

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

- 1) 03 Mar..... Mark 01..... Calls
- 2) 10 Mar..... Mark 02..... Forgives
- 3) 17 Mar..... Mark 03-04..... Unites
- 4) 24 Mar..... Mark 05..... Restores
- 5) 31 Mar..... Mark 06..... Sends
- 6) 07 Apr..... Mark 07..... Includes
- 7) 14 Apr..... Mark 08-09..... Commands
- 8) 21 Apr..... Mark 15..... Saves
- 9) 28 Apr..... Mark 10..... Serves**
- 10) 05 May..... Mark 11-12..... Purifies
- 11) 12 May..... Mark 13..... Promises
- 12) 19 May..... Mark 14..... Prepares
- 13) 26 May..... Mark 15-16..... Lives

**INTRODUCTION**

- In this chapter, Jesus teaches about divorce and remarriage (D&R) and a sundry of other topics before healing blind Bartimaeus
- Unfortunately, Lifeway Explore the Bible (ETB) curriculum totally ignores **Mark 10:1-12** dealing with the topic on divorce & remarriage.
- Few can handle the truth about D&R. **WHY?** This is such a critical teaching for the Church today, I have to give it considerable attention.
- **Tony Evans says this:** *“Divorce and remarriage remains the often-unacknowledged elephant sitting squarely in the center of the sanctuary. We dance around it, carry on with our praise and worship services next to it, and frequently outright ignore it. This is dangerous to the body of Christ.”* (Src: Divorce & Remarriage, p6)
- We cannot have an impact on an ever-increasing immoral society when the world can rightfully accuse the church of hypocrisy for condoning and promoting adultery in our own ranks through D&R.
- **Principle to Know.** The transcending moral laws of God (e.g., murder, idolatry, idolatry, thievery) are applicable to Jews and non-Jews, believers and non-believers throughout all generations
- **Modern Day Dilemma – Divorce & Remarriage is out of control**
  - ♦ Divorce, by itself, is not a do-or-die issue for the church today. It is the remarriage of divorcees that makes the Church ineffective in its attempts to positively influence an ever-increasing immoral society with a growing homosexual agenda
  - ♦ Many of us would not be who we are today (this author included) if one of our parents or grandparents did not divorce and remarry
  - ♦ Everyone is impacted by divorce. Even God is divorced, **Jer 3:8**; and Joseph thought about divorcing his wife, Mary, the mother of Jesus
  - ♦ Israel panicked when the number of their abnormal marriages reached 1% (113 families out of 10,000) ..... **Ezra 10**
  - ♦ Most churches today have at least 30% blended families and we don't even raise an eyebrow of concern
  - ♦ Should we panic and do something different to fix things for the next generation or do we continue maintaining status quo?

**THE EARLY CHURCH ON DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE**

- History shows us during the earliest centuries of the New Testament Church that polygamy and divorced & remarried folks were very prevalent throughout Jewish society and the Roman Empire
- In all probability, the early church had within its midst more polygamous relationships and divorced and remarried couples than churches do today – and those families were vital to church life
- The early church did not seek to break up families in such relationships, but acknowledged such relationships as valid (God-joined) and workable, as Jesus would have done so
- The only controls the early church implemented were the following:
  - Elders and Deacons had to be husbands of one wife only. No polygamous or divorced/remarried Elders & Deacons allowed. They were to lead by example in this area.
  - Most early churches prohibited marrying additional wives to polygamous husbands and remarrying divorcees

