

Chapter 10

Disciple/apostle = learn/do.

In study of Chapter 10 you will:

- Prayerfully contemplate Jesus' response to questions on marriage and divorce
- Consider Jesus' love of little children
- Think on Jesus' attitude concerning money
- Meditate on "rise again" the third day
- Actively minister to others (the "greatest")



Always look for Journal prompts and ideas at the end of these documents, right before "Cross References." A beautiful Journal is provided at the beginning of this course for your responses, notes, ideas, questions, healings, inspiration, and progress.

Email Abby questions, comments, prayer requests: abby@scripturalstudycenter.org

Prayerfully contemplate Jesus' teaching
in response to questions on marriage and divorce



Chapter 10:1-12

1. And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.
2. And the Pharisees cam to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.
3. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

“Put away” means divorce.

Jesus teaches us that the best response to a trick question, one intended to harm or trap you, is to answer back with a question. REMEMBER THIS.

The question to return must come to us from divine Intelligence, the Christ operating in our consciousness by reflection of God. The more we stay in *spiritual listening mode*, the quicker Spirit's answers come. Do not hurry in any response, and remember — you can answer a question with a question. Jesus refers back to Moses (always turning to Scripture for authority). Moses is the accepted authority figure. He asks them: What did Moses say?

Jesus' ministry, and ours, is based on the Scriptures and the spiritual meaning of the Word. Jesus knew the Scriptures by heart — another thing we need to work on — memorizing verses. He turned to the Word every time that they tried to make him incriminate himself in his speech — and they attempted that often.

Here is their response. Mark 10:4. "And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away." Jesus takes this concept farther and adds more love to the Law. He answers: "For the **hardness of your heart** he wrote you this precept."

Who is known in Scripture for a "hard heart?" Pharaoh, king of Egypt; the one that kept the children of Israel in slavery! Disciples of Jesus cannot be "hard-hearted." The best way to soften a heart is to forgive.

Remember that Jesus taught that we are forgiven to the same extent that we forgive others... “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” It is not a question of deserving forgiveness — it is unconditional.

We cannot “un-do” things but we can know God’s Allness and Infinite Purity — and in that Allness forgiveness operates as a Law that obliterates sin. If you need this for yourself, you must give it to others. Love doesn’t depend on “deserving forgiveness” or not — it just forgives. The Scriptures say that “as far as the east is from the west” that far divine Love has “removed your transgressions from you.” The merciful receive mercy — mercy means “treating an offender better than they deserve.” Soften your heart.

Prayerfully listen for guidance. Step-by-step. Know that God’s Law is operating to adjust everything for good, to bless each one the most. Know that all things are possible to God. Jesus continues: “But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

PRIVATE TEACHING. The disciples ask Jesus further questions on marriage and divorce once they are “in the house.” Mark records Jesus’ words, his private teaching: “And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”

MacClear¹ points out that the *Gospel of Matthew* adds, “for every cause” (14:3). He explains, “On this point the rival schools of Hillel and Shammai were divided, the former adopting the more lax, the latter the stricter view: the one holding that *any dislike*, which he felt towards her, would justify a man in putting away his wife; the other, that only notorious unchastity could be a sufficient reason.”

MacClear adds that they brought this question right then because Jesus was in the country where the ruler was in an adulterous situation. Any remark the slightest bit ‘off’ would have been dangerous. Another lesson on speaking to a crowd with potentially vindictive persons: Jesus’ teaching that marriage is the closest human tie was a certain rebuke to Herod Antipas. The Master illustrates the wisdom of an indirect censure — but one certainly understood by all who heard.



Tyndale's Commentary notes that Jesus' reputation "for being a friend of tax-collectors and immoral people (2:16) and numbering women like Mary Magdalene among his followers (16:9) must have [made him look] suspicious to them." If it was their hope to expose him as lax in this question, "they were sorely disappointed: Jesus showed no sign of laxity here." Tenderly adds that Jesus' "strong views surprised even his own disciples so much that they later in private asked for an explanation."

