

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**10-9-24**

**Mark 10**

**A Test From The Pharisees – Verses 1-2**

**<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?”**

**10:1-2** The Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus with their question. If he supported divorce, he would be upholding the Pharisees’ procedures, and they doubted that he would do that. If Jesus spoke against divorce, however, some members of the crowd would dislike his position; some may have even used the law to their advantage to divorce their wives. More important, he might incur the wrath of Herod, who had already killed John the Baptist for speaking out against divorce and adultery (6:17-28). This is what the Pharisees wanted. The Pharisees saw divorce as a legal issue rather than a spiritual one. Jesus used this test as an opportunity to review God’s intended purpose for marriage and to expose the Pharisees’ selfish motives. They were not thinking about what God intended for marriage and were quoting Moses unfairly and out of context. Jesus showed these legal experts how superficial their knowledge really was.

**Jesus Emphasizes Marriage And God’s Plan In Marriage – Verses 3-9**

**<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.”**

**10:1-5** God allowed divorce as a concession to people’s sinfulness. Unfortunately, the Pharisees used Deuteronomy 24: 1 as a proof text for the sanctioning of divorce. Jesus explained that divorce was not God’s ideal; instead, God wants married people to consider their marriage permanent. Don’t enter marriage with the option of getting out. Your marriage is more likely to be happy if from the outset you are committed to permanence. Don’t be hard-hearted like these Pharisees, but be hardheaded in your determination, with God’s help, to stay together. That said, we know that in our world, divorce is sometimes necessary (for physical survival, for well-being of children, etc.). Jesus clearly gave God’s ideal for marriage in Genesis priority over Moses’ permission for divorce. Jesus did not cancel Moses’ teaching, however. For possible exceptions, see Matthew 5: 32 and 19: 9, where Jesus permitted divorce when the spouse had been unfaithful; and 1 Corinthians 7:15, where Paul recognized divorce when the unbelieving partner leaves the marriage. Divorce is wrong; it severs a holy union. But divorce is permitted. Jesus did not elaborate on the permissible reasons, but his high view of marriage surely requires that divorce be a last resort to avoid greater disaster.

**10:6-9** Women were often treated as property. Marriage and divorce were regarded as transactions similar to buying and selling land. But Jesus condemned this attitude, clarifying God’s original intention— that marriage bring oneness (Genesis 2: 24). Jesus held up God’s ideal for marriage and told his followers to live by that ideal.

## **Jesus Clarifies The Point For His Disciples – Verses 10-12**

**<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.”**

**10:10-12** His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter: This is not a 1-verse teaching of all there is to know about divorce and remarriage. Jesus clearly followed up His remarks made earlier in the chapter, where He indicated that God did permit (not command) divorce in the case of sexual immorality.

**10:10-12** Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her: We can only understand this passage by taking into account the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). In Matthew’s more complete recording of this teaching, he noted how Jesus said, “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery” (Matthew 19:9). The reason why a person who does not have a legitimate divorce commits adultery upon remarrying (as well as their new spouse) is because they are not divorced in the eyes of God. Since their old marriage is still valid, they are actually guilty of bigamy and adultery.

**10:10-12** We must come to grips with the fact that marriage, as a promise made to God, our spouse and the world, is a binding promise, and cannot be broken at our own discretion. There are certain cases where God allows the promise to be dissolved, but it is up to God and not us. There are some that neglect the whole counsel of God and say that God never allows remarriage after divorce. But when we see what the entire Bible says on the subject, we see that if a divorce is made on Biblical grounds (adultery or abandonment by an unbelieving spouse), there is full right to remarry.

## **The Little Children and Jesus – Verses 13-16**

**<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.**

**10:13-16** Jesus was often criticized for spending too much time with the wrong people— children, tax collectors, and sinners (Matthew 9:11; Luke 15:1-2; 19:7). Some, including the disciples, thought Jesus should be spending more time with important leaders and the devout because this was the way to improve his position and avoid criticism. But Jesus didn’t need to improve his position. He was God, and he wanted to speak to those who needed him most.

**10:14** To feel secure, all children need is a loving look and gentle touch from someone who cares. They believe us because they trust us. Jesus said that people should trust in him with this kind of childlike faith. We do not have to understand all the mysteries of the universe; it should be enough to know that God loves us and provides forgiveness for our sin.

