


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

Live as you are called

¹⁷ 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.

Q1. Paul wrote, “each [Believer] should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him or her and to which God has called him or her.” How do we know our “place in life” to which we have been “assigned”?

.....
.....
.....

Philippians 2:13-16 [The Message (MSG)]

¹²⁻¹³ What I’m getting at, friends, is that you should simply keep on doing what you’ve done from the beginning. When I was living among you, you lived in responsive obedience. Now that I’m separated from you, keep it up. Better yet, redouble your efforts. Be energetic in your life of salvation, reverent and sensitive before God. That energy is God’s energy, an energy deep within you, God himself willing and working at what will give him the most pleasure.

¹⁴⁻¹⁶ Do everything readily and cheerfully — no bickering, no second-guessing allowed! Go out into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this squalid and polluted society. Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God. Carry the light-giving Message into the night so I’ll have good cause to be proud of you on the day that Christ returns. You’ll be living proof that I didn’t go to all this work for nothing.

Q2. Does this mean that we should never strive to get ahead in this world?

.....
.....

¹⁸ 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.

Q3. Was circumcision a sign of the Old Covenant?


.....

Q4. What was the Old Covenant?

.....
.....

Q5. What is the New Covenant?

Q6. Was Paul writing that the Old Covenant is no longer applicable to Believers in Christ Jesus?

 In the Pentateuch (the 1st five books in the Old Testament) there are many references to God's "Covenant" (or promise). With each new reference to "Covenant", God progressively elaborates on past covenants by either making it clearer or more expansive. In the English Standard Version, there are 41 references to "Covenant" within the pages of Genesis and Exodus.

Genesis 17:3-8 [The Message]

Overwhelmed, Abram fell flat on his face. Then God said to him, "This is my covenant with you: You'll be the father of many nations. Your name will no longer be Abram, but Abraham, meaning that 'I'm making you the father of many nations.' I'll make you a father of fathers — I'll make nations from you, kings will issue from you. I'm establishing my covenant between me and you, a covenant that includes your descendants, a covenant that goes on and on and on, a covenant that commits me to be your God and the God of your descendants. And I'm giving you and your descendants this land where you're now just camping, this whole country of Canaan, to own forever. And I'll be their God."

Genesis 17:9-14 [NIV-1984]

⁹ Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. ¹⁰ This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹² For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. ¹³ Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

Exodus 6:2-8 [NIV-1984]


² God also said to Moses, "I am the Lord. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. ⁴ I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they lived as aliens. ⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant."

⁶ "Therefore, say to the Israelites: 'I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. ⁷ I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. ⁸ And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord.' "

Hebrews 8:6-13 [The Message]

But Jesus' priestly work far surpasses what these other priests do, since he's working from a far better plan. If the first plan — the old covenant — had worked out, a second wouldn't have been needed. But we know the first was found wanting, because God said, Heads up! The days are coming when I'll set up a new plan for dealing with Israel and Judah. I'll throw out the old plan I set up with their ancestors when I led them by the hand out of Egypt. They didn't keep their part of the bargain, so I looked away and let it go. This new plan I'm making with Israel isn't going to be written on paper, isn't going to be chiseled in stone; This time I'm writing out the plan in them, carving it on the lining of their hearts. I'll be their God, they'll be my people. They won't go to school to learn about me, or buy a book called God in Five Easy Lessons. They'll all get to know me firsthand, the little and the big, the small and the great. They'll get to know me by being kindly forgiven, with the slate of their sins forever wiped clean. By coming up with a new plan, a new covenant between God and his people, God put the old plan on the shelf. And there it stays, gathering dust.

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts.

Q7. Is Paul saying that the Old Testament no longer applies to Believers? How about non-believers?

.....
.....
.....

²⁰ Each one should remain in the situation which he was in when God called him. [see also verse 24]

Q8. What does the phrase “when God called him [or her]” mean to you?

.....
.....

Q9. Then, what does the “situation... when God called him” mean?

.....
.....

²¹ Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you — although if you can gain your freedom, do so.

Q10. Does this mean that we should try to get ahead in this world?

.....
.....

²² 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.

Q11. What is a “slave”?

.....
.....

Q12. What is a “freedman”?

.....
.....


Q13. How can someone become “Christ's slave”?

Q14. We, who believe in the saving grace of Christ Jesus, have also been freed from what? (3-letter word)

Q15. Before we came to believe in Christ Jesus, were we slaves to this three-letter word?

Q16. I believe in Christ Jesus, but I still sin. How am I freed from sin?

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

²³ You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

Q17. Americans are a free people, so are we, too, a slave – “bought at a price”?

.....
.....

Q18. If we are to consider ourselves slaves, what was the price paid for each one of us?

.....
.....

Q19. How might we become “slaves of men”?