Passage	Comments
Mark 10:1-12	<p><b>Divorce and Remarriage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v1. Again, large crowds surrounded Jesus. Assuredly He healed all who were sick in those crowds, but his main emphasis “according to His custom” was to teach</li> <li>• vv2-9. The Pharisees tested Jesus with this provoking question, “Was it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?”                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Even back then divorce was a sensitive topic</li> <li>♦ Jesus stopped them in their tracks by saying “NO”, and the justification He used was the account from <b>Genesis 2:24</b> – “...the two shall become one”</li> <li>♦ And He concluded “what God has joined together let no man separate.” <b>IOW, divorce is not an option.</b></li> <li>♦ In <b>Mat 19:10-12</b>, the Apostles essentially said, “If one cannot get out of a bad marriage without sinning then it is better not to marry.” Jesus replied “not everyone can accept this [single life]”</li> <li>♦ Jesus did acknowledge that Moses acquiesced to their sinful &amp; hardened heart by allowing men to divorce their wives for “indecentcy” ..... <b>Deut 24:1</b> But God still hates divorce ..... <b>Mal 2:16</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divorce allowed mercy into a bad situation. The wife would be able to reclaim her dowry, but many would need to get remarried just to survive, thus “being made to commit adultery” ..... <b>Mat 5:32</b></li> <li>• Remember – If the wife’s adultery was confirmed the penalty in the OT was a stoning, not a divorce</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• v10. The disciples asked Jesus to expound on this issue, and Jesus essentially said we create an adulterous event when we marry after a divorce or we marry a divorcee.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Yet, Christians have been looking for loopholes &amp; exceptions to justify D&amp;R and make it sinless                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholics, if you gave indulgences, came up with marital annulments to avoid the “adultery” label</li> <li>• Protestant excuses include: a divorce happened before salvation; or abandonment; or abuse; or infidelity; or incompatibility; &amp; eventually “no-fault”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Divorce and Remarriage from a Gentile Perspective	
Mark 10:11-12	Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman <b>he commits adultery against her</b> ; and if she divorces her husband and marries another man, <b>she commits adultery</b>
Luke 16:18	Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another <b>commits adultery</b> , and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband <b>commits adultery</b> .
Romans 7:2-3	For the married woman is bound by <b>LAW to her husband while he is living</b> ; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, <b>if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress</b> ; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.



Divorce and Remarriage from a Gentile Perspective	
1Cor 7:11	If the woman leaves (divorces) her husband, she must <b>remain unmarried, or else be reconciled</b> to her husband, and that the husband should not divorce his wife.
1Cor 7:39	<b>A wife is bound as long as her husband lives</b> ; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.
Divorce and Remarriage from a Jewish Perspective	
Matthew 5:32	Everyone who divorces his wife, <b>except for the reason of unfaithfulness &lt;porneia&gt;</b> , makes her commit adultery; & whoever marries a divorced woman <b>commits adultery</b> .
Matthew 19:9	Whoever divorces his wife, <b>except for immorality &lt;porneia&gt;</b> , and marries another woman <b>commits adultery</b>

**So, what is this Exception Clause, "Except it be for Immorality?"**

- Notice when Mark, Luke, and Paul address their initial audience of Gentiles about divorce and remarriage, there is no exception clause. Without exception, when a divorced person marries while their previous spouse is still physically alive, they have created an adulterous event.
- But when Matthew addressed his initial Jewish audience, we have an exception clause – TWICE (Mat 5:32, 19:9). So, what gives?
  - From a Jewish perspective, several immoral <porneia> or invalid types of marriages (not God-joined) would have come to mind:
    - A. Herod married his brother's wife, contrary to Lev 20:21
    - B. The unlawful marriages of Ezra's day, violating Deut 7:3
    - C. Other types of unlawful <porneia-based> relationships or marriages include homosexual, bestial, and incestial.
  - God would not have "joined together" these types of people in an indissoluble union since they clearly violate His timeless commands for what constitutes a valid marriage (cf Lev 18:1-30 and 20:10-24).
    - Therefore, from God's perspective, adultery would not be an issue for those coming out of an immoral <porneia> relationship since there was not a valid God-joined marriage to violate.
  - Remember – John the Baptist lost his head over this issue

**Moses Allowed for Divorce**

- True. Overriding principle → God calls us to peace .... 1Cor 7:15
- BUT God never sanctions the remarriage of a divorcee (who was in a valid, God-joined marriage) to be free from the sin of adultery

Reasons For Remarriage	Reasons Against Remarriage
We must show grace, mercy, love, and compassion, not legalism	God wants obedience, not sacrifice when sin is involved...1Sam 15:22
We must be sensitive to the needs of divorced people	God prefers holy people, not married people ..... 1Peter 1:16
God's permissive will allows for divorcees to remarry	God's perfect will says to reconcile or remain single ..... 1Cor 7:11
We might lose church members & income if we say no to remarriage	Yep.....Acts 4:19; 5:29

