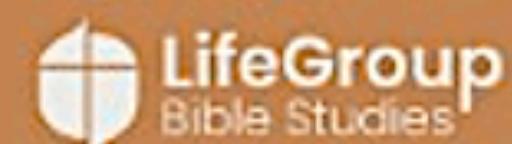


# FROM CROSS TO CROWN



THE STORY  
OF JESUS  
IN THE  
GOSPEL  
OF MARK



LifeGroup  
Bible Studies

FALL 2025  
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# Marriage and Family

- God values marriage, children and family
- Mark 10:1-16
- In the ancient Roman world, “household codes” described the relationships between the members of the household.
- The Greco-Roman world exercised the power of the paterfamilias, the “father of the family.”

# Marriage and Family

- The oldest living male in a household had autocratic authority over his family.
- Most household codes stressed absolute submission of the wife, children and slaves.
- Jesus' words about marriage and children were countercultural to the Greco-Roman world and even to the way Jews saw marriage, women and children.

# Marriage and Family

- When the Pharisees asked Jesus about divorce, the text says they did this to test Him.
- Several topics could be tricky, ones they knew would put Jesus in a bind, such as paying taxes to Caesar.
- If Jesus said no to divorce, it would contradict the law of Moses, which seemed to allow for divorce (Deuteronomy 24:1–4).

# Marriage and Family

- If He said yes to divorce, He would have to explain God's strong words in Malachi.
- It says that divorce covers the Lord's altar with tears, that divorce is a man doing violence to the one he should protect, and in a more literal translation, "God says that He hates divorce" (Malachi 2:13–16).

# Marriage and Family

- The Jewish attitude towards divorce at the time can be seen in the Talmud (compiled years after Jesus).
- The Talmud says only men could choose divorce,
- A man could divorce his wife for any reason, even as small as burning his dinner; she had no choice in the matter.

# Marriage and Family

- Jesus answered their question with a question – What did Moses command you?
- Notice He said “command,” but they answered with what Moses “allowed.”
- Rabbis differentiated between what Scripture commanded and what it allowed as a concession.

# Marriage and Family

- By asking this way, Jesus was forcing them to say that Moses only allowed divorce. Jesus could not be tricked.
- Divorce is not God's design, and He went all the way back to the creation story to explain – when a couple marries, they are no longer two people, but one flesh.
- Divorce isn't just separating two people; it's like ripping a person in half.

# Marriage and Family

- When they were alone, the disciples asked again, and Jesus said anyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery.
- In Matthew, Jesus gave one exception, sexual immorality (Matthew 19:9).
- He said the same about women, even though women couldn't choose divorce.

# Marriage and Family

- With this language, Jesus was giving women a value they didn't have in the Talmud.
- In their culture, a divorced woman had no way to provide for herself, which is why Malachi described it as a man covering his garment with violence.
- “Covering” refers to protection; a man was supposed to protect his wife, but divorce left her vulnerable.

# Marriage and Family

- From the beginning, God's plan was one man and one woman, joined together for life.
- Scripture provides two exceptions for divorce: adultery and an unbelieving spouse abandoning the home or family (1 Corinthians 7:15).
- God allowed divorce in these cases, giving protection to the vulnerable when sin shatters a marriage.

# Marriage and Family

- Jesus' words about children also gave them value they didn't have in Greco-Roman culture at the time.
- In the paterfamilias, children were considered property, like sheep.
- The patriarch could do whatever he wanted with his children, including punishing them severely, even to the point of death.

# Marriage and Family

- But in Judaism, children were seen as the hope of the future.
- Parents were commanded to protect, nurture, and teach their children.
- But children didn't have any social or political power, and the disciples didn't consider them important enough to take up Jesus' time.

# Humility and Servanthood

- God values humility, generosity and servanthood
- Mark 10:17-45
- A man ran up to Jesus and knelt before Him. For a man of great wealth, this showed tremendous respect.
- He called Jesus “Good Teacher” and asked what to do to inherit eternal life.

# Humility and Servanthood

- Jesus responded with an ironic statement, considering He is God – Why do you call me good? No one but God is good.
- As human beings, we tend to think of ourselves as “good people” if we don’t do really bad things such as murder or embezzlement, or if our good deeds outweigh our bad, or if we’re a “better” person than that guy over there.

# Humility and Servanthood

- But Scripture tells us that no one is good because we all fall short of the perfection of God (Romans 3:23; Psalm 14:3). Jesus said the man already knew the law, listing six of the Ten Commandments that relate to how we treat others.
- As a good Jew man, he had kept these things his whole life, but that still didn't make him truly good, because only God is good.

# Humility and Servanthood

- The text tells us two things Jesus did: (1) He looked at him
  - He saw who he really was, beyond the good exterior, and
  - (2) He loved Him – even though he wasn't good, as He does all of us.
- Jesus saw what was in his heart, the one thing that kept him from fully surrendering his life as a disciple, which was his money.

# Humility and Servanthood

- When the rich man went away disheartened, Jesus told the disciples that without God, it is impossible for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom.
- This amazed them, because in Jewish thought, wealth was a sign of blessing from the Lord.
- Jesus used a hyperbolic example to show that this is impossible without God.

# Humility and Servanthood

- Having wealth is not inherently wrong, but it can easily become a god for us because the love of money (not money itself) is the root of all kinds of evil (1 Timothy 6:10).
- This is true for those who have a lot as well as those who have a little. Both can center their lives on money instead of God and pursue wealth as their security, hope and identity instead of God.

# Humility and Servanthood

- In the previous chapter, the disciples had argued over who was the greatest?
- Jesus had told them if they wanted to be the greatest in the kingdom, they would have to become the servant of all (Mark 9:35).
- Apparently, they didn't learn the lesson because, here they were, doing it again.

# Faith and Trust

- God values faith and trust in Him
- Mark 10:46-52
- Jericho was the ancient city where the Israelites first entered the Promised Land.
- It was the site of their first battle of the conquest, but it wasn't a traditional battle.

# Faith and Trust

- Bartimaeus meant “son of the unclean,” pointing to the ancient belief that people were born with disabilities such as blindness because of some sin of their parents.
- When he heard that Jesus was walking by, Bartimaeus cried out to Him, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”
- Calling Jesus “Son of David” was a statement of faith that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised one.

# Faith and Trust

- The world called Bartimaeus “unclean,” but Jesus saw in him a pure heart.
- When Jesus restored his sight, the text says, Bartimaeus immediately followed Jesus on the way. This means more than just that he was physically healed.
- As opposed to the rich man who walked away from Jesus, Bartimaeus followed Jesus.

# Faith and Trust

- These stories show us again how God's kingdom is upside down from the world.
  - Instead of hoarding wealth for ourselves, Jesus calls us to give it away.
  - Instead of pursuing power, Jesus calls us to sacrifice and suffering.

# Faith and Trust

- He promised that in the end, the last shall be first.
- We shall receive the greatest inheritance we can ever imagine. It will be worth it in the end.
- And life in the here-and-now will be even better because it will be a life of service, generosity and sacrificial love, not power-hungry greed that only leads to emptiness.

# Ministry Opportunity

