

Strange Words:
“Concubine”

The term “concubine” has always been a challenge for me to understand. It shows up in the Bible, so let’s have a look at it.

The following is from the Easton Bible Dictionary:

Concubine: In the Bible denotes a female conjugally united to a man, but in a relation inferior to that of a wife. Among the early Jews, from various causes, the difference between a wife and a concubine was less marked than it would be amongst us. The concubine was a wife of secondary rank. There are various laws recorded providing for their protection - Exodus 21:7; Deuteronomy 21:10-14 and setting limits to the relation they sustained to the household to which they belonged - Genesis 21:14; 25:6 They had no authority in the family, nor could they share in the household government. The immediate cause of concubinage might be gathered from the conjugal histories of Abraham and Jacob - Genesis 16:1ff; Genesis 30:1ff. But in process of time the custom of concubinage degenerated, and laws were made to restrain and regulate it - Exodus 21:7-9 Christianity has restored the sacred institution of marriage to its original character, and concubinage is ranked with the sins of fornication and adultery - Matthew 19:5-9; 1 Corinthians 7:2.

There is a cultural barrier to our understanding of this concept. Ancient culture embraced polygamy, some present-day cultures still do, but our culture does not, and that is because of the purifying effect of Christianity. But my question was, “As long as you can have more than one wife why do you need to have some wives and some concubines”? Why can’t they all be wives? Here is another cultural hurdle, but this one is not as hard for me to get over. I grew up in England at a time when you would still have passenger train cars marked “First Class’ and “Second Class”. We still have “First Class” seating on airplanes today. Nowadays it just means you can get the best if you want to pay for it, but there was a time when the class distinction meant that people were regarded as “first class” or “second class”. We still do that when we speak of “middle classes” don’t we? The difference is there is no longer as much stigma associated with these terms. People intermarry quite freely. A concubine, however, was simply not good enough to be a wife because of her position in society. And, even though she was good enough to bear children for her master, and may even have been loved by him, children of the wife or wives often despised those children of “slave women”. For an insight into how messy things could get even in a culture that accepted this practice you should read about Abimilech, one of Gideon’s sons, in Judges 8:28- 9:20.

And be thankful that, in Christ, there are no class distinctions. ~ AB



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840

(570) 886-1838

Arthur Barry, Evangelist- (607) 280-1732

April 29, 2018

WELCOME!

Sunday

Bible Class- 9:30 a.m.

Worship- 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday

Ladies Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30pm

All the churches of Christ greet you.
ROMANS 16:16

Today’s Sermon: *Lift Him Up!*

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

valleycitieschurchofchrist.org

aicoc.org (Antioch Initiative)

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Scripture: John 12:26-32

ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- **Ladies Class: Tuesday, May 1st. We will be studying Day 3 of Chapter 4 in the lounge.** ☺
- **Housewarming Celebration- Thursday, May 31st- Sunday, June 3rd. Speakers so far are Don Myers from Montgomery, AL, Larry Krause from Kittanning, PA, and Steve Connors from Horseheads, NY., Orrin Nearhoof from Kentucky, Bill Garrett from Lewiston, PA, Frank Coletta from Clifton Park, NY and Alex Tullis from San Jose, CA. Also, Jeff Wyeth from Tunkhannock, PA.**

Next Potluck: May 20th



- **Arthur has been knocking on doors in this neighborhood to introduce us and hand them a leaflet asking them for ideas about how we can use our building for community events.**
- **Lani has accepted a new job in Texas, so she will be leaving us in early June. We will certainly miss her!**
- **Ruthie and Patty are still in FL to visit their brothers Stanley, who is suffering from lung cancer, and Jim (and his wife Deborah), and their sister Marcia. Patty's daughter, April, also lives in Orlando.**
- **Emily Barry had thyroid surgery here in Sayre on Tuesday. She did very well and is recovering nicely.**
- **Teresa Wyeth, the preacher's wife from Tunkhannock lost her mother last week after a long illness.**
- **5th Sunday Regional Singing @ Horseheads TODAY @ 4:30pm.**

PRAYERS...

- We pray that our **door-knocking/leafleting** campaign to introduce ourselves to the neighborhood produces fruit and Bible studies.
- Pray for safety for **Ruthie and Patty** on their trip to FL and a happy reunion with their family.
- **Pray that Connie has a successful interview for a full-time job.**
- Please pray for **Sam**, who is studying and working many long hours every day of the week.
- **Dara**, Darlene's sister, is searching for employment, as both of her current jobs have been cutting back hours.
- Pray for **Andrea Lentz**. Pray for her comfort as she is having trouble breathing. Also pray that she will reconsider Bible study.
- **Lori Kashorek** continues with experimental chemo treatments, and we pray it will keep her lung cancer in check.
- Pray for **Vicki Joice** as she continues Herceptin treatments until June. She has 2 left to do. Also, pray that she doesn't become discouraged dealing with lymphedema on a daily basis.
- Sandy and Arthur's neighbor, **Erin Beiber** has metastatic breast cancer. Pray for her comfort and that she will want to learn the truth about Christ soon.
- **Emily Barry** is thankful to God that her surgery went well and to everyone who prayed for her during the time of her thyroid condition. Pray that the biopsy will come back negative for cancer.
- **Patty and Ruthie's cousin Cathy's husband Bruce** has kidney cancer.
- Also, please pray for **their sister in law, Deborah**, who is suffering pain in her jaw and has just been in hospital for an infection.
- **Ruthie's** friend and former colleague, **Nancy Black**, has had her foot amputated because of complications of diabetes. She is living at Elderwood in Waverly. She is very grateful for prayers offered on her behalf.
- **Don Myers** back surgery was not successful. He is suffering pain from a swollen nerve and is trying a new medicine for that.
- **Dave and Lynne Laton's daughter Natalie** has been diagnosed with Diffuse Large B-cell Lymphoma. She had good news that the tumor shrank after her first round of chemo, which takes 3-4 days of infusions. She has finished her second chemo now.

If you have any prayers or news that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy Barry: barncat7237@gmail.com or text or call (607) 261-0911.