

1 Corinthians Part One

Lesson #25, Chapter 7:17-40

Read all of chapter 7 before beginning this lesson. May the Lord bless you with insight and understanding as you study.

1. In a sentence or two summarize chapter 7:1-16.
2. How does Paul instruct the Corinthians in chapter 7 verse 17?
3. How does that command coincide with the previous information from verses 8-16?
4. Paul widens his instruction by giving some examples of those who should remain as they were called. What situations does he cite in verses 17-24?
5. Why would Paul keep reiterating his instruction to remain in the condition in which they were called? See verses 17, 20, and 24.
6. Verses 18-19 discuss circumcision as one of the “conditions” the Corinthians found themselves in. Why would the Corinthian men consider circumcision desirable even after coming to Christ? You can gain insight into their thinking by rereading Paul's exhortations to them in 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 2:5; 3:1-9.

7. What consolation does God provide concerning circumcision in verse 19?

8. What consolation does God give to those who are slaves according to verses 21-22? What does he have to say about those who called as free men in verse 22? What does he have to say to both groups in verse 23?

9. Though the Lord didn't specifically address the issues to follow in verses 25-40, Paul wisely counsels the Corinthians. How should they receive Paul's counsel in this matter? See Luke 10:16; 1 Cor. 7:17; 2 Cor. 13:10; 1 Thess. 4:2, 8; Titus 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:2.

10. What is Paul's counsel for men who desire to marry and for fathers who have daughters of marriageable age? See verses 26-28.

11. What reasons does Paul give for maintaining that position? See verse 26, 28.

12. What distresses and troubles does Paul anticipate for the believers? See Matt. 24:8-14; Luke 21:23-28; Jn. 16:2; 2 Tim. 3:10-12; 1 Pet. 4:12.

13. How should we all live in light of increasing persecution for believers and the Lord's anticipated and soon return according to verses 29-31?

14. What are some concrete ways you could put verses 29-31 into practice in your life?

15. Paul explains why he counseled believers to remain in the condition in which they were called. What are the reasons behind the practical advice according to verses 32-34?

16. Explain how Paul's statements about the unmarried and married are true in light of the increasing persecution of believers and Paul's firm belief that the Lord would soon return.

17. Paul summarizes his statements from verses 17-34 with one succinct declaration in verse 35. What were the goals of his communications to the Corinthians (verse 35)?

18. Before we leave this section let's take a closer look at the single life. What are some benefits an unmarried person can more easily enjoy than a married person according to verses 32-35? How can married believers help and encourage single believers to live out their calling as described in these verses?

19. If you are unmarried what are some ways you have applied verses 32-35 in your life and heart?

- a. For those who are married now, how can you live with a single person's undistracted devotion toward the Lord?

 - b. What are some hindrances in seeking and serving the Lord a married person faces that a single person does not?
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20. Verses 36-38 contain wise counsel for fathers who have marriageable daughters if you are studying from the NASB. If you are using the ESV, NKJV, or NIV then verses 36-38 contain wise counsel for men who desire to get married. What is Paul's attitude toward and advise for those fathers willing to let their daughters marry and also for those who feel it is best not to let their daughters marry? *Or* if you are reading from the ESV, NKJV, or NIV, what is Paul's attitude toward and advise for those men who desire to marry and also for those who don't?
 - a. What is Paul's reasoning for this counsel? See verses 26 and 29-31.

 21. If a woman is married what important truths does she need to understand about the freedoms and limits of being married according to verse 39?

 22. Though a woman would be free to remarry a believer if her husband died, Paul believed that she would be happiest remaining single. Why is that? See verse 35 and Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:20-21; 3:7-11.

23. Paul's counsel is as relevant today as it was for the Corinthian believers. Persecution of believers is on the rise and Christ's return is even more imminent than it was during Paul's time. What *decision-making principles* can we apply today from the Word of God regarding things similar to the issues of getting circumcised, remaining a slave or getting married or remaining single?
24. What is the focus Paul desires believers to have—no matter what their circumstances or the time in which they live?
25. Would you say you are more distracted or single-minded in your focus on the Lord at this stage in your life? What steps do you find are necessary to move from distracted service to single-minded devotion to the Lord?

Since first Thy word awaked my heart,
like new life dawning o'er me,
where e'er I turned mine eyes, Thou art,
all light and love before me.
Naught else I feel or hear or see—
all bonds of earth I sever—
Thee O God, and only Thee,
I live for, now and ever!
~ Sir Thomas Moore