

Events

If the Lord wills...

- July 5
Meal after AM Worship
- July 12
Men's Meeting

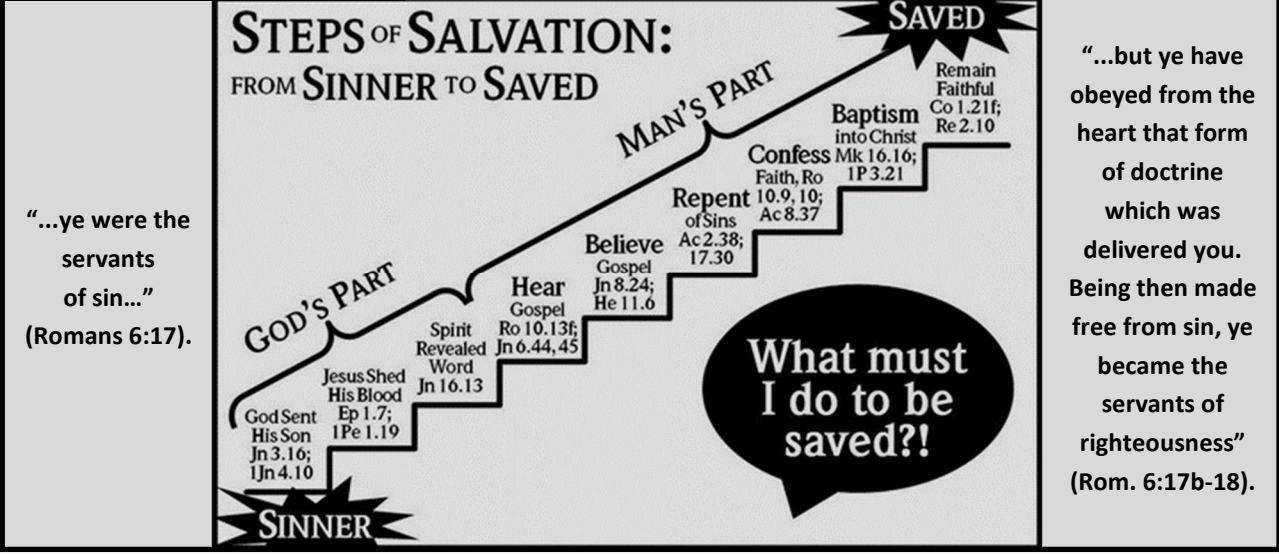
Faithful Worship — 1) Praying to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ (Luke 11:1-2; John 16:23; Eph. 5:20; Php. 4:6); 2) Singing without mechanical instruments (Matt. 26:30; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16-17; Heb. 2:12); 3) Preaching God's Word (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:42; 20:7); 4) Giving weekly as prospered, cheerfully (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7); 5) The Lord's Supper on the first day of every week (Matt. 26:26-28; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20-34; 16:2; Heb. 10:23-31).

To Our Visitors

We are happy and honored that you are here! Please fill out a visitor's card and give us a chance to get to know you. If you have any questions about anything said or done in Bible class or worship, please ask. We seek to give a Bible answer for everything we do (Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 3:15; 4:11).

Privileged to Serve

Announcements: Glenn Howze
Song Leading: Sunday—David Howze; Wednesday—Caleb Howze
Serving the Lord's Supper
Head: Johnny Moss; Helpers: Leo Derrick, Ethan Howze, Mark Howze
Lord's Supper PM
Head: Mark Howze
Helper: Jacob Mashburn
Bible Reading: Trey Miles



THE BAKER BULLETIN

The weekly bulletin of The church of Christ in Baker, FL

July 5, 2026

Meeting Times

- Sundays:
- 10AM Bible Class
 - 11AM Worship
 - 6PM Worship
- Wednesdays:
- 7PM Bible Class

Other Information

Building: 5761 Hwy. 4
Mail: P.O. Box 285
Baker, FL 32531 USA
850-669-9117
Website: churchofChristatBaker.com
Radio Program: 104.7FM Sundays 8:30AM WAAZ1047.com livestream
Jason Hilburn's Info: 850-826-8198 hilburnjasonp@gmail.com TheBibleDomain.com JasonsBibleBlog.com

Does 1 Corinthians 7 Authorize Divorce for Desertion?

By Jason Patrick Hilburn

Some have argued that 1 Corinthians 7:15 grants a deserted believer the right to divorce and remarry. A careful reading of the text in context does not support this conclusion. Paul upholds what Jesus taught: divorce and remarriage are not permitted except for fornication (Matthew 19:9).