In further explanation of Moses' position, Tyndale offers this very clear insight: "Then comes a further blow to the scribes. This law of Moses, said Jesus, was not only as they admitted, permissive, instead of being imperative; it was actually concessive, because of the unresponsiveness of human hearts to God (hardness of heart). Better, in the days of the law, we might paraphrase, easy divorce than open adultery and defiance of all marriage codes. It was the lesser of two evils in Israel, but its very existence showed a fatal flaw in humanity, to which Jesus drew attention."



Jesus' presence at the marriage in Cana (*John 2*) adds weight to his words that sanctify the marriage vows. If we find ourselves in a difficult marriage, what should we do? If we take away personal sense and self-justification, what is the highest path? If we have great faith and trust, will not God open the way?

Happiness cannot be lost or stolen, it is in and of God, and is a law to adjust whatever changes need to occur.

Consider Jesus' love of little children — nurture this in yourself

Mark 10: 13 - 16

13. And they brought young children to him, that he should teach them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

15. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.



16. And he took them up in his arms and put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

JESUS ILLUSTRATED LOVE FOR, AND VALUE OF, LITTLE CHILDREN

Question: What is it about “little children” that Jesus so loved? LIST several things in your **Journal**. Go on a “watch” for the next few days to nurture these qualities in yourself. Receive his blessing with each conscious act of childlikeness, each purposeful thought of innocence, joy, simplicity, and trust.

Understand Jesus’ attitude concerning riches or money — emulate this. We are not to trust in it, we are to trust in God who supplies all things abundantly. Did Jesus not feed multitudes with only a few loaves and fishes twice to demonstrate this?

Mark 10:17-30

“And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God.* Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

FOR ETERNAL LIFE:

- 1) Keep the Commandments
- 2) Do not trust in riches (be willing to let things go)
- 3) Take up your cross

Are you thinking that something is not possible? Whatever it is, Jesus has said... WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE — v. 27 When Jesus says that they have "left house, brethren...wife, children" he does not mean abandonment or divorce. Leave to do God's work as you are called, but do not abandon.

Only seek to do that which God's gives you to do. As disciples, our motive must always be honest and pure.



Jesus cautions us in these passages. Watch that “things” do not become so important that they ruin our pure spirituality and realization of the true “treasures in heaven.” Do not let “things” become so important that higher ideas such as loving-kindness, selflessness, generosity, and sharing freely suffer. Rather than things or physical objects, it is better to change thought to a more spiritual view. Mary Baker Eddy writes in *Science and Health*, “Metaphysics resolves things into thoughts, and exchanges the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul. These ideas are perfectly real and tangible to spiritual consciousness, and they have this advantage over the objects and thoughts of material sense, — they are good and eternal” (269). All that God, Spirit, has created is spiritual and eternal, so all that we perceive as material and temporal must be

indications only of the real and substantial, the perfect and eternal ideas that are truly right there! Healing flows from knowing this truth, and it helps to free our thought from bondage to “things” or “trust in riches.”



Third day — “rise again”

Mark 10:32-34

“And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.”

There is no response from the disciples recorded here in *Mark*.

They are afraid. Jesus is walking straight for danger, right to the place where he is most threatened. He explains why. He spares no fact of the harshness or cruelty he will endure, but he ends with the triumphal, “he [I] shall rise again.” Why do the disciples seem later never to have heard this?



Jesus tells them straight out that he will be killed, but will rise back to life again afterward. They could not perceive this; could not grasp that it would be a literal event.

Notice Jesus' use of third person, as if this would all be happening to someone else — the human being a foreign sense in realization of his eternal spiritual being in God. Men would do the worst they could — indignities, torture, and murder, but when they are done he will triumph — he would “rise again” and evil's efforts shown to be in vain.

This is the lesson of the Great Teacher — God is omnipotent, Life and Love — and He cares for every detail in our experience, including the rising up, lifting up, or healing of the body. Why do the disciples not seem to remember these words later when these exact predictions are occurring?

Do we, today disciples, remember that if we are spit upon (condemned or treated with contempt) that we will “rise again?” If under threat of death, do we remember these words that pertain to us as well? We will “rise again.”

