

# Studies In First Corinthians

## (I Corinthians 7:25-40)

1. Would a virgin have sinned if he or she did not follow Paul's advice about not getting married because of the present distress?

No: "(25) Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. (26) I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be. (27) Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. (28) But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you" (I Corinthians 7:25-28).

- Again, as we discussed earlier in this chapter, Paul is giving Spirit-guided (I Corinthians 7:40) advice rather than a Scriptural command (see notes on I Corinthians 7:6).
- The reasoning for this advice is that there will be trouble in the flesh if they get married due to persecution (vs. 29-31). The present distress [necessity, distress, tribulation, and calamity] is a good reason not to have a family (Luke 21:20-24).
- Paul is trying to spare them the suffering that persecution causes for families (Lamentations 5:1-17, Jeremiah 38:23, Jeremiah 52:8-13, etc.). Want man wants to see his children killed and his wife raped (Isaiah 13:16 \*context of this verse is punishment due to apostasy, but the point is that men will do these things to your family during invasions, etc.)?
- At the same time, this distress was not a cause for divorce (I Corinthians 7:10-11).

2. During the present distress Paul wrote of, should those who did get married have planned on a long and peaceful relationship?

No: "(29) But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; (30) And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; (31) And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (I Corinthians 7:29-31).

- Time is short. Throughout the times leading to AD 70 (wherein Jerusalem was attacked, the temple destroyed as Jesus promised a punishment, persecution hit a high, etc. - Matthew 24:1-34 [note verse 21 especially]), the Scriptures warn about a day coming (Romans 13:11-12, James 5:8, Hebrews 10:25, and I Peter 4:7).
- The word translated "fashion" [Strong's # 4976] only appears in one other verse (Philippians 2:8). Thus, we can scripturally conclude that the way things appear now is soon going to end. Again, this fits the distress that what occurred in AD 70 was going to cause for Christians everywhere. Remember, Jerusalem is where the church started

(Acts 2:41-47) and acted in some ways as a center of operations for the Apostles (Acts 15).

- The point is, when this distress comes to a point, things as you know them are not going to be. Life will not be “normal”.

3. When one gets married, will he or she have some cares for things that are of the world?

Yes: *“(32) But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: (33) But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. (34) There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband” (I Corinthians 7:32-34).*

- Paul wanted them to be free from anxiety (Philippians 4:6).
- These points apply in that when the distress hit an eruption, you’re not buying your wife/husband the finer things in life. You’re on the run (i.e. Mark 13:14 and Acts 8:1-4).
- Marriage requires you to focus on some of the physical things in life, which in times of distress, are very difficult to do...
  - Marriage carries likely parenting responsibilities (I Timothy 3:5 and Titus 2:3-5).
  - Providing physically for your family (Matthew 7:11 and I Timothy 5:8).
  - Sexual attractiveness is carnal, but is a part of marriage (Proverbs 5:18-19 and Ecclesiastes 4:1-7).
- The unmarried person needs only be concerned with themselves and his or her relationship with God (Luke 2:36-37).

4. Why did Paul bring these things before those in Corinth?

To try and help some avoid distractions: *“And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction” (I Corinthians 7:35).*

- Distractions are NOT good for us (Luke 8:14, Luke 10:38-42, and II Timothy 2:1-4).

5. Is there authorized freedom to decide whether or not a virgin, who passes her age of maturity, shall be given in marriage?

Yes: *“(36) But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry. (37) Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. (38) So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better” (I Corinthians 7:36-38).*

- “His virgin” [Strong’s #3933] is: “a maiden; by implication an unmarried daughter” (Strong’s). See: **Acts 21:9**
- The flower [Strong’s # 5230] is: “the bloom; past the prime of youth” (Strong’s).
- These verses show that a father may give his daughter in marriage, but it is better not to (again, because of the distress we’re contextually talking about). A father need not force his daughter to remain unmarried, though it wouldn’t be the “best” choice to marry.

6. How long is a wife bound to her husband?

As long as her husband lives: *“The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord” (I Corinthians 7:39).*

- “Till death do you part” is scripturally true (**Mark 10:2-12** and **Romans 7:1-3**).
- What does it mean to say, “only in the Lord”? Consider the following Scriptures, which prove Paul is not saying a widow may only marry a Christian (**I Corinthians 11:11-12**, **Ephesians 6:1**, and **Colossians 3:18**).
- While it is not WISE to marry a non-Christian, to say it is sinful requires on repent of this sin (**Luke 17:3-4**). Repenting would mean ending the marriage (**Ezekiel 14:6**, **Matthew 3:8**, and **Acts 26:20**). As we addressed already in this point, this is contrary to the will of the Lord. Therefore, you MUST necessarily conclude, “only in the Lord” does not mean, “only marry a Christian”.

7. Though Paul gave his judgment multiple times in this chapter, what does he state to give his judgment on these things greater weight?

That he has the spirit of God: *“But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God” (I Corinthians 7:40).*

- His wisdom was not of the world (**I Corinthians 2:6-7** and **II Corinthians 1:12**).
- For discussion sake, we should note that young widows should marry (**I Timothy 5:11-15**). However, based upon the current context we are studying, there are obviously times (i.e. when saints are heavily persecuted) wherein widows should not marry.