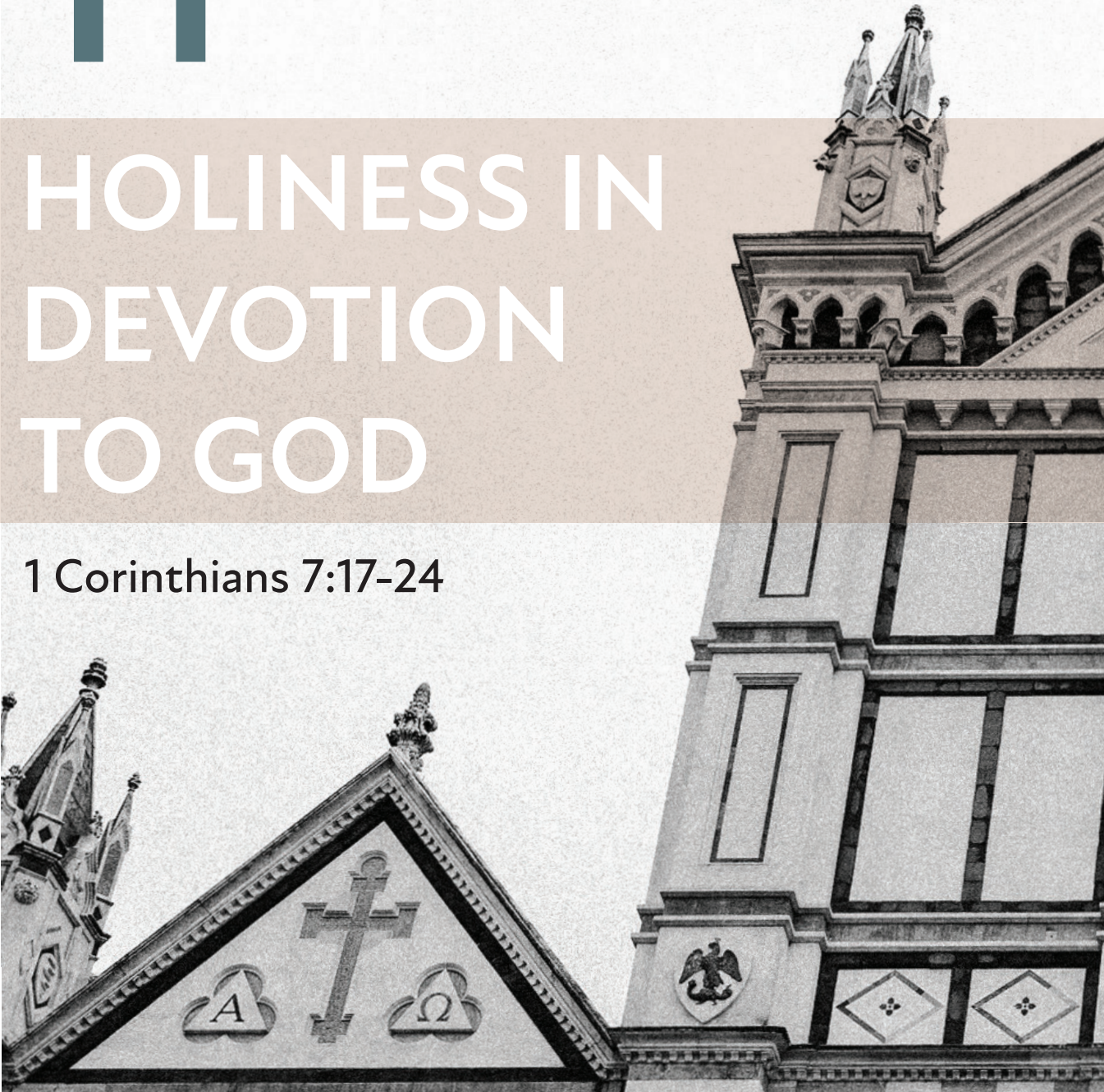


11

HOLINESS IN DEVOTION TO GOD

1 Corinthians 7:17-24





Daily Readings

01 1 Corinthians 7:17-24

02 Acts 15:1-11

03 Romans 3:21-26

04 Colossians 3:1-17

05 Galatians 3:23-29

06 Mark 12:28-34

07 Galatians 5:1-6



WEEK 11

Holiness in Devotion to God

This passage is a reflection of the larger principle Paul teaches on marriage—being content where God has you. Paul acknowledges the principle of contentment holds true for many other circumstances: cultural, socio-economic, national origin, etc. It is a mistake to think one must “advance” socially to please God. This does not mean moving, changing, or advancing is wrong. If you can get to a better situation, by all means, do so! However, Paul warns against thinking these circumstances are the essence of spirituality. Remaining faithful in our current circumstances is essential.

CONCERNING CHANGE OF STATUS

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.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.¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts.²⁰ Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

²¹ Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so.²² 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.²³ You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings.²⁴ Brothers and sisters, each person, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.



WARM UP

What are some responsibilities or disciplines that you resented as a child but appreciate now? (Practicing a musical instrument, putting things back where they belonged, making your bed and cleaning your room, others?)

Do you remember an instance in life where you learned the importance of acting honorably toward others?

EXPLORING 1 CORINTHIANS 7:17-24

Paul challenges the Corinthians to be faithful in their walk with God regardless of social status. What does it mean for you to live as a follower of Christ, remaining faithful to God in your current situation?

Read verses 22-24. Paul encourages slaves, as well as free, to glorify God in their present circumstances. (Note: Paul is not endorsing the practice of slavery. See 1 Timothy 1:8-11.) If one's present circumstance is difficult, how is it possible to glorify God? Can you list examples of people who have done so?

In the book of Philemon, we find the story of Onesimus. He was once a slave, but his newfound relationship with Christ gave him a new position as a "fellow man and brother in the Lord." What does this tell us about God's view of us when we are in Christ?

What does Paul mean when he tells the Corinthians that they were "bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings (verse 23)"? Who purchased us? In our context, what are some ways we become enslaved to others?

APPLICATION

List the benefits and blessings of being "in Christ."

PRAYER

Ask your group for prayers in areas where you feel you are in bondage to anything that keeps you from serving Christ with your whole heart.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ where I lie, Christ where I sit,
Christ where I arise,
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.
Salvation is of the Lord.
Salvation is of the Christ.
May your salvation, Lord, be ever with us.

THE PRAYER OF ST. PATRICK, CHRIST BE WITH ME



