

Wait, what?

I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is running out.  
From now on, let those having wives act as not having them,  
those weeping as not weeping,  
those rejoicing as not rejoicing,  
those buying as not owning,  
those using the world as not using it fully.

This is the Second Reading that we heard today. It is from 1 Cor. 7:29 – 31. It is also one of the more befuddling things St. Paul says. It is also inextricably linked with what we will hear next week and I wish they were not separated (1 Cor. 7:32 – 35):

I should like you to be free of anxieties.  
An unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord,  
how he may please the Lord.  
But a married man is anxious about the things of the world,  
how he may please his wife, and he is divided.  
An unmarried woman or a virgin is anxious about the things of the Lord,  
so that she may be holy in both body and spirit.  
A married woman, on the other hand,  
is anxious about the things of the world,  
how she may please her husband.  
I am telling you this for your own benefit,  
not to impose a restraint upon you,  
but for the sake of propriety  
and adherence to the Lord without distraction.

So, what Paul is getting at is much more clear now, but it still needs a little context. In chapter 6 of 1 Corinthians, Paul begins answering questions posed to him from the community in Corinth. Immediately preceding our section here, he weighs in on sexual morality inside and outside of marriage. (Check out last week's 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading for a small selection.) It is in the latter half of chapter 6 that Paul speaks of the meaning of the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit. It is here that we get the foundation for the idea that St. John Paul II developed into what we know of as the Theology of the Body.

All of chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians is dedicated to answering a question posed to Paul about marriage and family life. He is giving practical advice about how a Christian ought to live in a world that is hostile to Christian world-view and morality.

Next week, we will pick that idea up and begin looking at "Theology of the Body".