

2019-2020 Bible Study

#24

3/18/20

Matthew 19

3/18/20

A Prayer to be recited before reading the Sacred Scriptures

- Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.
- Send forth Thy spirit and they shall be created.
- And thou shall renew the face of the earth
- *Let Us Pray*
- O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things and ever to rejoice in His consolation.
- Through Christ our Lord

Outline for Matthew 19

- **Matthew 19**
- Teachings about Divorce
- Jesus Blesses the Children
- The Rich Young Man

Matthew 19

- **Matthew 19:1-2** *“Now when Jesus had finished these sayings,...and he healed them there”*
 - When Jesus finished these sayings, Matthew presented another framing device to **end book 4** (Father suggested we place the Roman **numeral IV** at this point)
 - We will now begin **book five** of Matthew’s Gospel
 - At this point, Jesus and His disciples were heading South to Jerusalem
 - As discussed before, the synoptic gospels only present Jesus going to Jerusalem one time (John presents His going to Jerusalem for many feasts)

Structure of Matthew's Gospel

- **Prologue:** The Genealogy of Jesus and the Infancy Narrative (1-2)
 - **Book I:** John the Baptist and the Early Ministry (3-7)
 - **Book II:** Miracles and the Commissioning of the Twelve (8-10)
 - **Book III:** Controversy and the Kingdom (11-13)
 - **Book IV:** *Instruction of the Disciples (14-18)*
 - **Book V:** The Journey to Jerusalem (19-25)
- **Conclusion:** Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus (26-28)

Structure of Matthew's Gospel

Narrative about John the Baptist, Jesus' Baptism & being tested – Mt 3-4

A. Discourse on Sermon on the Mount – Mt 5-7

Narrative on 10 Miracles – Mt 8-9

B. Discourse to the 12 Apostles on Authority - Mt 10

Narrative on the mysteries of the kingdom – Mt 11-12

C. Discourse on the Seven Parables – Mt 13

Most important - like meat in a sandwich

The parables begin at this point

Narrative on the Church & First Fruits of the Kingdom of Heaven – Mt 14- 17

B' Discourse on the Church to the 12 Apostles – Mt 18

Narrative on the Approaching Advent of the Kingdom of Heaven – Mt 19-22

A' Discourse on the Temple Mount – 23-25

Narrative on Passion and Resurrection – Mt 26-28

There are also two other small discourses in Matthew

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- For some reason, the synoptic writers were only interested in presenting the Galilean Ministry (followed by this final trip to Jerusalem for His passion)
- Here, we see Jesus leaving Galilee, traveling down the Jordan valley, and entering Judea with a large crowd following Him
- Matthew is proclaiming that Jesus was headed to Jerusalem with His disciples along with a large crowd of followers
- Among this crowd were His special 12 disciples (whom He called Apostles meaning “those who were sent out”)



The New Moody Atlas of the Bible, By Barry J. Beitzel
 Moody Publishers, Chicago IL

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- Of importance here was the fact that this crowd followed Him and that it was the time of the Passover
- Many pious Jews from Galilee were making this trip to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover in accordance with the Law (**Deuteronomy 16:16; Exodus 23:14**)

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- **Matthew 19:3** *“And the Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, ‘Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?’”*
 - Father pointed out that once again the Pharisees attempted to test (trip up) Jesus
 - The response could be divided into two groups:
 - Those who believed that a man could divorce his wife for any reason
 - Those who believed that one could only divorce his wife for a very serious reason like adultery
 - This division can be traced to the book of **Deuteronomy 24:1**, where Moses said that if one found a wife to have committed **infelicity** (an unhappiness), one could divorce her

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- The debate arose over the definition of “**infelicity**” (unhappiness)
- This led to the Pharisees to debate as to whether it had to be serious or trivial
- It could be understood either way for Moses only said that if a man found an “infelicity” in his wife, he could send her away and give her a certificate of divorce
- This, however, meant that he could not remarry her if she married someone else and that marriage failed
- This pronouncement by Moses was designed to protect women

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- The certificate of divorce was the proof that she was divorced so she could not be accused of adultery
- It also protected the woman because a man had to think twice before divorcing her as this was his last chance to be married to her
- Unfortunately, the Pharisees had turned the entire matter on its head
- They took the passage to mean that Moses gave men the “right” to a divorce
- Father pointed out that it was not what he gave them
- He gave them direction for when they divorced their wives there was a certain way they must do it

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- It was not a decree to divorce one's wife
- So, here the Pharisees were asking Jesus for what reason could a man divorce his wife
- The entire matter has been turned around
- Next, we will see Jesus' response

