A BETTER WORD

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

A Study Through the Life of King Jesus | with Pastor Nick Gatzke

Jesus' Teaching on Divorce

◆ *Mark 10:1–12*

THE BIG IDEA

Marriage was never meant to run on feelings — it holds because God himself joins it together. And even where it has broken, his grace still reaches into the wreckage.

SERMON SUMMARY

The Pharisees tried to trap Jesus with a question about divorce, but he answered with something deeper than the law's loophole — God's original design. Citing Genesis 2, Jesus traced the Mosaic allowance back to human hardness of heart, not God's desire, and insists that what God joined, he means to hold together.

DIGGING DEEPER

OBSERVATION

1. In verse 2, the Pharisees asked Jesus a question in order "to test him." What does that motive tell you about the question and how does Jesus' answer in verses 3–5 turn the conversation back to Scripture instead of the trap?

INTERPRETATION

2. Jesus traced the Mosaic allowance for divorce to "hardness of heart" (v.5), then pointed past Moses to Genesis 2. What's the difference between what the law permitted and what God designed and why does Jesus insist the second one is the real standard?
3. Verses 6–9 move from creation, to union, to God's own action: "what God has joined together." Why did Jesus ground marriage in something God does rather than something two people simply decide and what did that reveal about how serious a covenant it actually is?

THEOLOGICAL CONNECTION

4. Jesus (Matthew 19:9) and Paul (1 Corinthians 7:15) each name one circumstance where leaving a marriage carries no moral failure. How does knowing these specific exceptions shape how you think about commitment, yours, or someone else's?
5. Ephesians 5 says marriage exists to put the gospel on display because it mirrors Christ's sacrificial love for his church. If someone watched your marriage right now, what would they learn about forgiveness and sacrifice and what needs to change?

LIVING IT OUT

HEART CHECK

Are you measuring your relationships by how they make you feel, or by the commitment you've made? Is there an unresolved offense in your marriage, a friendship, or a family relationship that you've been using as an excuse to harbor anger or resentment?

ACTION STEPS

— Name one relationship, past or present, where trust was broken and never fully repaired.

— Identify the offense, whether it was yours to confess or theirs to forgive, instead of the vague feeling around it.

— Confess and pray over that relationship, then, if it's wise and safe, talk to the person.

"SO WHAT?" CHALLENGE

> ***Don't let "it's complicated" be the last word — take one real step toward reconciliation this week.***

REFLECTION & PRAYER

KEY VERSE — TO MEMORIZE

"What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

— Mark 10:9

PRAYER PROMPT

Thank God for his covenant faithfulness even when we are faithless. Ask him for the humility to seek forgiveness quickly, the courage to stay when staying is hard, and a readiness to reflect his grace wherever trust has been broken.

YOUR PRAYER