**10:15** How can you “receive the kingdom of God like a little child”? Adults considering the Christian faith for the first time will have life experiences that take them way past the ability to be as innocent as children. Jesus does not ask us to put aside our experiences, but he does require a change of

attitude: adult self-sufficiency must recognize its need for the sovereign God; adult moral defensiveness must humble itself before the holy God; and adult skeptical toughness must soften before the loving God. Children do not feel supremely powerful, perfectly righteous, or totally autonomous. These are adult fantasies. Coming to Jesus means to accept his goodness on your behalf, confess your need, and commit your life to his tender guidance.

### **The Rich And The Kingdom Of God – Verses 17-22**

**17** 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?” **18** “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. **19** 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.’” **20** “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” **21** 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.” **22** At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

**10:17-20** This man wanted to be sure he would get eternal life, so he asked what he could do. He said he’d never once broken any of the laws Jesus mentioned (10:19), and perhaps he had even kept the Pharisees’ additional regulations as well. But Jesus lovingly broke through the man’s pride with a challenge that brought out his true motives: “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor.” This challenge exposed the barrier that could keep this man out of the kingdom: his love of money. Money represented his pride of accomplishment and self-effort. Ironically, his attitude made him unable to keep the first commandment: to let nothing be more important than God (Exodus 20:3). He could not meet the one requirement Jesus gave— to turn his whole heart and life over to God. The man came to Jesus wondering what he could do; he left seeing what he was unable to do. What barriers are keeping you from turning your life over to Christ?

**10:21** What does your money mean to you? Although Jesus wanted this man to sell everything and give his money to the poor, this does not mean that all believers should sell all their possessions. Most of his followers did not sell everything, although they used their possessions to serve others. Instead, this incident shows us that we must not let our possessions or money keep us from following Jesus. We must remove all barriers to serving him fully. If Jesus asked, could you give up your house? your car? your level of income? your position on the ladder of promotion? Your reaction may show your attitude toward money— whether it is your servant or your master.

**10:21** Jesus showed genuine love for this man, even though he knew that the man might not follow him. Love is able to give tough advice; it doesn’t hedge on the truth. Christ loved us enough to die for us, and he also loves us enough to talk straight to us. If his love were superficial, he would give us only his approval; but because his love is complete, he gives us life-changing challenges.

### **The Difficulty Of Riches – Verses 23-27**

**23** Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” **24** The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! **25** 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.” **26** The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?” **27** Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

**10:23** Jesus said it was very difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of God because the rich, having their basic physical needs met, often become self-reliant. When they feel empty, they buy something new to try to fill the void that only God can fill. Their abundance and self-sufficiency become their deficiency. The person who has everything on earth can still lack what is most important— eternal life.

**10:26** The disciples were amazed. Was not wealth a blessing from God, a reward for being good? This misconception is still common today. Although many believers enjoy material prosperity, many others live in poverty. Wealth is not a sign of faith or of partiality on God's part.

### **Our Reward And The Solution To The Problem Of Riches – Verses 28-31**

**28** Then Peter spoke up, **“We have left everything to follow you!”** **29** **“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** **30** **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.** **31** **But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”**

**10:29-30** Jesus assured the disciples that anyone who gives up something valuable for his sake will be repaid a hundred times over in this life, although not necessarily in the same way. For example, someone may be rejected by his family for accepting Christ, but he or she will gain the larger family of believers. Along with these rewards, however, we experience persecution because the world hates God. Jesus emphasized persecution to make sure that people do not selfishly follow him only for the rewards.

**10:31** Jesus explained that in the world to come, the values of this world will be reversed. Those who seek status and importance here will have none in heaven. Those who are humble here will be great in heaven. The corrupt condition of our society encourages confusion in values. We are bombarded by messages that tell us how to be important and how to feel good, and Jesus' teaching about service to others seems alien. But those who have humbly served others are most qualified to be great in heaven.

### **Jesus Predicts His Death a Third Time – Verses 32-34**

**32** They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. **33** **“We are going up to Jerusalem,”** he said, **“and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles,** **34** **who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.”**

**10:33-34** Jesus' death and resurrection should have come as no surprise to the disciples. Here he clearly explained to them what would happen to him. Unfortunately, they didn't really hear what he was saying. Jesus said he was the Messiah, but they thought the Messiah would be a conquering king. He spoke to them of resurrection, but they heard only his words about death. Because Jesus often spoke in parables, the disciples may have thought that his words on death and resurrection were another parable they weren't astute enough to understand. Jesus' predictions of his death and resurrection show that these events were God's plan from the beginning and not accidents.

