

1 CORINTHIANS
CALLED OUT
SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM



Sermon: **Let's Crash the Pity Party (1 Corinthians 7:17-24)**

Date: **September 18, 2016**

The Corinthian church was a church of individuals that struggled with contentment. They had a tendency to wallow in self-pity as they dwelled on their past hurts and the difficult circumstances in their lives. Paul addresses this issue head on in this week's text. Discontentment comes in all different shapes and sizes. Some discontentment stems from hurt and guilt over past sins. Other forms of discontentment stem from things like our appearance, abilities, and financial situation. Some people wrestle with jealousy toward others and this leads them to be discontent. In this week's text Paul gives us a strategy to deal with discontentment. We must trust that everything we have has been sovereignly given to us by God. Instead of wallowing over past regrets, we need to focus on obeying God in the present. Most of all, we must recognize that our identity in Christ is infinitely greater than whatever current circumstance we might find ourselves in. Christ is always enough.

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

Individual Bible Study

1. Please read 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 and ensure that you've listened to Sunday's sermon.
 - a. In verse 17, Paul addresses the church as individuals ("each person", "him"). Why is this significant?
 - b. In verse 17, what does the word "assigned" teach us about the current circumstances in our lives?
 - c. At the end of verse 17, Paul writes, "This is my rule in *all* the churches." What does this teach us about the extent of Paul's command to "lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him"?
 - d. Everything we have is from God. Why should believing this help us to avoid dwelling on past regrets, wallowing in self-pity, or groaning about our current circumstances?
 - e. Paul uses the example of circumcision in verses 18-19. Why would being circumcised be undesirable to a Jew? Why would not being circumcised be undesirable to a Roman?
 - f. What are some things that people tend to focus on that bring them to a point of discontentment? What should we be focusing on instead of those things?

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- g. Why does Paul bring up the example of slavery (verse 21)? How bad was slavery in the first century?
 - h. What are some examples of situations in life that we cannot change? How should we think about difficult circumstances that are beyond our control?
 - i. What are some things that we can fret over if we don't have them? What should we be thinking about instead?
 - j. Why is remembering our identity in Christ an important component of Christian contentment?
 - k. What are some things we can do to avoid squandering the gifts that God has given us?
2. Read Philippians 4:10-13. Is it possible to be content in any and every circumstance? What is the secret of contentment that Paul has discovered in both the highs and lows of life (v. 13)?

Group Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. What are some examples of things that you focus on that can lead you to be discontent? What are things that you should be spending energy on that you don't when you're too focused on self?
3. Why is it important that we remember that everything we have in life has been sovereignly given to us by God? How does this belief help us to be content?
4. What are some examples of difficult situations that you either have been in or are in right now that you have no control over? What can we do to strive for contentment in these difficult situations?
5. How can we use our identity in Christ to fight against discontentment?