by the Apostle must be taken, as the rest of  
the chapter, *with its accompanying conditions.* He is speaking of a pressing and  
quickly shortening period, which he regards  
as yet remaining before that day and hour  
of which neither he, nor any man knew.  
He wishes his Corinthians, during that  
short time, to be as far as possible *totally*  
undistracted. He mentions as an objection  
to marriage, that which is an *undoubted*  
*fact of human experience* :—which is necessarily  
bound up with that relation; and  
*without which the duties of the relation  
could not be fulfilled.* Since he wrote,  
the unfolding of God’s Providence has  
taught us more of the interval before the  
coming of the Lord than it was given even  
to an inspired Apostle to see. And as it  
would be perfectly reasonable and proper  
to urge on an apparently dying man the  
duty of abstaining from contracting new  
worldly obligations,—but both unreasonable and improper, should the same person  
recover his health, to insist on this abstinence  
any longer; so now, when God has  
manifested His will that nations should  
rise up and live and decay, and long centuries  
elapse before the day of the coming of  
Christ, it would be manifestly unreasonable  
to urge,—except in so far as every man’s *time*  
is *getting shorter and shorter*, and similar  
arguments are applicable,—the considerations  
here enforced. Meanwhile they stand  
here on the sacred page as a lesson to us  
how to regard, though in circumstances  
somewhat changed, our worldly relations:  
and to teach ns, as the coming of the Lord  
may be as near now, as the Apostle then  
believed it to be, to act at least in the  
spirit of his advice, and be, as far as God’s  
manifest will that we should enter into the  
relations and affairs of life allows, without  
distraction. The duty of ver. 35 is incumbent  
on all Christians, at all periods.

**35.**] *Caution against mistaking what has  
been said for an imperative order, whereas  
it was only a suggestion for their best  
interest.*

**this**] viz. verses 32—34.  
**for your own** (emphatic) **profit**, i. e.  
not for my own purposes—not to exercise  
my apostolic authority : **not that I may  
cast a snare** (lit. ‘a noose ;’ the metaphor  
is from throwing the noose in hunting or in  
war) **over you** (i.e. entangle and encumber  
you with difficult precepts), **but with a  
view to seemliness** (compare Rom. xiii. 13),  
**and waiting upon the Lord without distraction**. Stanley draws out the parallel to  
the story in Luke x.39—42: Mary sitting  
by the feet of Jesus, while Martha was  
cumbered with much serving, and careful  
about many things: the very words used  
in the original there being almost the same  
as here.

**36—38.]** *For seemliness’  
sake:* and consequently, if there be danger,  
by a father withholding his consent to his  
daughter’s marriage, of unseemly treatment of her, let an exception be made in  
that case: but otherwise, if there be no  
such danger, it is better not to give her in  
marriage.—**But** (introduces an inconsistency  
with what is seemly) **if any one** (any  
father) **thinks that he is behaving unseemly towards his virgin daughter** (viz