**Follow – Gospel of Mark - Wk 24 – Marriage and Divorce**

**Walking in the steps of Jesus w/ his disciples - Gospel of Mark**

**Today, leave the home of Galilee - begin ministry in Judean area.**

**Map - Jesus walks into a very highly religiously charged area. Into a lot of confrontations w/ Pharisees and political leaders.**

**Mark 10:1 Jesus then left that place (Galilee) 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. 2 Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” 3 “What did Moses command you?” he replied. 4 They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.” 5 “It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,” Jesus replied.**

* **Question - Is it against God’s will to get a divorce?**

**And, if God hates divorce, why did Moses give divorces?**

* **Answer – Because of the hardness of hearts a lot of things happen that God disapproves of.**

**BTW – it was given as protection for the woman. Not allowed to just kick her out. This allowed her to remarry.**

**6 “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ 7 ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8 and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”**

**Problem was not they did not understand what God said about divorce, but did not understand what God says about marriage**

**A passage that causes people to decide if the Bible is true and trustworthy or toss it. \*\* But – Jesus said it.**

**\* God Created Marriage – So HE gets to define it**

**Jesus did not look to culture or trends. He went back to the design.**

**Here is the process: God exists - God is Good and Holy - God created all that is good and holy - God created & designed our bodies purpose - God tells us through his word what that definition and design is.**

**If there is a breakdown in any one of those you can throw the Bible out. God created marriage – God gets to define marriage**

Jesus on Marriage

**6 At (from) the beginning… What I am about to say is Gods’ design**

**God ‘made them male and female’ – a man and a woman**

**7 For this reason… what reason? Union – of a man and a woman**

**man will leave his father and mother… man & woman, shifting of allegiance**

**‘man’ united to his wife… marriage a man & woman working together as 1**

**and the two will become one flesh…’ 2 (not many) man woman - as 1 flesh.**

**9 Therefore what God has joined together… God joined together (God thing)**

**let no one separate.” God deigns this for the rest of your life.**

**First recorded words of man in Bible- Gen 2:23** **The man (Human) said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ (Ishah) for she was taken out of man.” (ISH)**

**Jesus started with – “from the beginning” – God’s forever design. Jesus says marriage is a (ish) and (Ishah) becoming one, as long as they live.**

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

* **Question – What’s the big deal about divorce anyway?**

**Why does God hate divorce?**

* **Answer – It is both complicated and simple**

**Matthew 19:8 Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. 9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”**

**Jesus is simply saying that if a divorce is not legitimate, then the remarriage is not legitimate. If the divorce is legitimate, then the remarriage is legitimate. What is legitimate?**

Jesus on Divorce **- What God thinks about Divorce**

**\* God (Jesus) Hates Divorce – because He loves People**

**God hates divorce because he hates the pain of divorce. Divorce hurts!**

**Marriage is a gift from God. Divorce is not his design.**

**It is not the symbol He loves – it’s the person He loves.**

**(NIV 1984) Malachi 2:16 "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.**

**(NIV Current) 16 “The man who hates and divorces his wife,” says the Lord, the God of Israel, “does violence to the one he should protect,” says the Lord Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful.**

**(ESV) 16 “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.”**

**(NASB) 16 "For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and (I hate) him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."**

**Why the diff? There's no "I" in the MS – just "hate divorce"**

**He (husband) puts on her a "garment of wrong". Cloaks her in cruelty. "Guard yourself" - hedge the thorns / protect by tending.**

**Malachi 2:16 "For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "To divorce your wife is to overwhelm her with cruelty," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "So guard your heart; do not be unfaithful to your wife."**

**Divorce causes pain and suffering – and God hates it.**

**\* God does not forbid all divorce (not all divorce is sin)**

**Adultery - Matt 5:32,19:4-9, Deut 24:1-4 - Infidelity – GK- Porneia**

**Abandonment – 1 Cor 7:15 - Desertion- don’t be difficult / vengeful**

**Abuse – 1 Co 7:14-15, Deut 21:11-14 – Don’t abuse her - let her go!**

**If you are in an abusive relationship – get out. Don’t look back.**

**If you are in an abusive marriage – get out and seek help.**

**If you are the abuser - God will crush the oppressors and the violent – “Vengeance is mine, I will repay” Says the LORD (Rom. 12:1)**

**\* When you say I do - God is for you – Don’t give up too soon**

**These are allowances not requirements - permitted not commanded.**

**A reason for divorce does not mean you need to divorce.**

**If Jesus can raise the dead, he can raise a dead marriage. God has the power to heal any marriage.**

**Matthew adds a little more insight into what they asked – Matthew 19:10 The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.” 11 Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given.**

* **The Question – Is marriage worth the hassle and commitment?**
* **Jesus answer – Yes, if you can live by God’s purpose and design.**

**Matthew 19:12 For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others—and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.”**

Jesus on the tough stuff

**What is a eunuch? A castrated person - removal of testicles for men. Mutilation for women. Inability to have sex or procreate.**

**Often forced on people in royal court work. And cases of people born with a genetic anomaly.**

**Some read as symbolic eunuch (single) but I think the context is literal as they were living it. Jesus gives a few scenarios.**

**Born a Eunuch – physical abnormality**

**Forced against will to be a Eunuch – attacked, childhood, job, slave**

**Choose to be a Eunuch – choosing celibacy to follow God’s command**

**Basically: If you can’t keep God’s design for marriage don’t get married and remain celibate.**

**Jesus is saying I know this can be a difficult – marriage is designed to be a man and a woman - but if someone is unable to accept this or do this, don’t get married and stay celibate (don’t have sex) “The one who can accept this should accept it.”**

**If you’re still with me - What do we do with all this?**

**\* All of us have at least a page in the Bible we did not get right, all of us**

**Romans 3:10-24 – none of us is righteous – not even one.**

**\* God brings, grace, mercy, and fresh starts**

**2 Cor 5:17- Our God is a God of forgiveness and new beginnings.**

**The heart of this is in what Jesus says next**

**Mark 10:13 People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 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.**

**“Don’t hinder them” from coming to me. A focus on the “important things” can hinder kids from knowing Jesus.**

**Jesus then builds a bridge to all of this today - key to all of this today**

**Mark 10:15 Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” 16 And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.**

**\* We all need to come to Jesus – as a child**

**You “will not receive the Kingdom of God” if you don’t. It is that important.**

**What does it mean to come as child? We all have to come to Jesus the same… like a child. Humble – broken – reliant – dependent on Jesus – trusting – turning to Him and His will.**

**But I messed up – broke it – can’t pay it back – can’t go back and fix it**

**When you come to him as a child – Mark 10:16 And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.**