

# 1 Corinthians 7:17 – 31

New American Standard Version

1 Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has  
2 called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct  
3 in all the churches. Was any man called *when he was*  
4 *already* circumcised? He is not to become  
5 uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in  
6 uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised.  
7 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing,  
8 but *what matters is* the keeping of the commandments  
9 of God. Each man must remain in that condition in  
10 which he was called.

11 Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it;  
12 but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.  
13 For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the  
14 Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free,  
15 is Christ's slave. You were bought with a price; do not  
16 become slaves of men. Brethren, each one is to remain  
17 with God in that *condition* in which he was called.

18 Now concerning virgins I have no command of the  
19 Lord, but I give an opinion as one who by the mercy of  
20 the Lord is trustworthy. I think then that this is good in  
21 view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to  
22 remain as he is. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek  
23 to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not  
24 seek a wife. But if you marry, you have not sinned; and  
25 if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will  
26 have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.  
27 But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so  
28 that from now on those who have wives should be as  
29 though they had none; and those who weep, as though  
30 they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though  
31 they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they  
32 did not possess; and those who use the world, as though  
33 they did not make full use of it; for the form of this  
34 world is passing away.

*Use the suggestions on the back page as a starting point for your own **Observation, Interpretation, and Application.***

**Observation (What does it say?):**

*Underline each "condition" the Corinthians were to "remain" in.*

*Circle any commands Paul gives.*

*What other topics does Paul mention in this passage? (Put a square around them.)*

**Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

*How do these different topics relate (or do they?)*

- *How would you apply the "condition" of slavery to our situations today?*
- *What questions do you think the Corinthians were asking that prompted Paul's responses in these verses (7:1)?*
- *How does "for the form of this world is passing away" (line 33) impact the teachings of this passage?*

**Application (What does it mean for me?):**

*How does Paul's statement that this is his opinion (line 19) affect your view of inspiration?*

*How do differences in culture today vs. the first century affect our application of a passage like this?*

## Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

### Observation (What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose ("in order that...")?
- Are there conclusions ("Therefore...")?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good "headline" for the passage?

### Interpretation (What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

### Application (What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures,  
but draw everything from them,  
and suffer nothing to remain hidden  
that is really in them.  
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)**