

- **Choose one** of those ways that the expectation of Jesus' return would shape how you live and **pray** that God would help you to live it out this week. Also, **share** this commitment with someone you trust so that they can ask how you are going and pray for you – your FOCUS leader, mentor, church pastor, or close Christian friend.

[Talk Notes](#)



*Singleness and Marriage in Light of
Jesus' Return*

1 Corinthians 7:17-40

The Story so far...

1 Corinthians 7:17-40 needs to be read in light of the previous chapters. From chapters 1-7, Paul pointed out the many problems in the Corinthian church while also giving them warnings and instructions. An example of this is Paul's advice on marriage in the beginning of this chapter which links to the sexual immorality happening in the church (1 Cor 5; 6:12-20). Here Paul shows how Christians can be sexually pure in both singleness and marriage.

Icebreaker

In your home-country, what are some common views of singleness?

What kinds of advice about marriage have you heard from your friends or family?

Pray

Ask God to help us understand, accept and obey His word even when it is challenging or hard.

Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-40:

Are there any difficult words here?

What is the rule Paul sets for Christians in his churches (v.17, 20)?

What did circumcision or uncircumcision mean for Jewish Christians (v.18-19; see Genesis 17:9-14)?

Why do you think Paul says that circumcision and uncircumcision is nothing now?

- Then, is it okay for someone who follows Jesus to not follow God's commands now that they are God's children? Why or why not?

What does it mean to be 'Christ's slave' (v.22-24)?
How do you feel about being Christ's slave?

What does it mean when Paul says time is short or the world is passing (v.29, 31)? What comes after (see Matthew 24:42-51)?

Count all the times Paul says 'remains' and '...as if they do/were/did not' throughout v.17-40.

- What do these repeated phrases tell you about Paul's main concern (v.29-31)?

What is the difference between the concerns of a married and an unmarried person (v.32-35)?

Considering the previous 3 questions, should people get married (also v.36-40)? Why or why not?

- How does Paul want us to think about marriage and singleness?

Paul's main concern is that the Corinthians should live with an expectation of Jesus' return (v.29-31). This concern shapes Paul's advice about marriage because the Corinthians struggled with sexual immorality (v.2). But Paul's main concern should also shape how we live today.

- Discuss in pairs how Paul's concern would shape the way you live as a student, about dating and marriage?

Circumcision: to remove the foreskin of the penis (for males).
Crisis: time when a difficult or important decision must be made; time of intense difficulty or danger.
Mourn: feeling of regret or sadness about the loss of something or someone.
Affairs: one's concern or matters of interest.
Engrossed: Absorb all the attention or interest of someone.
Compulsion: strong feeling to do something; a responsibility to do something.