



# The Gospel of Mark



## WARM-UP

What would you buy if you won the lottery?

*Read out loud as a group*

**Mark 9 Recap:** Previously in Mark chapter 9 we saw the transfiguration of Jesus Christ, the confusion of the disciples, and the healing of a possessed boy where his dad says the famous quote "I believe, help my unbelief" followed by a second prediction of Jesus' death and a warning to not be the cause of stumbling.

*Read as Leaders*

### **LEADER NOTE:**

*This section of scripture is on marriage and divorce. We encourage tenderness and listening ears as you discuss. We recognize that this can be a sensitive and difficult topic. Especially when a marriage takes two willing participants and one can only control themselves. If people want more information or have more questions an easy place to start is a sermon by Tim Keller entitled *Marriage, Divorce, and Singleness*. They are also welcome to reach out to pastors or if care is needed, *Restoring Hope* is a great place to start.*

*Read out loud as a group*

## **MARK 10:1-16 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

<sup>3</sup> "What did Moses command you?" he replied.

<sup>4</sup> They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away."

<sup>5</sup> "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. <sup>6</sup> "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.'<sup>7</sup> 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,<sup>8</sup> and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. <sup>9</sup> Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

*Read out loud as a group*

## MARK 10:1-16 (NIV) CONTINUED

<sup>10</sup> When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. <sup>11</sup> He answered, “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. <sup>12</sup> And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.”

<sup>13</sup> People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” <sup>16</sup> And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

*Read out loud as a group*

“Divorce was a controversial topic in Jesus’ day, with two main schools of thought centered around two of its most famous proponents. The first was the school of Rabbi Hillel (a lenient and popular view) and the school of Rabbi Shammai (a strict and unpopular view). Rabbi Shammai understood that uncleanness meant sexual immorality and said that was the only valid reason for divorce. But Rabbi Hillel understood uncleanness to mean any sort of discretion, even to the point of burning the breakfast being valid grounds for divorce... Jesus emphasized the heart of the matter in [Deuteronomy 24:1](#). Moses did not command divorce; Moses permitted it. This went against the teaching of Rabbi Hillel, who taught that it was a righteous duty to divorce your wife if she displeased you in any way... The law of [Deuteronomy 24:1](#) was really given as a protection to the divorced wife. “Moses permitted divorce providing a certificate of divorce was given to the wife... Its primary function was to provide a degree of protection for the woman who had been repudiated by her husband.” (Lane)...In using the terms joined together and separate, Jesus reminded us that divorce is really like an amputation. Sometimes in the most extreme circumstances, amputation may be the right thing to do. But the patient must first have a diagnosis worthy of such an extreme solution.”

- David Guzik, A Study for Mark 10



What stands out to you?

*Possible Answers: Answers will vary.*



**What does culture say about marriage? What does Christian culture say about marriage? What does God say about marriage?**

*Possible Answers: May vary.*

*Culture: a commitment as long as you feel it, not necessary but can be done, a legal agreement only, marriage is only about love, etc.*

*Christian culture: marriage is the ideal, marriage is necessary, marriage is worshipped, marriage is hard, etc.*

*God: marriage represents the greater oneness of Christ and His Church. etc.*



**Jesus' answer to the Pharisee's question is to go back to the beginning with how God created men, women, and marriage therefore God alone addresses how He created it to be. What makes it hard to trust in God's designs? What makes it easy?**

*Possible Answers: May vary.*

*Hard: Sometimes our feelings don't line up with God's designs. That doesn't make God's designs wrong or even our feelings wrong but it shows the dissonance that we have in this fallen world. Trusting God's design doesn't mean accepting it blindly. It means searching, asking, and wrestling with God and ultimately being willing to set aside what we feel to trust what He says is true.*

*Easy: When you don't struggle with it, when you have support from your community, when you breathe in the scripture around it, when you look back on all the times God has proven trustworthy in your own life, etc.*



**What about children do you think we are supposed to emulate?**

*Possible Answers: kids are always learning, they accept truth relatively easily and simply belief (think Santa and such), they often have to have so much done for them and they accept it and ask for it mostly without any shame that they couldn't do it themselves, they don't refuse gifts because they think they didn't earn them but accept them eagerly, they are rarely embarrassed when they are with their close people, etc.*

*Read out loud as a group*

### **MARK 10:17-31 (NIV)**

<sup>17</sup> As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>18</sup> "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

<sup>20</sup> "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

<sup>21</sup> Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

<sup>22</sup> At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

<sup>24</sup> The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

Read out loud as a group

## MARK 10:17-31 (NIV) CONTINUED

<sup>26</sup> The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”

<sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

<sup>28</sup> Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

<sup>29</sup> “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. <sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”



Jesus is immediately challenging the rich man’s idea of what is good. How does Jesus’ reply of “No one is good—except God alone” challenge our own ideas of goodness?

*Possible Answers: May vary. It especially answers the question: why do bad things happen to good people? Because technically no one is good. And the worst thing happened to the only good person= Jesus taking the whole of humanity’s punishment on the cross. Reminds us of our need no matter how “good” we feel.*



Jesus is not saying that keeping the commandments is what gives eternal life. Rather, He’s pointing out that the law REVEALS our need/sin and we cannot do it ourselves. So when the man says he HAS done it all himself, Jesus lays one more requirement that exposes the man’s sinful heart: “sell all you have and give it to the poor then come follow me”. Where in your life is it easier to jump to actions over simply BEING WITH/FOLLOWING Jesus?

*Possible Answers: May vary. Could be serving in the Church, not having sex before marriage, not gossiping, tithing, etc. Any action that we do has to start with being-with-Jesus before we jump into the doing-for-Jesus. Even good deeds can be done with sinful hearts.*



This is descriptive not prescriptive. Jesus is not telling everyone to go out and sell all they have and follow Him. He is showing what it takes to gain eternal life, but we’re not the ones that have to do it! Jesus is the true and better rich young ruler who gave all He had for you and He succeeded! What are the things you feel like you HAVE to do? How can we live in the truth that Christ has done all the have-tos and we now live in the get-tos?

*Possible Answers: May vary. Remind each other of the freedom we have in Christ, that we have the Holy Spirit living and indwelling us! The HS will help us with the get-tos, when you already know your grade the pressure is off to study but that doesn’t mean we do nothing, try to view it as an invitation and an opportunity to worship God verses something we are required to do.*



Jesus is not trying to trick the rich man. Jesus loves him. How does knowing that Jesus loves us change the way we hear His most challenging commands?

*Possible Answers: May vary. If we know that it is out of love then we know they have our best interests at heart.*



Jesus reveals that the rich man was trusting in himself and in his money but the real answer to eternal life is Jesus himself. But the rich man did not understand what Jesus was saying and left his presence filled with sadness. What is your typical response when you don't understand something?

*Possible Answers: May vary. Ignore it, throw everything out with it, wrestle with it, seek counsel on it, full-on investigate it, give up, etc.*



How can we as a small group encourage each other to continue to wrestle, pursue, search, and ask questions with God?

*Possible Answers: May vary. Encourage questions, don't shame or judge when questions are asked, point to truth, follow up with each other, seek other resources for one another, etc.*

## DISCUSSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



- What are the reasons you'd call yourself "good"? How can you take one step closer to having Jesus be the answer this week?
- How can you simply BE with Jesus this week?
- If Jesus said to you, "One thing you lack...", what might He name? What would be hardest for you to surrender?