

OVERVIEW

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- Read 1 Corinthians 7.
- Broad Structure of 1 Corinthians 7:

V1-16

V17-24

V25-40

- Controlling motif:

- Corinthian position:

1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-16

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- The Corinthian slogan: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman (v1b).*

What is 'touch a woman' and what is this slogan saying?

- Not applicable here! (V2-7)

²*Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality,*

let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

³*Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.*

⁴*The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.*

⁵*Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

⁶*But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment.*

⁷*For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.*

Correct understanding of verse 2:

**** *Nevertheless***

**** *Because of sexual immorality***

**** *Let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband***

Elaboration of verse 2c: Verses 3 & 4.

Exceptions allowed, warning stated: Verses 5

**** *Do not deprive one another***

*** Except with consent for a time, that you may give yourself to fasting and prayer*

Three conditions laid down:

- (i)**
- (ii)**
- (iii)**

*** So that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control*

Concession: Verses 6

What about you, Paul? (Verse 7)

- **“Unmarried” believers: How? (V8-9)**

Who is being addressed here?

Message for them:

Married believers: May we separate? (V10-11)

**** *Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. (V10)***

**** *But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband.***

**** *And a husband is not to divorce his wife.***

▪ Mixed marriages: How? (V12-16).

**** How come mixed?**

**** "I, not the Lord, say" - what does it mean?**

**** What's the message?**

1 CORINTHIANS 7:25-40

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²⁵Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy. ²⁶I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress--that it is good for a man to remain as he is: ²⁷Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.

²⁹But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, ³⁰those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, ³¹and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away. ³²But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord--how he may please the Lord. ³³But he who is married cares about the things of the world--how he may please his wife. ³⁴There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world--how she may please her husband. ³⁵And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.

³⁶But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry. ³⁷Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well. ³⁸So then he who gives her in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better.

³⁹A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. ⁴⁰But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment--and I think I also have the Spirit of God.

▪ **Some Issues Surrounding Its Interpretation:**

~ **Command? Advice? What?**

~ **Addressed to whom?**

~ **Present distress and trouble in the flesh - what are they?**

~ **Is married life inferior to singlehood?**

~ **What is 'past the flower of youth' (*hyperakmos*)?**

- *Verse 25 ~ Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy.*

Virgins:

Judgment:

- **Verse 26-28**

What's the counsel?

Why this counsel?

- Verse 29-35

These 7 verses can be sub-divided into two parts, each with a main point that Paul wants to convey: verses 29-31 and verses 32-35.

Verses 29-31

²⁹But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on

even those who have wives should be as though they had none,

³⁰those who weep as though they did not weep,

those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice,

those who buy as though they did not possess,

³¹and those who use this world as not misusing it.

For the form of this world is passing away.

Brethren:

“The form of this world is passing away”:

“The time is short”:

Five illustrations of “as if not”:

(i) Marriage

(ii) Weeping and rejoicing

(iii) Buy

(iv) Use the world

What is the message?

Verses 32-35

The New King James Version has it as:

³²*But I want you to be without care.*

He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord--how he may please the Lord. ³³But he who is married cares about the things of the world--how he may please his wife.

³⁴*There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world--how she may please her husband.*

³⁵*And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.*

The English Standard Version has it as:

³²*I want you to be free from anxieties.*

The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. ³³But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, ³⁴and his interests are divided.

And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband.

³⁵*I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.*

▪ Verse 36-38

▪ Verse 39-40

CONCLUSION