1 Corinthians 7:10–11

Paul opens this section with a direct command: *Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband* (1 Corinthians 7:10–11). Even when separation occurs, remarriage is not authorized. The only options Paul gives are to remain unmarried or to reconcile. This establishes the baseline for what follows.

1 Corinthians 7:15

When Paul turns to desertion by an unbelieving spouse, he writes: *if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases* (1 Corinthians 7:15). The phrase “not under bondage” refers back to the immediately preceding command, “let him depart.” In other words, the believer is not bound to prevent the departure or force continued cohabitation with an unbelieving spouse. The phrase explains the

command to *“let him depart.”* It does not introduce a new right to divorce and remarry.

A critical question, then, is what Paul means by *“bondage.”* The Greek word here is *dedoulōtai*, derived from *doulōo*, meaning enslavement. This is not the word Paul uses elsewhere for the marriage bond. When referring to the marriage covenant, Paul uses *deo* — as in *“the wife is bound (deo) by the law as long as her husband liveth”* (Romans 7:2). In fact, in the very same chapter Paul uses *deo* when discussing the marriage bond (1 Corinthians 7:27, 39), yet he does not use that word in verse 15. If Paul intended to say that the marriage bond itself had been dissolved in verse 15, why did he not use the very word he used elsewhere for the marriage bond?

Paul himself states the duration of the marriage bond in the same chapter: *“the wife is bound (deo) by the law as long as her husband liveth”* (1 Corinthians 7:39). The marriage bond endures until death. The one exception is divorce for fornication (Matthew 19:9) — not desertion. Why would Paul say in verse 39 that the wife is bound as long as her husband lives, yet supposedly teach in verse 15 that desertion severs the bond?

Furthermore, *dedoulōtai* is in the perfect tense. Paul is not describing a bondage that once existed and has now been removed. If this referred to the marriage bond, it would mean that no marriage bond ever existed — yet the parties were clearly married; therefore, *“bondage”* here cannot refer to the marriage bond. Paul is saying the believer has never been enslaved or forced to live with the unbeliever who wants to depart. The bondage Paul has in mind is not the marriage covenant itself, but the non-existent obligation to keep an unwilling unbeliever in the home or “chase down” the unbeliever and demand that they live together.

Critically, Paul never mentions remarriage in this passage. Verse 16 confirms the parties are still married: *“what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?”* The language of *“thy husband”* and *“thy wife”* refers to an ongoing marriage relationship, not a dissolved one. Remarriage, therefore, would not have been an authorized option.

An Unanswered Asymmetry

Those who argue that 1 Corinthians 7:15 permits remarriage after desertion face a serious problem of consistency. Matthew 5:32 indicates that a man who puts away his wife causes her to commit adultery — the innocent put-away party is not free to remarry. Why, then, would the deserted believer in 1 Corinthians 7:15 be granted the right to remarry, when the innocent victim of an unjust dismissal in

Matthew 5:32 is not? No satisfying answer has been given.

If 1 Corinthians 7:15 authorizes remarriage after desertion, then Paul would be adding a second exception to the Lord’s teaching in Matthew 19:9. Yet Paul nowhere states that he is adding another ground for remarriage, nor does he mention remarriage at all.

Conclusion

Paul does not authorize remarriage for desertion. The inspired context, word choice, verb tense, and silence on remarriage all point to the same conclusion. The deserted believer is freed from the obligation to maintain cohabitation with an unwilling unbeliever, nothing more. The exception clause of Matthew 19:9 stands as the sole ground for divorce and remarriage, and desertion is not fornication.

Does 1 Cor. 7 Authorize Divorce for Desertion?

Answer: No. Paul upholds what Jesus taught: no divorce and/or remarriage except for fornication. “Except” must be upheld (Mt. 19:9).

1. 1 Corinthians 7:10–11 – *“Let not the wife depart... But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband...”*

- ◆ Even if separation occurs, **remarriage is not authorized.**
- ◆ The only options given are to **remain unmarried or reconcile.**

2. 1 Corinthians 7:15 – *“If the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases...”*

- ◆ The word *“bondage”* (Greek: *dedoulōtai*) is **not** the same word used elsewhere for the marriage bond (*deo* – cf. Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:27, 39).
- ◆ This Greek word refers to **enslavement**, not a marriage covenant.
- ◆ Never in such bondage, **forced to live with** the departing unbeliever.
- ◆ The bondage **cannot refer to marriage** — the perfect tense does not fit a bondage that once existed and has now been removed.
 - Paul **never mentions remarriage.**
 - Verse 16 confirms **they are still married**: *“thy husband...thy wife.”*
 - Why would the deserted believer be allowed to remarry, but not the innocent person unjustly put away? (**Mt. 5:32**).