

# 1 Corinthians 7:29 – 40

New American Standard Version

1 <sup>29</sup> But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so  
 2 that from now on those who have wives should be as though  
 3 they had none; <sup>30</sup> and those who weep, as though they did  
 4 not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not  
 5 rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess;  
 6 <sup>31</sup> and those who use the world, as though they did not make  
 7 full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.  
 8 <sup>32</sup> But I want you to be free from concern. One who is  
 9 unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he  
 10 may please the Lord; <sup>33</sup> but one who is married is concerned  
 11 about the things of the world, how he may please his wife,  
 12 <sup>34</sup> and *his interests* are divided. The woman who is  
 13 unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of  
 14 the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but  
 15 one who is married is concerned about the things of the  
 16 world, how she may please her husband. <sup>35</sup> This I say for  
 17 your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to  
 18 promote what is appropriate and *to secure* undistracted  
 19 devotion to the Lord. <sup>36</sup> But if any man thinks that he is  
 20 acting unbecomingly toward his virgin *daughter*, if she is  
 21 past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he  
 22 wishes, he does not sin; let her marry. <sup>37</sup> But he who stands  
 23 firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has  
 24 authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own  
 25 heart, to keep his own virgin *daughter*, he will do well. <sup>38</sup> So  
 26 then both he who gives his own virgin *daughter* in marriage  
 27 does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do  
 28 better. <sup>39</sup> A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if  
 29 her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she  
 30 wishes, only in the Lord. <sup>40</sup> But in my opinion she is happier  
 31 if she remains as she is; and I think that I also have the  
 32 Spirit of God.

*Use the suggestions on the back page as a starting point for your own **Observation, Interpretation, and Application.***

## **Observation (What does it say?):**

*Underline all the things Paul mentions that “divide” our attention (v. 34).*

*Circle what Paul says about his intentions or his aims in this passage.*

## **Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

*How do Paul’s stated aims affect your understanding of the passage, and even what he has said in earlier passages?*

*What distinction does he make between the concerns of married men and married women? What is the significance (if any) of the different descriptions he has for men and for women?*

*Why does he bring up the details in verses 36-40?*

## **Application (What does it mean for me?):**

*What Biblical commands do you feel are “restraints” on you (v. 35)?*

*What is the difference between a restraint and undistracted devotion? In what areas do you have “distracted devotion”?*

*How important to you is “undistracted devotion to the Lord”? What would that look like?*

**Additional questions for thought and discussion:**

- Verses 36-38 mention a man's "virgin daughter." The word "daughter" is in *italics* (in NASB) because the word is not in the original text. The text actually says simply "his virgin" (KJV, YLT). Other translations interpret the text as "his betrothed" (ESV) or "the virgin he is engaged to" (NIV) or "his fiancée" (NLT). One even suggests it is the virginity of the man himself (DARBY). What do we do with such variety of translations? Is there anything in the text that would help you to know what is meant by "his virgin"? (For examples of these translations, see <https://www.biblegateway.com/verse/en/1%20Corinthians%207:36> )

## Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

### Observation (What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose ("in order that...")?
- Are there conclusions ("Therefore...")?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good "headline" for the passage?

### Interpretation (What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

### Application (What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.**  
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)