

Summit Woods Baptist Church  
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class  
**FACILITATOR'S GUIDE**

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

Remember, the “answers” provided below are not intended to be complete. They are to give you a bit of guidance on key elements to highlight in the discussion time and to help clarify the intent of some questions in case it wasn't initially clear. Not every question has an “answer” provided. Consider the comments more as insight and guidance rather than right vs wrong answers.

Remember to ask follow up questions, such as “Explain that further,” or “Who else has an answer?” to prompt additional input from the class or “Where do you see that in the text?” to remind everyone to be getting their answers from the Scriptures.

**There are no starred ★ questions this week. Please manage the discussion time to cover it all.**

✿ Opening Prayer (3 min)

✿ Discussion (52 min)

Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 aloud.

• Homework Qs:

1. Grammatically, what is the function of “only” (“nevertheless” in some translations) at the beginning of this paragraph?

*(it connects this paragraph to what came before; it returns the discourse back to the earlier point he was making before taking a diversion – ties back to Paul's preference for people to remain single after he gave some instructions to those who are married)*

2. What is the primary instruction of the passage?

*(remain in the condition in which you were called)*

- a. Where in the passage do you see this instruction repeated?

*(verses 17, 20, and 24)*

3. Is this instruction *only* a response to the Corinthians' letter to Paul? What in the passage informs your answer?

*(no – verse 17 says “this is my rule in all the churches”)*

4. To demonstrate that he is presenting a bigger-picture concept than just relating to one's marital status, what two examples does Paul use for illustration?

*(circumcision and indentured servitude)*

5. List some possible things that might motivate a believer who was uncircumcised at the time of salvation to “seek circumcision.”

*(influence of Judaizers; misunderstanding of the Old Testament – trying to be more spiritual in keeping all of God's Law; etc.)*

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6. List some possible things that might motivate a believer who was circumcised prior to salvation to want to “remove the marks of circumcision.”

*(to escape Roman persecution of the Jews (see Acts 18:1-2); to be rid of what they were trusting in before trusting in Christ (like pagans burning their idols); seeking to gain social status in Corinthian society (in the gymnasium, men wore no clothes...); etc.)*

7. What might a Jew say to Paul about circumcision and “keeping the commandments of God”? (See Genesis 17:10-14)

*(“but I thought circumcision was keeping God’s commandments”)*

8. How might Paul respond? (See Jeremiah 4:4; Romans 2:25-29; Galatians 5:1-6; Hebrews 7:12, 18-19)

*(Heb 7 – new priest, new covenant, new law; circumcision of the heart is the real issue)*

9. How does Paul tell the believer who is a bondservant to view his servitude?

*(“do not be concerned about it”)*

10. Does being a bondservant prevent one from being a faithful Christian? Why or why not?

*(no – the Lord sees the heart; the Lord uses weak things to shame the strong (1:27))*

11. What impact should Paul’s mention of the Lord assigning and calling have on a person’s perspective on his/her life circumstances?

*(God is sovereign; God has a good reason for everything in our lives; remember that life circumstance/social standing was not why God saved him)*

12. What does Paul say in this passage that indicates that the admonition to remain as you were at your calling is not to be applied legalistically?

*(“but if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity”)*

13. How does Paul say the one who is a bondservant to men should view himself in relation to Christ?

*(as “a freedman of the Lord”)*

14. How does he say the one who is free should view himself in relation to Christ?

*(as “a bondservant of Christ”)*

15. In what ways does union with Christ make all believers freedmen of the Lord?

*(we are free to obey since we no longer enslaved to sin, we are redeemed, our debt is paid, we are adopted as children, etc)*

16. In what ways does union with Christ make all believers bondservants of Christ?

*(we are not our own but were bought with a price, we belong to the Lord, we are slaves to righteousness, we are members of each other in Christ, etc)*

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17. What common heart issues can you see Paul addressing in all four of the people in his examples (circumcised, uncircumcised, bondservant, free)?

*(contentment, trusting the Lord, dependence on self, not having a worldly perspective, status-seeking, etc)*

18. Where else in this letter has Paul used the phrase “you were bought with a price”?

*(in 6:20)*

a. What did he say they were to do as a result (in 6:20)?

*(“glorify God in your body”)*

b. How does that relate to this passage?

*(you should be living to glorify God no matter what your circumstances are)*

19. What circumstance in your own life (that is not an active sin) do you think hinders your ability to serve Christ faithfully?

a. What impact does this passage have on your perspective?

20. Paul puts this instruction in the middle of his teaching about marriage and singleness. How do you think he expects them to apply it to marriage and singleness?

*(they are able to glorify God and reach full spiritual maturity whether married or single and should be content with the life God has given them)*

21. Summarize the passage in one or two sentences.

*(Bloom where you're planted!! ☺)*

✿ Closing Prayer (5 min)