

BECAUSE THE TIME IS SHORT

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

INTRO: Our time on earth is short & uncertain, thus it is in order that we be warned not to overdo or overemphasize earthly relationships and activities.

- I. THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP, vs 29. The husband/wife relationship is the closest human relationship possible. It even involves Divine association & responsibilities. MT 19:5-6.
 - A. Paul is not setting aside the instructions given in vs 3-5, nor Eph 5:22-23, or any other passage.
 - B. But he would remind us that:
 1. Relationships with our mates end at death, Rom 7:2
Our duty to God never ends. As long as we live we are accountable to Him & after we die we must answer to Him.
 2. Our mate may ask something unreasonable, even sinful of us. God never will.
 - C. Thus vs 29 is an admonition to not be like the hen-pecked husband of LK 14:20. Note in that context: If anyone comes to Me & does not hate his father & mother, wife & children, brothers & sisters, yes, & his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. (LK 14:26).
- II. EARTHLY SORROWS, vs 30a.
 - A. This is not an admonition against weeping, for "there is a time to weep" (Eccl 3:4).
 1. Jesus wept, (JN 11:35).
 2. Jesus wept over Jerusalem, LK 19:41.
 - B. Our text admonishes us to exercise control, to use restraint--to not "sorrow as those who have no hope" (1 Thes 4:13)
 - C. We should not let earthly woes, sorrows & disappointments keep us from fulfilling our responsibilities to God.

READ 2 SAMUEL 12:19-23 LUKE 9:59-62

- D. It is told that one elderly gentleman, when he was asked what his favorite Scripture was, replied: "'It came to pass.' I'm so glad the Scripture never says, 'It came to stay.'" That is precisely why earth's sorrows should not be allowed to adversely affect our relationship with God.

III. EARTHLY JOYS, vs 30b.

- A. Common sense & experience tells us that if earthly sorrows are temporary, so are its triumphs & joys.
- B. Of course, experiencing earthly joys & happiness is not wrong--but it is so temporary.

So I commended enjoyment, because a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, & be merry; for this will remain with him in his labor for the days of his life which God gives him under the sun. (Eccl 8:15).

[But the writer had already written:] I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure"; but surely this also was vanity. (Eccl 2:1).

- C. Unless we are cautious, we may become so busy enjoying our prosperity that we forget to be thankful to God, & to serve Him.

Agur wisely prayed: Give me neither poverty nor riches--Feed me with the food You prescribe for me; lest I be full & deny You, & say, "Who is the Lord?" or lest I be poor & steal & profane the name of my God. (Prov 30:8-9).

IV. EARTHLY POSSESSIONS, vs 30c. We desperately need to learn the relative unimportance of things. MT 6:33; LK 12:15; 15:20

READ ECCLESIASTES 2:18-21

NOTE: Don't lose your soul over possessions, MT 16:26.

V. THE USE OF THIS WORLD, vs 31.

- A. God intends for us to use this world, Gen 1:27-28
- B. But we must learn not to misuse, abuse & overuse.
 - 1. Waste our resources.
 - 2. Over indulge.

CONCLUSION: Vs 31b--The form of this world is passing away. The Greek word for form involves everything which makes up this world as we see & know it: its relationships; its sorrows, its joys; its material elements & possessions; its opportunities. All are passing away. None of these things should be allowed to keep us from that which is eternal. The time is short.

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