

Embracing Your Circumstances

i-design series

- made in image of God, distinct in role, equal in value
- God's design needs to be understood
- our reality seldom perfect or without challenge
- God is in the business of transformation
 - your heart, life, desires, pursuits
 - taking what Satan means for destruction, using it for His Glory

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Concerned that:

- in upholding the design – discourage the listener
- see our circumstances – reject design or resign from ...
- show that scripture full of the less than ideal redeemed
- Story of God's love for the eunuch
 - mutilated, prevented from family & culture
 - rejected by society – basically a servant / slave
 - met by God, loved and invited into family
 - saved, baptized and encouraged

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Text for Today 1 Cor. 7

- Three big thoughts from the passage
 1. You Are Where God Has Placed You
 2. Issue is not Circumstances – but Holiness in them
 3. Focus on the Eternal not the Temporal
- easily sidetracked debating the details
 - married vs unmarried, can I divorce
 - purity, sexuality, relationships, circumstances

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1 Corinthians 7:1-36 – Paul on Single, Married, Unbelieving Spouses, relationship in the family of God

1. Living Where God Has Placed You

- often discontentment begins with desire for what we don't have or experience
- vs. 17, 20, 24 – remain in your circumstances
 - circumcision, slavery, married to unbelievers, single
 - life with Christ changes you – not always your life circumstances

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a) Acknowledge the Reality

- real desires exist
 - in marriage, as singles, don't sin
- being unequally yoked is hard
 - don't leave, serve, your faith may cost you
- circumstances are less than ideal
 - slaves, free men, persecution

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2. Serving Where God Has Placed You

a) Choose Holiness & Transformation

- remain in your situation ...” *each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him.* “ *“Each one should remain in the situation which he was in when God called him.”*

- be aware of where God placed you

- vs.25-28 *“Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. Because of the present crisis, I think that it is good for you to remain as you are. Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this. “*

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- Overriding Concerns: *“I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord. “*

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- holiness, serving, loving God 1st, the focus
 - be content in the situation God has you in
 - allow him to deliver, don't grab
 - keep an eternal focus
 - do what is right with your gifts and position

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3. Focusing On the Eternal

- vs 29 Paul expresses the eternal as a focus

- a) Two possible reasons

 - persecution under Nero

 - famine predicted in Acts 28

- b) does not mean ignore the emotions & experiences of life

- c) challenge to view all in perspective of eternal

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So What

1. God Cares About You

- when the ideal seems impossible
- see God's love and desire to have relationship

2. God Redeems People and Situations

- Christ's work on the cross
- Scripture full of stories of God's redemptive hand
- what Satan looks to destroy – God can be glorified in

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3. Embrace Where God Has You

- be real about the situation & your abilities
- choose to honor & serve in your situation
- keep an eternal focus
- accept the leading & empowering of the Holy Spirit