

James Rafferty **Lesson 8**

**August 17-23*

NEXT WEEK - LESSON 9 JERUSALEM CONTROVERSIES

Teaching Disciples: Part II

The blind man was one of societies disposables but no one is disposable to Jesus abortion book

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: *Mark 10; Gen. 1:27; Gen. 2:24;*

Gal. 4:1, 2; Rom. 6:1-11; Isa. 11:1-16.

Memory Text: " 'For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many' " (*Mark 10:45, NKJV*).

This week covers Mark 10, completing the special section in which Jesus teaches His disciples in preparation for the cross. About half of the chapter deals with the

disciples themselves, and the rest with issues important to discipleship but told through the lens of others who interact with Jesus. Pharisees come and argue with Him over the subject of divorce. Parents bring their children for Jesus to bless. A rich man asks about eternal life, and a blind man asks for sight.

This chapter of Mark carries important teachings about what it means to follow Jesus, particularly as it relates to living in the here and now: marriage, children, how to relate to riches, and the reward and cost of following Him. Topping it off is the healing of a second blind man (*Mark 10:46-52*, compare with *Mark 8:22-26*), which provides the closing bookend for the section (*Mark 8:22-10:52*) and a beautiful illustration of what following Jesus both costs and leads to.

Together, these lessons prepare the follower of Jesus—whether the disciples 2,000 years ago or disciples in the twenty-first century—for the challenges that come with discipleship.

**Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, August 24.*

SUNDAY

August 18

God's Plan for Marriage

Read Mark 10:1-12, as well as Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24. What trap was hiding under the Pharisees' question about divorce, and what lessons did Jesus teach in His response?

MARK 10:1-12:

1 And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judæa by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*.

11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

MATTHEW 19 version:

3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

11 But he said unto them, All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

- 1) *for every cause -*
- 2) *Except fornication -*
- 3) *Good not to marry?*
- 4) *3 types of single men 1) by birth 2) by other men 3) by choice for Gods kingdom*

In this passage, the Pharisees ask Jesus if it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife. Among the Pharisees, divorce was considered lawful. The question was on what grounds. The School

of Shammai was arguably more restrictive—only for childlessness, material neglect, emotional neglect, or marital unfaithfulness. The School of Hillel was much more lenient, allowing divorce for almost any reason, though their process of granting the divorce was more complex, helping to slow things down.

So, it may seem a bit odd that they ask Jesus the blanket question if divorce is acceptable at all. Hiding under this question was a plot to get Jesus in trouble with Herod Antipas, the ruler of the region to the east of the Jordan, where Jesus was now. Antipas had divorced his wife and married Herodias, his brother's wife. Herod had beheaded John the Baptist because of his rebuke regarding this illicit relationship (*see Matt. 14:1-12*).

Jesus parries their question with His own, asking the Pharisees what Moses commanded on the matter. The passage the Pharisees reference in reply is Deuteronomy 24:1-4, which describes a particular case of remarriage after divorce. The Israelites in Moses' day were already practicing divorce. The case law described in Deuteronomy 24 was meant to provide protections for the woman. But in Jesus' day this was twisted by the School of Hillel to make it easier to get divorce for almost any reason. Thus, the law meant to protect the woman was being used to make it easy to thrust her aside.

Instead of debating the case law in Deuteronomy 24, Jesus refers back to God's original ideal for marriage, in Genesis 1 and 2. He notes that in the beginning God made a man and a woman (Gen. 1:27), two individuals. He then combines this truth with Genesis 2:24, that a man leaves his parents and is joined to his wife, and the two become one flesh. This concept of unity becomes the basis of Jesus' affirmation of the marriage bond. What God has joined, people should not separate.

What can your congregation do to strengthen the marriages among you? How do you help those whose marriages have already fallen apart?

- Pre marriage counseling
- Marriage seminars
- Marriage counseling
- Following gospel order and church discipline for non biblical divorce as well as for fornication illicit sex.
- Forgiveness and re-baptism for truly repentant persons.
- Maintain a high standard in the church with a graceful attitude towards those who have fallen. We want to pick people up not trample over them.