

SESSION 1

you are here

“Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.”

1 Corinthians 7:17



Everyday life can sometimes feel a bit random.

Have you ever asked this question: “God, why do you have me here?” Many of us feel like our current situation is somewhat unimportant compared to other people’s. And so, it’s easy to think that for God to use us in a big way, it’s somewhere out there—in a faraway land or a more prominent position.

However, God wants us to understand that our greatest ministry is not somewhere out there but is right in front of our noses—where we already are. Your neighborhood, school, workplace, and social circle aren’t an accident. They are assignments. We are surrounded by people who need to know Jesus, and we have been given the message of reconciliation to share with them.

What does it look like for us to be faithful and fulfill our assignments? In today’s session, we’ll discuss how we are called to live as Christ-followers wherever we are. God loves the people in our lives, and He has a purpose for our presence where He has placed us.

Leader Notes

- + If your group is new, welcome newcomers. Introduce everyone—you may even want to have name tags for this first meeting.
- + Open your group with a brief prayer asking God for insight as you study. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.
- + Before you start this first meeting, get contact information for every participant. Take time to pass around a copy of the Small Group Roster on page 93 or a blank sheet of paper. Ask someone to make copies or type up a list with everyone's information and email it to the group during the week.
- + Whether your group is new or ongoing, it's always important to review your values. On page 86 is a Small Group Agreement with important values for sustaining healthy, balanced groups. Choose one or two of these values—ones you haven't previously focused on or have room to grow in—to emphasize during this study.
- + The Small Group Calendar on page 90 is a tool for planning who will host and lead each meeting. Consider rotating hosts and leaders and take a few minutes to plan future meetings.



share your story

Begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

What brought you here? What do you hope to get out of this group?

Share a time you had to change your perspective about a situation and look at it as an assignment from God. How did this experience change you?



watch the video

NOTES FROM THE SESSION



hear God's story

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 7:17-24 (NIV)

Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. 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. Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so. For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord's freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings. Brothers and sisters, each person, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

What does it mean to live as a believer?

What are the commands that every believer is called to keep?

What does Paul mean when he said "you should not become uncircumcised"?





study notes

The passage we studied from 1 Corinthians talks about circumcision, which can seem very strange unless you understand how this practice relates to the religious history of the time. For Jewish people of the day, circumcision was the sign of the covenant between God and Abraham. All of Abraham's male descendants, the Jews, were circumcised to demonstrate they were in a covenant with God.



When Jesus died on the cross, we received a new covenant, and therefore, men no longer need to get circumcised. The problem was that some of the Jewish believers thought even Gentile believers should get circumcised. However, Paul explained this is not the case. The Jewish believers were so concerned about the Gentile believers being circumcised, but this is not what matters. It is about our heart. "For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh."

Philippians 3:3

create a new story

In this section, talk about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned from the teaching and Bible study. Then, think about practical steps you can take in the coming week to live out what you've learned.

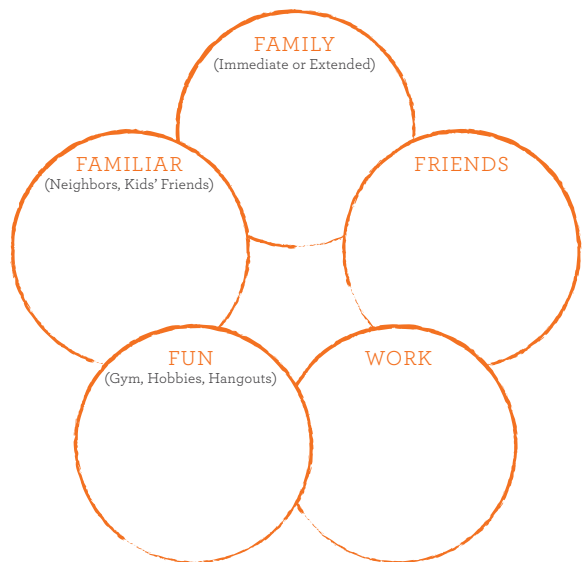
What situation has God assigned to you right now? What does it look like to be faithful there?

What does it mean that you were bought at a price? What does this tell you about your value to God?

"Keeping God's commands is what counts." How do you keep God's commands on a daily basis?



God has not only placed you somewhere, he's placed you in relationships with others. Take a look at the Circles of Life diagram below and write the names of two or three people you know who need to know Christ. Commit to praying for God's guidance and an opportunity to share with each of them. Would they be open to joining the group? Share your lists with the group so you can all be praying for the people you've identified.



This week, how will you interact with the Bible? Can you commit to spending time in the Daily Devotions? Tell the group how you plan to follow Jesus this week, and then, at your next meeting, talk about your progress and challenges.

Give each person an opportunity to share prayer requests. If you'd like, you can write these on the Prayer and Praise Report on page 92.

Close your meeting with prayer.



for additional study

Take some time between now and our next meeting to dig into God's Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own. Jot down your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. You may even want to use a Bible website or app to look up commentary on these passages. If you like, share what you learn with the group the next time you meet.

READ ROMANS 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

How does this passage relate to 1 Corinthians 7? What is similar? What is different?

What does it mean to be a "living sacrifice"?

What happens when we are transformed by the renewing of our mind?



READ 1 CORINTHIANS 10:23-33

“I have the right to do anything,” you say but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but not everything is constructive. No one should seek their own good, but the good of others. Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, for, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience. I am referring to the other person’s conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another’s conscience? If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for? So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

What does it mean to not seek your own good but the good of others?

In this passage, Paul explained how Christians caused others to stumble by eating or refusing to eat certain foods. How do we cause people to stumble today?

How does this passage relate to the topic “love where you live”?



daily devotions



Day 1

READ MATTHEW 22:37-39

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

REFLECT

We show our love to God by loving our neighbor. Who is the neighbor in your life that you need to love?



Day 2

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 10:32

Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God.

REFLECT

Maybe you never consciously caused anyone to stumble, but how often do you go out of your way and encourage the people around you? How can you point the people around you to God?



Day 3

READ COLOSSIANS 3:23

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.

REFLECT

Today, try to go about your daily life while keeping in mind that everything you do is for the Lord. At the end of the day, journal about your experience.



Day 4

READ EPHESIANS 4:2-3

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

REFLECT

Sometimes, it is easier to love the non-Christians in our life than our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. This verse makes it very clear that we need to be united with love and peace. Is there anyone in your life with whom you need to practice some extra patience?



Day 5

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:20-23

To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I may share in its blessings.

REFLECT

Paul isn't saying we don't have our own personalities. Instead, he's saying that we can find points of commonality with others, and we can put others before ourselves so we can share Christ with them. What are some ways you can do this in your own relationships?



Day 6

Use the following space to reflect on what you learned this week and what God is saying to you.
