

Mark 10:1-12 “What Do We Make of Marriage?” 9/25/22

Outline:

- 1) The test (10:1-3)

- 2) The concession (10:4-5)

Deut 24:1 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, ...

James Edwards, "You do not learn to fly an airplane by following the instructions for making a crash landing; you will not be successful in war if you train by the rules for beating a retreat. The same is true of marriage and divorce. The exceptional measures necessary when a marriage fails are of no help in discovering the meaning and intention of marriage. Jesus endeavors to recover God's will for marriage, not to argue about possible exceptions to it. His opponents ask what is permissible; he points to what is commanded. Deut 24:1-3, he argues, is not a pretext for divorce but an attempt to limit its worst consequences for women. The divine intention for marriage cannot be determined from a text about divorce."

- 3) "From the beginning..." (10:6-9)

James Edwards, "The greatest difference between Jesus and the rabbis...is this: by giving a husband principal control over his wife, the Jewish divorce policy made the man the lord of the marital relationship. According to Jesus, however, it is neither man nor woman who controls marriage, but rather God, who is the lord of marriage: 'what *God* has joined together, let man not separate.'"

- 4) Divorce and adultery (10:10-12)

Matt. 5:32 "...everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Matt 19:9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.

1 Cor 7:15 ...if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

5) Discipleship and marriage

James Edwards, “The essential thrust of 10:1-12 one is the inviolability of the marriage bond as intended and instituted by God. Jesus does not conceive of marriage on the grounds of its dissolution but on the grounds of its architectural design and purpose by God. Human failure does not alter that purpose.

The intent of Jesus’ teaching is not to shackle those who fail in marriage with debilitating guilt. The question is not whether God forgives those who fail in marriage period the answer to that question is assured in 3:28, ‘All the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven.’ There is, after all, no instance in Scripture of an individual seeking forgiveness and being denied it by God.

The question in our day of impermanent commitments and casual divorce is whether we as Christians will hear the unique call of Christ to discipleship in marriage. In marriage, as in other areas to which the call of Christ applies, will we seek relief in what is permitted, or commit ourselves to what is intended by God and commanded by Christ? Will we fall away in trouble and difficulty (4:17), or follow Jesus in the costly journey of discipleship, even in marriage? Will we sunder the marriage union of ‘two become one flesh’, or will we honor and nurture marriage as a gift and creation of God?”