

“The One Thing Guaranteed to End All Relationships”
“A Journey with Jesus”—Part 16
Mark 10:1-16

Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them.

Mark 10:1

1. The controversy: What is the just cause for divorce?

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

Mark 10:2

2. The culture: (2 schools of thought)

- Rabbi Hillel promoted “any reason” divorce.
- Rabbi Shammai taught “premarital sin only” divorce.
- The debate revolved around the meaning of “uncleanness.”

If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the Lord. Do not bring sin upon the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

- The bill of divorcement was given to declare her status and assure a prospective husband that she was indeed free to remarry.
- The Law of Moses did not give adultery as grounds for divorce. (Both adulterers were taken out and stoned.)

3. Jesus ignores the debate.

"What did Moses command you?" he replied. They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

Mark 10:3-9

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in

number; fill the earth and subdue it..."

Genesis 1:27-28

So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Genesis 2:21-24

4. The powerful influence of culture on the disciples.

When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

Mark 10:10-12

- It was the man who divorced the wife, not the wife who divorced the man.
- Jesus explained that Moses gave the divorce law because of the hardness of the human heart. The law protected the wife by restraining the husband from impulsively divorcing his wife like an old piece of furniture.
- Jesus elevates the position of women and at the same time warns them of betraying God's original design for marriage.

"Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."

Matthew 19:7-9

Porneia—sexual perversion

Moicheia—adultery

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. Galatians 5:13

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

Ephesians 5:25-31

Application:

1. Don't form your opinions based on the climate of our culture.

2. Avoid self-righteous judgmentalism and legalism.
3. Leave room for God's grace to rescue those who are victims.
4. In order for marriages to thrive, BOTH people need to guard with all diligence against hardness of heart. Hardness begins subtly, with the smallest acts of selfishness, but left unchecked can grow to become a raging fire of wrath, anger, hatred and bitterness.
5. Through marriage we learn to love like Jesus.

5. Powerbrokers and the powerless

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Mark 10:13-16

- Marriage and family are both a high priority in God's plan and design.
- The kingdom of God is for the weak and powerless, not the entitled and self-righteous.
- The kingdom of heaven is a gift of God's grace, not a reward to be earned.