# Remain Single or Choose Marriage (Part 2): Counting the Costs of Marriage – May 8, 2022

**1. Universal Principle of Godliness #2: Our attitude and emotional attachment towards earthly priorities should be open-handed (in view of the Second Coming of Jesus) – 7:29-31**

**2. Although biblical principles are not binding like moral commands, they are nevertheless rooted in authoritative wisdom and should be taken seriously by all believers.**

**3. Counting the Costs of Choosing Marriage:**

1. **The burdens of life are even heavier during a crisis – 7:26**
2. **Marital and familial troubles – 7:28**
3. **Your attention is necessarily split between God’s spiritual priorities and familial responsibilities - 7:32-35**

**4. Two Other Principles on Considering Marriage**

1. **Marriage is permissible, but singleness is better for serving God’s spiritual priorities – 7:33-35, 38, 39-40**
2. **A father has authority over his unmarried daughter. A father must discern with his unmarried daughter about her desire for marriage in view of the benefits of serving God in singleness. – 7:36-38**

*- Other scriptures on fatherly authority: Genesis 24:5, 34-49, 50-51, 57-58; 29:1-30; Numbers 30; Ephesians 6:1-3, 4*

### Reasons why it’s better to read 7:36-38 as a father’s interaction with his unmarried daughter rather than as a “betrothed” man

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| **“Virgin” (Daughter)** | **“Betrothed”** |
| 1) “his virgin” – cf. similar usage of a father and unmarried daughters in Acts 21:9  \*[[1]](#footnote-1)2) Parallels with vv.39-40 in comparison to the freedom of a widow to marry whomever she wishes, no longer being under the father’s authority (cf. Numbers 30 on women and vows), he does better if he keeps her unmarried.  3) Normally transitive use of the Greek verb to marry (*gamizō*)  4) The central theme is about the marital state of a virgin, NOT about a male virgin’s perception of his betrothed’s virginity. Under this perspective, a father’s role in overseeing his daughter’s virginity makes most sense.  5) Paul already said what needed to be said about a virgin’s own decision in vv.25-35 (so why repeat the same idea; but if it’s about a father’s role in the decision, then Paul would be addressing a new situation to address) | 1) Most straight forward reference of the subject of each clause in v.36  2) “Let them marry” makes most sense here (Thistleton, 596)  3) “his virgin” – if they are not married, the virgin is not “his” |

1. Strong argument. Especially given Point #5, why be redundant in the principles. But if we take this traditional view, then it makes sense that it then covers one’s unilateral (by oneself, for widows) or bilateral (with one’s father) decision-making as a Christian woman [↑](#footnote-ref-1)