.....
.....
.....

²⁴ Brothers, each man, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation God called him to. [See verse 20]

Q20. What does “trust” mean to you? (Personal question: do you trust God?)

.....
.....

Q21. How are we “responsible to God”?

.....
.....


Q22. How do we put verse-24 into action?

.....
.....

Q23. In the question following verse 21, we speculated what verse-21 meant about getting ahead in this world. As we read the last words of verse 24, how do we know what God is calling us to do?

.....
.....
.....

Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

The Unmarried and the Widowed

²⁵ Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.

Q24. Is Paul beginning a statement that is personal opinion or a command from God through the Holy Spirit?

.....
.....

Q25. If this is Paul’s personal opinion, why should we pay attention to this section?

.....
.....

²⁶ Because of the present crisis, I think that it is good for you to remain as you are.

1 Corinthians 7:26-28 [The Message]


²⁶⁻²⁸ Because of the current pressures on us from all sides, I think it would probably be best to stay just as you are. Are you married? Stay married. Are you unmarried? Don’t get married. But there’s certainly no sin in getting married, whether you’re a virgin or not. All I am saying is that when you marry, you take on additional stress in an already stressful time, and I want to spare you if possible.

Q26. We can only speculate: what do you think was the “present crisis”? This letter (epistle) to the Corinthians was written in the mid-50s AD (about 53-55 AD), while Paul was ministering in Ephesus.


.....
.....

Q27. Is it possible that God revealed to Paul the future Roman annihilation of the Jewish people in 70-AD?

.....
.....

 [In 70-AD, the Romans annihilated the Jewish unrest in Jerusalem; the gleaming Temple was literally destroyed and Jews were hunted and executed.] “Josephus describes the utter devastation as the altar [of the Jewish Temple] was surrounded by ‘corpuses, blood flowing down the steps of the sanctuary.’ He says, ‘The temple was in flames, the victors stole everything they could get their hands on. They slaughtered all who were caught, no pity shown for age or rank, old or young, children, men, women, the laity, the priests, they’re all massacred.’ And he also notes that the Temple was doomed August 30, 70-AD, ‘the very day on which the former temple had been destroyed by the king of Babylon.’ ” [Source: Hank Hanegraaff - the Bible Answer Man - <https://www.equip.org/hank-speaks-out/dating-the-book-of-revelation/>]

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

²⁷ Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife.

Q28. Why was Paul telling the Corinthians to maintain the status quo?

²⁸ But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

Q29. In our society today, there are untold zillions of emails or social media memes that make fun of marriage. Was Paul's comment in verse-28 "But those who marry will face many troubles in this life" simply the first? What do you think he was teaching?

²⁹ What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; ³⁰ those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; ³¹ those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

Q30. If we are to be slaves to Christ, what happens to us - to our attitudes - when we marry, or when we mourn, or when we purchase a wonderful new thing?

Q31. Is Paul teaching us Believers to not marry?

³²I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs — how he can please the Lord. ³³But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world — how he can please his wife — ³⁴and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world — how she can please her husband. ³⁵I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.

Q32. Is this true that a husband's loyalty is divided between his wife and God? Or a wife's loyalty is divided between her husband and God?


Q33. Is it possible to balance loyalty?

Q34. Why should we marry?

Matthew 18:19-20

¹⁹ "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." [‘A couple, who prays together, stays together.’ Arguably, the simplest church.]

Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

³⁶ If anyone thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to, and if she is getting along in years and he feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married.

Q35. What does “acting improperly” mean to you?

Q36. This verse seems to contradict Paul's early pronouncement, “Do not look for a wife” (verse 27). Is Paul contradicting himself?

³⁷ But the man who has settled the matter in his own mind, who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will, and who has made up his mind not to marry the virgin — this man also does the right thing. ³⁸ So then, he who marries the virgin does right, but he who does not marry her does even better.

Q37. Is it easy in this world to remain unmarried and devoted to God?

³⁹ A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

Q38. Paul said that a divorced person should not remarry. Is that accurate?

Q39. If a widow remarries, what trait must her new husband possess?

Q40. Does this verse apply equally to widowers?

2 Corinthians 6:14-15 [Paul explicitly wrote in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians the following:]

¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial [Satan]? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?

⁴⁰ In my judgment, she is happier if she stays as she is — and I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

Q41. Why would Paul state that the widow would be “happier if she stays as she is”?

Q42. What or who is the “Spirit of God”?

Q43. Do you think Paul had the “Spirit of God” or was it only his thought?

Copyrights:

Questions: © For All Eternity on behalf of Christ Jesus.

Scripture: The Message (MSG): © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson, The Message (MSG)

Scripture: from the Holy Bible, New International Version [NIV] ©, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Zondervan Publishing House.