**...Let's Move on to the Rest of Chapter 10...**

Passage	Comments
10:13-16	<p><b>Permit the Children to Come</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it" .....cf Mat 18:3; 1Pet 2:2                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ At times we are commanded to be men                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be men of understanding.....1Cor 14:20, Eph 4:4</li> <li>• Act like men, be strong ..... 1Cor 16:13</li> </ul> </li> <li>♦ But here, Christ wants us to be unassuming as kids                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be still and know that I am God.....Ps 46:10</li> <li>• Trust not in ourselves, but in God.....2Cor 1:9</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10:17-31	<p><b>The Rich Young Ruler</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v19. It takes more than keeping the 10 Commandments to get to Heaven. It's not what we trust in, but Who we trust in</li> <li>• v21. Jesus spells out the spirit of the law – Focus on the food that endures to eternal life ..... John 6:27</li> <li>• vv23-25. Why do riches keep people out of Heaven?</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv26-27. "All things are possible with God."                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ We know what Scripture says, but what does it mean? In this case, it means what it says, "All things are possible with God." BUT, always keep in mind the context, which conveys here in this passage who can be saved.</li> <li>♦ ...and the answer is theoretically everyone can be saved. BUT will everyone get saved? Unfortunately not!</li> <li>♦ Salvation is made available to everyone, but many are not willing to come to Christ to have eternal life..... John 5:40</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10:32-45	<p><b>Jesus' Sufferings Foretold &amp; To Be Great is to Be Small</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is amazing how little information Mark provides at times, yet, what he does reveal is packed with insight</li> <li>• vv32-34. Jesus foretold His disciples what He will soon experience in Jerusalem, and they didn't seem to get it.</li> <li>• vv35-40. Instead, they went off on a tangent – "Hey, can we get prominent ring-side seats."                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Yet, Jesus used the tangent as a teaching moment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv41-45. Christian leadership is all about serving and meeting the needs and hurts of others                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ How well are we doing with that?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10:46-52	<p><b>Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v46. Another large crowd assembled around Jesus, and assuredly, Jesus healed ALL in that crowd just as He had done before. But Bartimaeus stood out for several reasons:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ First of all, Mark knew his name, which conveys he was a possibly a well-known figure in the early church</li> <li>♦ 2<sup>nd</sup>, He recognized Jesus as the Son of David, which acknowledged Him being in line to be King, and alluded to His Messiahship ..... 2Sam 7:12-16</li> <li>♦ 3<sup>rd</sup>, he threw his cloak aside indicating he will soon have his sight so he can find it and pick it up later</li> <li>♦ 4<sup>th</sup>, his faith in Christ was solid, &amp; he "immediately" was healed with only a command, "GO"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS**

- So much more could be said about divorce & remarriage
- How do we fix adulterous relationships in our churches today?
  - ♦ Fortunately, God works with the current marriage and so should we, unless it is a <porneia> relationship [e.g., same sex union]
  - ♦ The church elders & deacons should lead by example in this area and none of them should be in an adulterous relationship (divorced and remarried or married to a divorcee)..... 1Tim 3:2; 12; Titus 1:6
  - ♦ Remember what Jesus conveyed – Divorce is not an option, which means remarriage is not an option either..... Mark 10:6-9
  - ♦ Like the early church, we should avoid remarrying divorcees to restore our saltiness/effectiveness in promoting/preserving society's morals
  - ♦ When we disobey what Jesus taught we demonstrate we do not love Him with all of our heart, soul, and mind (Mat 22:37); we prefer to love others above loving God (Luke 24:26); and we prove we are lukewarm toward Him (Rev 3:16). All these scenarios are a recipe for disaster for our testimony and effectiveness not to mention losing God's blessings.

**NEXT WEEK: Mark 11-12.** Mark addresses numerous other teachings and testings of Jesus as He begins His final week on earth: 1) All your prayers can get answered; 2) Parable of the vine-growers; 3) Pharisees continue testing Jesus' authority; & 4) The widow's mite.

