

Mark 10:1-12
Prevent Divorce. Nurture Marriage!

1. Review
 - a. Please read the file I emailed to you last week. If you didn't receive the email, check your spam folder. The file is also available on our website. Click on last week's sermon and you will see a link to my notes and the essay.
 - b. We have walked with Jesus and the disciples from Caesarea Philippi to Judea, a two or three week trek in which Jesus focused His attention on preparing His men for His departure.
 - c. Now He's back in the Pharisees crosshairs.
2. Two stories
 - a. Chick-Fil-A and gay marriage
 - b. The Church has focused on the wrong thing
 - i. Dogmatic rules about divorce and remarriage
 - ii. Failure to promote healthy marriage
 1. Premarital counseling
 2. Crisis counseling
3. Reading and prayer
4. Bold statement: **Jesus was not establishing a rule for His followers.**
 - a. Consider the context.
 - i. The Pharisees were *not* asking to learn. They were asking to trap. Big difference!
 - ii. Jesus was navigating the same type of mine field the CEO of Chick-Fil-A found himself in.
 - iii. Jesus gave the orthodox answer. His behavior toward women and the rule of law tell a different story.
 - b. Behavior toward women:
 - i. His own mother
 - ii. Woman at the well
 - iii. Woman caught in adultery
 - iv. Mary Magdalene
 - c. The rule of law: Jesus *clearly* "broke" the Sabbath. Jesus' standards:
 - i. "Judge with righteous judgment" (Circumcision on the Sabbath - John 7:21-24)

- ii. “[God] desires compassion and not sacrifice” (Gleaning on the Sabbath - Matthew 12:1-8)
 - iii. “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath” (Healing of the withered hand - Matthew 12:9-13)
 - iv. Jesus was angry and grieved by their hardness of heart (Isaiah 58 is very important!) (Healing of the withered hand - Mark 3:1-12, vs 5)
- d. What are we supposed to do?
 - i. Avoid the trap! Do not make rules.
 - ii. Recognize biblical principles regarding marriage (Malachi 2:13-16) “This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. For “I hate divorce,” says the Lord, the God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong,” says the Lord of hosts. “So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.”
 - 1. God has a high view of marriage.
 - 2. God has high expectations for husbands.
 - 3. God hates divorce when it is abused.
- 5. How do we prevent divorce? By working hard to support strong marriages!
 - a. Men: the teaching on marriage in the Bible (particularly in Proverbs, Malachi, and in Ephesians 5:22-33) is heavily skewed toward husbands. You are the leader in your home. The health and happiness of your wife is *your* responsibility. Your wife is hard-wired to need your love.
 - i. Study your wife. Be as fascinated by her as you were when you were trying to trick her into marrying you. Be as dedicated to caring for her as you were back then!

- ii. Be grateful for your wife. Stop to realize how much she does to care for your home, your children, and YOU! Express gratitude in a way that is meaningful to her.
 - iii. Serve your wife (more on that in two weeks)
 - iv. Take responsibility!
- b. Wives: your husband is hard-wired to need your respect. Same points as I just listed for your husband.
- c. Church: the primary failure of the modern church is our acceptance of the “right to privacy”. We were designed to function in community!
 - i. Look for exemplary marriages and spend time with those couples.
 - ii. Proactively seek out other couples in different age brackets.
 - iii. Support young families. They are going through the most demanding stage of life.
- d. Pray for one another!