

## **The Gospel of Mark**

### **Mark 10. 1-12**

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#### V1-2

- Jesus is in Capernaum and the Pharisees try to trap him with a question about divorce. This is the same region Satan tried to test Jesus.
- Jesus has to be careful about how he answers their question in Herod's territory. Herod has recently divorced and remarried for less than righteous reasons. John took a stand against this and it cost him his life.
- Divorce was easily attained in Jesus' culture. The reasons for divorce varied but the legality of the matter was clear.
- Jesus is put in a tough position. If he says "no" then he will seem to oppose the Old Testament Law. If he says "yes" he will appear to oppose John's stand, and John was revered by the people to be a righteous man.

#### V3-4

- Jesus turns their question into a question, as was his custom. His question reveals the heart of man. This is not a legal issue, it's a human issue. He refers to Deuteronomy 24.1.
- He clarifies that the only grounds for divorce is adultery, but that an "any matter" position had been taken by the culture, which the Pharisees would seem to concur with.
- Jesus brings them back to the important matter of marriage – what is God's intention for it?
- God's intention if for marriage is to stand as an example of faithfulness and sacrificial love. This example points to God's relationship with us. When we trivialize this example we trivialize each other, our value and may even be in danger of trivializing God's intentions for us.
- Jesus contends that marriage is matter and divorce springing from the "any matter" position is not right.
- This "any matter" positions allowed a man to divorce his wife for any reason he liked, even if the matter was trivial.

#### V5-9

- Jesus takes us back to Genesis. What was God's first intention?
- Marriage is a gift, a bond for life, and should not be taken lightly.
- Jesus stresses that divorce exists because sin exists, our "hard hearts" needed a way to function in a broken world.
- Jesus stresses that man's hand should not supersede God's hand. Divorce should not be taken lightly. The answer should not be found in the law, but in the heart.

V10-12

- In Jesus' day both men and women could initiate divorce. Jesus opposes the "any matter" position. He also speaks to and backs up his words in other places in scripture in Matthew 5 and 19.
- Jesus believes that sexual immorality breaks the marriage covenant. 1 Corinthians corresponds.
- Any provision for divorce must be based on the premise that God has a better vision for life for his creation than broken relationship and disunity.

### **Closing Thoughts:**

Many of us have been touched by divorce or may have been divorced ourselves. All of us would agree that it's not something one would *like* to walk through. It is painful, it is sad and it is detrimental to a family unit.

Marriage therefore, must be closely guarded, and husbands and wives should be vigilant in investing in and safeguarding their relationship. Marriage as God intended it is about a life long commitment which finds its foundation in sacrificial love. Those intending on becoming married should not take this covenant relationship lightly and do all they can to prepare well for it, making wise choices and seeking wise counsel in community.

For those who have been divorced and perhaps remarried remember that our past, our brokenness cannot trump God's amazing grace. No matter what we're walking through or have walked through, God's love is for us. His grace is big and his healing is possible.

Those who are struggling in marriage should do all they can to help their marriage succeed and never be afraid to seek proper counsel. Your marriage is the most important relationship you will have on this planet outside of your relationship with Jesus. Parents hold to this truth know this,; a healthy marriage is the best gift you can give your children. Of course it is never wise to stay in an abusive or unsafe relationship and if you find yourself in that position we encourage you to seek good counsel and appropriate resources to stay safe.

God's original plan for marriage as recorded in Genesis holds today – because it is the best plan for us. We need to cherish, protect and build on our marriages everyday.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- If you're comfortable in sharing, how has divorce touched your life?
- What did this teaching bring up for you? How did it inform how you think about marriage and divorce?

- How does Jesus see marriage differently than our culture?
- How do we better love one another when we talk about this topic and try and help one another in difficult circumstances? How do we continually lead one another to Jesus and embrace grace and the gospel as we wrestle with challenging realities?