

Church Purity in a Polluted Culture - Part 10

1 Corinthians 7:17-24



"Live as You Are Called"

Paul's message to the married and unmarried, the Jew and the Gentile, the slave and the free man, is a message meant to show us that no matter what our station in life, it is the result of the sovereign call of God!

The Principle Stated (7:17-19)

"Nevertheless, each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts." (1 Cor 7:17-19 NIV)

- *Nevertheless* = "Hey, its time to refocus here, in light of what has just been said
- *assigned* = means to divide or distribute, not in the sense of divvying up a pile of things equally, but carefully measuring out something for individual appropriation.
- *the place* = what the Lord distributed to us carefully.
- *called* = the action done by God in the past that assigned our "place" in the present.

Note: God has specifically and carefully measured out your circumstance or place in life at the time He called you to be His own!

- *the rule I lay down in all the churches* = military term as a commanding general of God's army.

Note: In other words, "stay where you were commissioned, don't go AWOL!"

- *Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing* = Paul helps us understand that neither group is better than the other.
- *Keeping God's commands is what counts* = the scripture nowhere claims one race to be superior to the other. Therefore, knowing the commands of God and doing them will change this

perspective. (Truth Phrase)

The Principle Repeated (7:20-23)

"Each one should remain in the situation which he was in when God called him. Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so. For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men." (1 Cor 7:20-23 NIV)

- *Were you a slave when you were called?* = Slaves generally were permitted to work for pay and to save enough to buy their freedom. It would not be a stretch to equate this with our modern day employer/employee relationship.
- *For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave.* = Paul states the marvelous truth that Christ is the great equalizer.
 - Physically a slave, are Spiritually free. Christ has freed us from the consequence, control, and characteristics of sin.
 - Physically free are the bondservants of Jesus Christ.
- *You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men* = you belong to Jesus Christ and need to focus your attention on what pleases Him, not on human beings who seek to enslave us with unbiblical longings. (Truth Phrase)

The Principle Concluded (7:24)

"Brothers, each man, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation God called him to." (1 Cor 7:24 NIV)

- *Brothers, each man, as responsible to God*, as a reason for remaining in the situation God called him to. Each man or woman is individually responsible to God!

Here's the point: "God put you there, and so you answer to Him for not remaining!"

Summary

1. Do I understand that the sovereign God has placed me where I am, and He controls my destiny?
2. Am I willing to submit to His sovereign plan for me in the here and now regardless if it's where I want to be right now or not?

- 3. Will I look for every opportunity to serve Christ and spread His blessed gospel each day wherever He places me?

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5. Am I willing to submit to His sovereign plan for me in the here and now regardless if it's where I want to be right now or not?
6. Will I look for every opportunity to serve Christ and spread His blessed gospel each day wherever He places me?