God is your Life. There is no Life but God. You are the expression of God's Being, God's Life, God's Love. There is nothing in the universe that can extinguish you. There is nothing that can smash you down to nothing that you will not be able to ever rise again. You will always rise. God's Law lifts you up and you cannot escape His Law.

How to be “greatest”— minister to others

In verses 35 to 45, two disciples ask for the honor of sitting at Jesus' right and left hand in the kingdom. He tells them that they don't realize what they are asking. He tells them they will have to endure the fiery baptism that he must endure.

Jesus tells us that it is up to God to place us in our proper positions. He tells his disciples (for all time to come) that whoever would be greatest must minister to the others — wash their feet.

“Feed my sheep,” he admonishes Peter after the resurrection. Jesus explains, “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (45). Give your life during your lifetime—give love—help and heal.

To minister — To attend and serve; to perform service in any office, sacred or secular (*Webster’s 1828*).

Restore sight

It is possible, “all things are possible to God,” to restore vision, improve vision, correct vision, through prayer. It is something that Jesus did, and it is something his disciples are to do — you are to do.



Seeing is not in the material eye, but is a spiritual function. We see eternally, and we see with Spirit. Sight continues forever because God is the all-seeing and we are His “image and likeness.” The fact that “restores” sight is that vision is always present and

matter neither hinders nor helps. There is one perfect vision.

Subject the appearance and/or experience of blindness or faulty vision or deterioration to this spiritual fact and be free from the imposition. The all-seeing is present and you reflect it. Vision is present; you do not have to make it so — just KNOW.

Spirit sees, not matter. Physical eyes are subject to Truth. The truth makes free, as Jesus taught. The truth is that all substance is Spirit, and that man reflects the all-seeing Spirit, God — we see eternally — and our sight is perfect now and forever. This truth is preventive and curative. Pray with this truth and accept no other testimony.

Mark 10:46-52 (paraphrase)

A blind man sits by the roadside, hears that Jesus is coming that way, and begins to cry out for mercy. People tell him to be quiet, but he will not. Jesus, hearing the man, stops walking and calls for him. The man “casting away his garment” — the imposed beliefs and convictions of material vision — and comes to Jesus. “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” asks the Master. It was obvious, of course, but Jesus uses this question to elicit a statement of faith that all is possible to God. “Lord, that I might receive my sight,” the man replies. He is fully expectant and certain that Jesus can do this. Jesus commends the man for his faith saying that it has made him “whole,” able to see. When the man receives his sight, he follows Jesus.

This is the purpose of our vision — to see and follow Christ. Let us use our vision for this reason and actively employ our sight in reading the Word, in observing the Master, in following him.

JOURNAL IDEAS

1. Write one thought, idea, question, or reaction to Jesus' words regarding marriage and divorce. Keep some room under that to write more as you pray about it over the next few days. You might look up some things in the Bible on marriage and divorce, and check different translations. Open up thought in listening prayer, and know that if there is adjustment needed, divine Love is already working on it in ways you cannot imagine. What we think would "take a miracle" is not difficult for God. Pray to know that His plan is operating right now for you, or for others you may be praying for along these lines.
2. What can you do in the next couple of days to express more love for little children?
3. Money needs to be mentally translated to mean "gratitude." How much gratitude do you have?
4. Rising again on the third day - Jesus speaks of this several times in attempts to get his disciples thinking and ready. They are dull to his meaning. What this means to you today could be very practical in petition to God that your consciousness "rise" higher through His power and grace. A spiritual consciousness manifests Life and harmony.
5. Jesus explained that the greatest or best disciple is the one who ministers or serves most. Is there something more you can do TODAY to lovingly serve another? Do it — do not fail to do it. It could be as quick and easy as a phone call to someone who needs to hear from you or know they are loved.

Cross References

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Mark 10:3:

Is. 8:20; Mal. 2:16; Luke 10:25; John 5:39; Gal. 4:21

Mark 10:4:

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Mark 10:5:

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Mark 10:6:

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Mark 10:9:

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