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- **Matthew 19:4-7** *“He answered, Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female,...and put her away?”*
 - Jesus takes the discussion back to the book of **Genesis 2:24**
 - He did not say that “three shall become one!”
 - Father said that it was not Adam, Eve, and Susie
 - He said that the “two shall become one”
 - Again, Father remarked that this was not what Moses commanded
 - His commandment indicated that if you divorce your wife and send her away and give her a certificate of divorce, you may not remarry her if she goes and marries another and that marriage does not work out
 - Jesus responded in the next passage

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- **Matthew 19:8-9** *“He said to them,... ‘it is not expedient to marry’”*
 - Jesus pointed out that Moses did not command one to divorce his wife, but he only allowed it
 - Further, Jesus reminded the Pharisees that from the beginning this was not so
 - This is the second time we heard Jesus teach on divorce
 - The first time was in **Matthew 5:31-32** where he provided the exception clause (except for unchastity)
 - Only Matthew says “except for a case of”
 - Mark and Luke provided an absolute with no exceptions
 - Paul in 1st Corinthians 7 also addressed this subject without exceptions

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- Father asked, “What was Matthew talking about?”
- He said that once again we must look at: the author, his audience, and what was his purpose of writing
- If Mark and Luke give an absolute teaching that implies that Jesus taught an absolute
- But Matthew provided an exception for a case of *porneia* statement (unfortunately translated unchastity)
- Scholars believe that Matthew is most likely referring to Jewish law on marriage

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- If a man married a woman unlawfully, then according to Jewish law, it was not only considered unlawful and illicit but also invalid (as in a man could not marry his sister)
- This was not the case for a Gentile (Mark and Luke's audience) who was simply told that he may not divorce his wife
- A Jewish audience would have asked questions about such an absolute
- If Jesus said that one shall not divorce for any reason, they would have asked "What if it was an unlawful marriage?" (you were married to your sister)

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- In that case, it would be called *porneia* which was a licentious act, and it would be seen as fornication
- This would be seen as an illicit marriage which would be considered invalid by Jewish law
- Father pointed out that once again, this was an example of the very Jewish audience of Matthew

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- **Matthew 19:10** *“The disciples said to him, ‘If such is the case of a man with his wife, is it not expedient to marry’”*
 - So the disciples wondered, if one could not divorce his wife, then should one get married in the first place
 - Once one was in a marriage, he was stuck and could not get out. They were stuck!
 - Jesus replied in the next verse

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- **Matthew 19:11-12** *“But he said to them, ‘Not all men can receive this precept,...He who is able to receive this, let him receive it’”*
 - Jesus said that some had been made eunuchs by men and others by birth
 - Others have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom
 - Then, He concluded that he who was able to receive this, let him receive it
 - Father asked that we put a “note” in this verse referring to **1st Corinthians 7:7**
 - This is the first place where we find a teaching on Christian celibacy

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- Among the 12 Apostles, John was celibate since he was very young (13 or 14 years old) when he first encountered Jesus
- John lived the rest of his life this way from the moment Jesus called him
- Father said we would revisit this when we look at **1st Corinthians 7**
- Jesus speaks of remaining in the stage in which you were called
- Father pointed out that he was called to the priesthood as a married man in the Melkite church

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- In the western church, a celibate priest does not get married as he spends the rest of his life in the state in which he was called
- Paul told those who were called to the priesthood not to seek to be married
- Thus, if God called a man to this ministry when he was celibate, they should not seek marriage
- This usually also applies to deacons

Matthew 19 (Cont)

- **Matthew 19:13-30** *“Then children were brought to him...and the last first”*
 - We skipped over the following stories
 - Children brought to Jesus for a blessing
 - A question about what one must do to inherit eternal life
 - The difficulty for a rich man to get to heaven
 - Peter’s question about their sacrifices
 - This passage ends with Jesus reminding His disciples that “many that are first will be last and the last first”
 - The story will continue in **Matthew 20**

The Saint Raymond Prayer

- Glorious Saint Raymond of Peñafort, wise and holy patron,
come to the aid of those entrusted to your care,
and all who flee to your protection.
Intercede for us in our need,
and help us through your prayers, example, and
teaching,
to proclaim the truth of the Gospel to all we meet.
And when we have reached the fullness of our years,
we beseech you to guide us home to heaven,
to live in peace with you, Our Mother Mary, and Our
Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hail Mary Prayer

- Hail Mary,
Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of death. Amen.