

1 Corinthians 7:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

Analysis

And they that use this world, as not abusing it—the verb *chrōmenoi* (χρώμενοι, "using") describes engagement with earthly systems and goods. *Katachrōmenoi* (καταχρώμενοι, "using fully/exhausting") suggests excessive attachment or exploitation. Believers may utilize the world's resources without becoming enslaved to them. This balance of engagement without attachment characterizes Christian freedom.

Paul's reasoning: **for the fashion of this world passeth away**. The term *schēma* (σχῆμα, "fashion/form/appearance") refers to the world's external, temporary structure. *Paragei* (παράγει, "is passing away") is present tense—the current world order is already fading. This echoes 1 John 2:17, "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof."

Paul's eschatological perspective undergirds all his counsel in this chapter. Because the present order is temporary and Christ's return is imminent, believers must hold earthly realities loosely—marriage, possessions, social status, emotions. This does not mean withdrawal from the world but proper prioritization: invest in eternal realities, use temporary ones wisely without idolatry.

Historical Context

Paul's language reflects Jewish apocalyptic expectations of the "present age" and "age to come." Christ's death and resurrection inaugurated the new age, though

the old age persists until His return. Christians live between the ages, experiencing overlap. This "already/not yet" tension shapes Paul's ethics.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to "use" the world without "abusing" it or becoming enslaved to it?
2. How does recognizing that the world's "fashion" is temporary affect priorities and investments?
3. How should Christians balance engagement with culture with recognition that present structures are fading?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	οἱ	χρώμενοι	τῷ	κόσμῳ	τούτῳ	ὥς	μὴ
And	G3588	they that use	G3588	world	of this	as	not
G2532		G5530		G2889	G5129	G5613	G3361

καταχρώμενοι·	παράγει	γὰρ	τὸ	σχῆμα	τοῦ	κόσμου
abusing	passeth away	it for	G3588	the fashion	G3588	world
G2710	G3855	G1063		G4976		G2889

τούτου

this

G5127

Additional Cross-References

1 John 2:17 (Parallel theme): And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

1 Peter 4:7 (Parallel theme): But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Luke 21:34 (Parallel theme): And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

James 4:14 (Parallel theme): Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

1 Peter 1:24 (Parallel theme): For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

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