## **The Request Of James And John – Verses 35-41**

**<sup>35</sup> Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.” <sup>36</sup> “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked. <sup>37</sup> They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.” <sup>38</sup> “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” <sup>39</sup> “We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.” <sup>41</sup> When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.**

**10:35-37** Mark records that John and James went to Jesus with their request; in Matthew, their mother also made the request. Apparently mother and sons were in agreement in requesting honored places in Christ’s kingdom. The disciples, like most Jews of that day, had the wrong idea of the Messiah’s kingdom as predicted by the Old Testament prophets. They thought Jesus would establish an earthly kingdom that would free Israel from Rome’s oppression. James and John wanted honored places in it. But Jesus’ kingdom is not of this world; it is not centered in palaces and thrones but in the hearts and lives of his followers. The disciples did not understand this until after Jesus’ resurrection.

**10:38-39** James and John said they were willing to face any trial for Christ. Both did suffer: James died as a martyr (Acts 12:2), and John was forced to live in exile (Revelation 1:9). It is easy to say we will endure anything for Christ, and yet most of us complain about the most minor problems. We may say that we are willing to suffer for Christ, but are we willing to suffer the minor irritations that sometimes come with serving others?

## **Jesus describes true greatness – Verses 42-45**

**<sup>42</sup> Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”**

**10:42-45** James and John wanted the highest positions in Jesus’ kingdom. But Jesus told them that true greatness comes in serving others. Peter, one of the disciples who had heard this message, expands the thought in 1 Peter 5:1-4. Businesses, organizations, and institutions measure greatness by personal achievement. In Christ’s kingdom, however, service is the way to get ahead. The desire to be on top will hinder, not help. Rather than seeking to have your needs met, look for ways that you can minister to the needs of others.

**10:45** This verse reveals not only the motive for Jesus’ ministry but also the basis for our salvation. A ransom was the price paid to release a slave. Jesus paid a ransom for us because we could not pay it ourselves. His death released all of us from our slavery to sin. The disciples thought Jesus’ life and power would save them from Rome; Jesus said his death would save them from sin, an even greater slavery than Rome’s.

## **Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight – Verses 46-52**

**<sup>46</sup> Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. <sup>47</sup> When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus,**

**Son of David, have mercy on me!”** <sup>48</sup> Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, **“Son of David, have mercy on me!”** <sup>49</sup> Jesus stopped and said, **“Call him.”** So they called to the blind man, **“Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.”** <sup>50</sup> Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. <sup>51</sup> **“What do you want me to do for you?”** Jesus asked him. The blind man said, **“Rabbi, I want to see.”** <sup>52</sup> **“Go,”** said Jesus, **“your faith has healed you.”** Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

**10:46** Jericho was a popular resort city rebuilt by Herod the Great in the Judean desert, not far from the Jordan River crossing. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem (10:32), and, after crossing over from Perea, he would naturally enter Jericho.

**10:46** Beggars were a common sight in most towns. Because most occupations of that day required physical labor, anyone with a crippling disease or disability was at a severe disadvantage and was usually forced to beg, even though God’s laws commanded care for such needy people (Leviticus 25:35-38). Blindness was considered a curse from God for sin (John 9:2), but Jesus refuted this idea when he reached out to heal the blind.

**10:47** “Son of David” was a popular way of addressing Jesus as the Messiah, because it was known that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David (Isaiah 9:7). The fact that Bartimaeus called Jesus the Son of David shows that he recognized Jesus as the Messiah. His faith in Jesus as the Messiah brought about his healing.

**10:47** We do not know how long Bartimaeus had been blind, but it only took a moment for him to decide to call on Jesus for help. Jesus met many spiritually blind people— religious leaders, family members, people in the crowd. Though their eyes were fine, they could not see the truth about Jesus. But blind Bartimaeus heard the report that Jesus was coming and boldly cried out. In coming to Jesus, we need Bartimaeus’s boldness. We must overcome our reticence and doubts and take the step to call on him. Bartimaeus had not seen Jesus’ miracles, but he responded in faith to what he had heard. We have heard Jesus described in the Gospels. May we be like those of whom Peter wrote, “Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy” (1 Peter 1:8).