

## THE BONDAGE OF MARRIAGE

Bondage -- Read after the article "Who is Free to Remarry?"

Rhoda says: I agree that the word "bondage" means "servant, and or slave" as shown in Strong's Concordance. Let us take a closer look at the topic in question found in 1Cor.7:15.

"If the unbeliever leaves let him depart". In modern language: If an unbeliever leaves, don't go against his will preventing his leaving. Why? Because "God has called believers to peace". It stands to reason that if a believer, husband or wife, holds onto the unbeliever against his will there will not be harmony or peace. There definitely will be conflicts and contention that will cause a very un-peaceful situation for the whole family.

On the other hand, if the unbeliever is "PLEASED to dwell" (vs. 12-13) with the believer, then the believer and the unbeliever are both obligated to honor the vows (commitment, contract, and or covenant) of their marriage.

The believer is cautioned not to leave the unbeliever because of his or her unbelief, but if the believer does leave for whatever cause, he or she is not free to marry another person as long as the unbeliever is "pleased to dwell" with the believing spouse.

Now back to verse 15: "A brother or sister (the believer) is not under bondage" if the unbeliever leaves. The question is: under "bondage" (slavery) to what? Are we to believe that Paul advocates that the believer is to be a "slave" to the unbeliever? No, of course not! God's way is one of love and peace, not slavery. So if the unbeliever leaves, what is the believer no longer controlled (in-slaved) by? Is it not the contract of marriage? A marriage cannot be peaceful if one spouse dominates the other. Marriage is a union where God intended they become as one. But being human we need a set of rules that demands we abide by our commitment. The bible sets forth these rules, and we agree to them when we make a commitment to a spouse. These rules are what bonds (the "bondage") the marriage.

I am aware that many want the role of dominate master over their spouse and put them in the role of "slave" or "bondage" but that is not what Paul is supporting. The contract is the dominate force that exists as long as both parties agree to the rules. If one abandons the other, the bondage is broken. The one that is left is then free of the commitment contract. So we see that the "bondage" is not en-slavery to another human, but to the contract or covenant of marriage.