

Should Christians Care About Social Status?

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

January 16, 2022

I. Social Status from Ethnicity (V. 17-20)

A. Social status was created by man, ethnicity was created by God. If a person's ethnicity lowers their social status, it is society that is wrong and God who is right.

B. The Christian's ultimate identity is in Christ. If any other identity compromises our obedience to Christ, it is that identity that is wrong and God who is right.

II. Social Status from Profession (V. 21-24)

A. Social status was created by man, work was created by God. If a person's work lowers their social status, it is society that is wrong and God who is right.

- B. Slavery in Biblical Times (SBT) vs American Chattel Slavery (ACH)
1. SBT was a choice, ACH depended on the abduction of people from foreign lands.
 2. SBT was meant to get out of debt, ACH was to express inferiority.
 3. SBT was equally experienced by all ethnic groups, ACH was directed against one racial minority.
 4. SBT did not cover a person's whole identity (slaves bought and sold property and had outside jobs), ACH made the slave sub-human and could own nothing.
 5. Also: Jewish slavery under Old Testament law demanded that slaves be paid (Deut. 15:18), could only serve for six years (Deut. 15:12), were entitled to restitution upon finishing their terms of service (Deut. 15:18), and stealing slaves was punishable by death (Ex. 21:16).

C. Being a bondservant of man is slavery. Being a bondservant of Christ is freedom.

Group Discussion Questions

1. Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-24.
2. If a new Christian believed they had to abandon their nationality or ethnicity because of their salvation, what would that say about their faith?
3. Why is obedience to God more important than our ethnicity or cultural background, as verse 19 says?
4. Why doesn't the Bible condemn slavery outright? What was the difference between slavery in Biblical times and American chattel slavery of African American peoples?
5. What jobs today are associated with a low social status?
6. How is every Christian free regardless of their social status, profession, or ethnicity, as verse 22 says? How is every Christian a bondservant regardless of privilege, advantage, or riches, as verse 22 also says?
7. Pray for our church, that our members would be filled with wisdom and insight to navigate through gray areas of life with grace, gospel fluency, and biblical confidence. Consider coming to tonight's online church prayer meeting at 7 pm (register from the church website on the homepage).

Church Bible Reading Plan

Bible Reading Plan: Job 10-12

January Memory Verses: Job 9:2-4



Psalm 71:17-18 (ESV)

17 O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

*18 So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your
might to another generation, your power to all those to come.*

BEFORE Sunday Night Prayer Meeting:

If you have not done so already, register from the www.apollobaptist.org home page by clicking the image for the Prayer Meeting. Register with your name and email address. The new registration will last through 4/17/2022. Click on the emailed Zoom link at the time of the Prayer Meeting.

Sunday Night Prayer Meeting:

- PRAYING for our Disciple Now event on February 11-13 for our youth group, that it would ultimately lead to students being saved and baptized.

Pray for Our Church Family Needs:

- PRAY for missions and missionaries:
Andy & Lindsay M. in Spain, Steve & Joy V. in Turkey, David & Comfort J. in Nigeria, Luke P. in Maricopa, Arizona, Nathan & Becky F. in Indonesia, Sylvia M. at ASU West, Arizona, John T. in California, Doug & Cheryl D. in Thailand, and Jules S. in Thailand
- PRAY for all our students: elementary, middle school, high school, and college. No matter whether they are in the classroom, an on-line setting, or a home school setting our students are forming minds that need to focus on Christ.
- Family & friends of church members who need salvation or to renew their relationship with Jesus
- Families who are grieving the recent loss of loved ones:
Jeanette C., Ruthie C., Floyd & Karen C. (daughter, niece, Mary E.), Cordero C. (grandfather), Marge D. (brother), Ida S. (two sisters-in-law), Frances P. (brother-in-law), Dorothy C. (sister-in-law), Gwen L. (brother), Rita H. (daughter-in-law), Kelly J., Rick S., Andrew R. and family (sister, aunt, & mother, Julie R.), Paul & Kathy W. (daughter's signif. other)
- Those struggling with on-going health and other issues:
Michelle L. (unexplained health issues), Mary R. (upcoming kidney transplant), Debbie B. (blood clots, hip pain), Leon V. (chemotherapy), Ann C.-W. (health issues), Ruthie C. (tumor/kidney stone), Margaret J's husband (recovering from non-COVID pneumonia), and Raul O. (recovering from triple bypass surgery), Ken R. (pre-cancerous tissue)
- Those struggling with COVID
- Others that you are aware of