

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

Mark 10:2-16
October 3, 2021

Marriage Matters

What is this text about? Divorce? Marriage? Hard hearts? How to read Scripture? Yes!

Today we take up this text to study Marriage matters and to see that Marriage matters.

- ❖ Marriage matters need to be studied because of the hard hearts we were born with.
 - Hard hearts are not open to listen to God - to be molded by him and made alive.
 - ◆ Hard hearts: the source of the Pharisee's question intended to trap Jesus.
 - ◆ Hard hearts think, *There must be a way to make God's word fit my will.*
 - ◆ Hard hearts ask, *What will God let me get by with? How far can I push it?*
 - ◆ Why did God give Israel a civil divorce provision?
 - He knew Israel would have self-willed sinners who would not listen to him.
 - He provided it to protect the vulnerable and civil society from the hard hearted.
 - Hard hearts (sin) are self-centered. Marriage calls for selfless love.
 - ◆ 2 made 1 = a closeness designed for love/care, where sin produces friction.
 - ◆ Love's *other-mindfulness* and *servant heart* (submit) is the very opposite of sin.
- ❖ God's word seeks to enlighten, enliven, and liberate our hearts on marriage matters.
 - Faith knows God's love and trusts his wisdom and ways.
 - Touched and transformed by God's love - a Christian home is a nursery to daily melt and mold hardness into living hearts eager to hear, know, and do God's will.
 - ◆ Let Jesus' words implant God's design and goals for marriage in you.
 - ◆ The whole family of believers is called to know and honor God's marriage design.
 - ***Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.*** Hebrews 13:4
 - ◆ Honor marriage as a precious gift of God to be respected as God designed it.
 - ◆ Marriage is **not** a human invention of evolution open to be redefined.
 - God's marriage: 1 man + 1 woman - united by God for life
 - Once both willingly enter - believers or unbelievers - the Living God unites them
 - A calling for this life. Ended by God when one dies (for life)
 - Breaking a marriage by adultery or desertion is rebellion against God - sin
 - To end a marriage to marry another - Jesus calls adultery
 - John the Baptist lost his life calling Herod and his wife to repent of this.
 - When a marriage ends before death - sin killed the marriage.
 - Jesus is clear. **Don't** compromise **nor** expound on Jesus' silence. Elsewhere:
 - *I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the grounds of her sexual immorality, and marries another woman is committing adultery.* Matthew 19:9
 - *...if the unbeliever leaves, let him leave. The brother or the sister is not bound in such cases...* 1 Corinthians 7:15 The one leaving without cause is an unbeliever.
 - Ending the marriage bond is the sin. Divorce declares that the marriage is ended.
 - Sinners end marriage by adultery or malicious desertion.
 - The believer is given the freedom to declare his/her spouse ended it.

- ◆ Honor God's design for marriage with your attitudes and actions.
 - Encourage and commend the married
 - Married - Honor your marriage as a calling or vocation from God.
 - Honor God by honoring and respecting your spouse as God's gift and calling.
 - God gave you this calling to treasure, be faithful to, care for and about, and serve and support your spouse in a unique role.
 - Nothing good will ever come out of entertaining the thought: *I think I/we could have made a better choice...* after the fact. Your spouse is God's gift to you.
 - Christian spouses see each other as running partners to grow in Christ.
 - Unmarried Christians honor marriage
 - By seeing being unmarried as their current calling from God.
 - Speaking highly of God's gift of marriage.
 - ◆ Not putting marriage down because of its challenges.
 - Not buying the lie that it's better to *live together* before marriage
 - ◆ You can't *try* unconditional faithfulness without the marriage commitment.
 - Avoid remarks and "jokes" that mock marriage and its gift of sexual intimacy.
 - Honor God's heterosexual design of marriage.
 - Care for & about people in *alternative marriages* with God's word, not hatred
 - *How do you love and witness to friends who abandoned their first marriage?*
- The power of God's word and forgiveness in Christ matters a lot in marriage
 - ◆ It takes the guess work out of God's design and purpose, exposing sin's lies.
 - ◆ Jesus died for all sins, including the ones that damage marriages.
 - Only the gospel can heal the hurting - self inflicted or hurt by your spouse.
 - While causing the end of a marriage is sin - Jesus paid for that sin too!
 - Healing comes at Jesus' feet, embracing his word of truth and forgiveness.
 - Repentance acknowledges my sin, it trusts Jesus' forgiveness, and longs for and follows his instruction.
 - An abandoned believer finds:
 - ◆ eternal value and purpose in Christ
 - ◆ the power to let go, lest their ex's injury controls them, and
 - ◆ forgiveness - for while they didn't break the marriage the believer knows their response to sin was less than Christ-like.
 - ◆ It gives us hearts eager to be molded by God's word and will.
 - Transforming our homes from mud pits of the self-willed...
 - ...into homes where Christ reigns with his love & peace, building each other up.

God's marriage matters matter a lot!