

**First things first**  
**10. Marriage matters (1 Cor. 7v1-24)**

**John Percival**

**Introduction**

- marriage advice?

**Paul's authority**

**Paul's advice (v1-16)**

- for Christians who are married (v1-6)
- for Christians who are widowed or not married (v7-9)
- for Christians who want to divorce their spouse (v10-11)
- for Christians married to unbelievers (v12-16)

**Paul's principle (v17-24)**

- *"Bloom where you are planted"*

**Conclusion**

**Bible references:** 2 Peter 3:15-16, Mark 10:11-12

**1 Corinthians 7v1-24 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now for the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." <sup>2</sup> But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. <sup>3</sup> The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup> The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. <sup>5</sup> Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. <sup>6</sup> I say this as a concession, not as a command. <sup>7</sup> I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

<sup>8</sup> Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. <sup>9</sup> But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

<sup>10</sup> To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. <sup>11</sup> But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

<sup>12</sup> To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. <sup>13</sup> And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. <sup>14</sup> For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. <sup>15</sup> But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. <sup>16</sup> How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. <sup>18</sup> Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. <sup>19</sup> Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts. <sup>20</sup> Each one should remain in the situation which he was in when God called him. <sup>21</sup> Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you--although if you can gain your freedom, do so. <sup>22</sup> For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave. <sup>23</sup> You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. <sup>24</sup> Brothers, each man, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation God called him to.

#### Some resources

Tim Keller, *The meaning of marriage*  
Christopher Ash, *Married for God*  
Paul Tripp, *What did you expect?*  
John Piper, *This momentary marriage*  
Dave Harvey, *When sinners say "I do"*