

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

AUGUST 31ST, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

DIVORCE (MARK 10:1-12) "AS WAS HIS CUSTOM"

Jesus and His disciples have traveled south to the eastern side of the Jordan River.

- This is a predominately Greek area, but His reputation preceded Him and crowds gathered to hear Him teach.
- Of course, the religious leaders were there to correct His "mistakes" and find a way to discredit His claims of deity.

THE TEST

We do not know exactly what Jesus was teaching that day before the question from the Pharisees.

- We do know that Mark has consistently shared Jesus' teaching on being a servant.
- This context may be the reason why the Pharisees chose to ask their loaded question.

IS DIVORCE LAWFUL?

At just the right time, they ask Jesus to give His position on divorce.

- Jesus responds with a question that requires them to give a "biblical" answer.
- Their answer is not the answer to Jesus' question. They instead share the favored teaching of their rabbinic school of thought.
- **We like to quote verses that support our positions. Too often it is just pretext.**

HARDNESS OF HEART

They were careful to quote scripture from Deuteronomy, but they were not careful with their interpretation of the law.

- The law had been written **BECAUSE** divorce was happening, not so it could happen.
- Nowhere in the Bible is divorce endorsed, although it IS allowed.

JESUS GIVES CONTEXT

Jesus gives context to the Pharisees because their hard hearts were looking for loopholes. He goes all the way to the beginning and examines His creation of males and females.

- He describes the simple and exciting way that a man and woman will join together in a unique relationship that God has endorsed.

THE DISCIPLES DID NOT GET IT, AGAIN

When Jesus and the disciples were alone, they asked questions about the divorce dialogue with the Pharisees.

- We see the disciples growing, as they begin to ask questions before saying things they should not say.
- They did not get rebuked for asking, but they did get a direct answer.

THE HARD VERSES

Mark shares the words of Jesus, and it seems there is no allowance for divorce and remarriage.

- There are other scriptures that clearly reveal allowances.
- Did Mark leave some words out? Maybe. Was Jesus unaware of other scripture that would be written? No. Could there be a bigger context? Most likely.

THE BIGGER CONTEXT

Mark has shared that the disciples have had some issues in the past few chapters.

- They thought children were not as important as them. They thought the same about others outside of their group. Some even thought they were better than the other disciples.
- As the culture agreed, a man's reason for divorce was a good enough reason.

IT IS STILL ABOUT SERVING

Jesus' words to the Pharisees probably fell on deaf ears, but the disciples needed to hear more.

- As disciples, they should not be looking for a way out; they should be looking for a way to humbly serve their wives (and others).
- **Are we serving one another the way God desires? Are we quick to reject one another because we have better options?**

CHILDREN (MARK 10:13-16) MORE CHILDREN

Parents were bringing little children to Jesus so that He could bless them.

- These children held a low status in the culture and were often marginalized, but Jesus had already corrected His disciples' prejudices. For some reason, the disciples rebuked them again.
- **Even if we do not get it the first time, Jesus will keep teaching us.**

"DON'T STOP THEM"

Jesus showed His anger at the unfair treatment of the children.

- His words were to the disciples, but His actions revealed that He prioritized children because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.
- **We do not want to be the ones to come between Jesus and children! What are we doing to get the children to Jesus?**

"LIKE A LITTLE CHILD"

Jesus valued children because they are a model of what it takes for someone to follow Jesus.

- They know what it is like to have a dependent status. They trust wholeheartedly and humbly in those who love them.
- **We humble ourselves, acknowledge our sin, and put our whole trust in and dependence on Christ. This is how we experience being taken in His arms and knowing His presence.**

WEALTH (MARK 10:17-31)

"INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE"

In contrast to childlike faith, a wealthy young man asks Jesus how to inherit eternal life.

- Calling Jesus "good teacher" implies that he recognized something special about Jesus.
- It seems that the young man did not see Jesus' divinity, so Jesus sets him straight.
- Jesus does not deny His divinity; He aligns Himself with the goodness and character of God.
- **Do we have a clear understanding of who Jesus is and how we should follow Him?**

GOD'S COMMANDS

Jesus shares some of the 10 Commandments. Six, ten, or one—we can be sure that this young man had broken some, if not all, of the commandments in some way.

- His superficial view of the commands is seen in his reaction: He believed he had kept them all!
- He missed Jesus' divinity and his own sin.
- **This is not about keeping the commands; it is about knowing that we do not keep them. What can we do to fix it? We can't!**

"YOU LACK ONE THING"

In love, Jesus shares that the young man lacks one thing and gives him a task.

- His unwillingness to follow through revealed that he was not as righteous as he perceived himself to be.
- The task was not the requirement; obedience was.
- **Sometimes, God will call us to do something to reveal our weakness. This is where we learn obedience and find the joy of faithfulness.**

THOSE WHO HAVE WEALTH

Jesus then gave a private lesson to His disciples.

- Their dialogue reveals the disciples believed that wealth was an indicator of favor with God and a sure place in His Kingdom.
- Jesus goes beyond even material possessions and reveals that anything we have/do can make us believe that we have somehow earned what only He can give.
- **We see money, happiness, family, position, and power as wealth. It is not the wealth we need.**

"WE HAVE LEFT EVERYTHING..."

Peter responds that they had left everything to follow Jesus. It must have been an appropriate statement because Jesus did not rebuke Peter (this time).

- Jesus then shares that every Believer who surrenders their "wealth" and follows Him will receive His wealth—eternal life.
- **To the world, the young man was wealthy. In truth, he would eventually lose everything that mattered to him—even his life.**
- **Do we realize that Jesus gave everything that mattered to Him to be with us?**

LOOPHOLES

- We like loopholes.
- They are usually "legal" ways to get around doing something we do not want to do.
- **The Bible does not have loopholes. We may have holes in our theology and understanding that make us believe what is not true or justify our desires. Why do we look for the easiest way?**

SHORTCUTS

- We like shortcuts.
- They are easier and quicker... sometimes.
- **They do not work in relationships. It takes work and time to make, grow, and keep relationships. Jesus has invested eternity and Himself into our relationship with Him. Why are we looking for shortcuts? If you think you found one, you didn't.**

TRUTH

- We usually prefer the truth.
- **When faced with a truth about ourselves, we try to find a better "truth."**
- **Jesus loves us and only tells us the truth. We enjoy how much He gives and loves. Are we ready for what else He might say? He tells the truth better than anyone. How are we doing at telling others? Ourselves? Will we listen so we can join, grow, and keep the relationships He has given us?**