
a *Grace Notes* course

The Gospel of Mark

an expositional Bible study

by Dr. Daniel Hill, Pastor

Southwood Bible Church

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Lesson 10

Mark 10:1-52

Grace Notes

1705 Aggie Lane, Austin, Texas 78757

Email: wdoud@bga.com

The Gospel of Mark

Lesson 10: Mark 10:1-52

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Instructions for Completing the Lessons

There are sixteen (16) lessons in the MARK course curriculum, one lesson for each chapter.. There will be questions in the Quiz for each lesson on the topics that are named here.

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Instructions

Read the introduction to the study of Mark.

Study the Mark chapter for this lesson, by reading the verses and studying the notes. Be sure to read any other Bible passages that are called out in the notes.

Before taking the Quiz, **Review** all of the notes in the Mark lesson.

Go to the Quiz page and follow the instructions to complete all the questions on the quiz. The quiz is "open book". You may refer to all the notes and to the Bible when you take the test. But you should not get help from another person.

When you have completed the Quiz, be sure to SAVE your file. If your quiz file is lost, and that can happen at Grace Notes as well, you will want to be able to reproduce your work.

To send the Quiz back to Grace Notes, follow the instructions on the Quiz page.

Grace Notes
Warren Doud
1705 Aggie Lane
Austin, Texas 78757 USA
Telephone: 512-458-8923
Email address: <wdoud@bga.com>

Chapter 10

Marriage is one of the most talked about, written about, spoken about subjects around. And yet with this massive infusion of information, marriage is at best a fragile union in our society.

One writer said that a successful marriage is always a triangle, a man, a woman, and God.

Socrates said: By all means marry. If you get a good wife you will be very happy. If you get a bad wife you will become a philosopher - and that is good for any man.

Alan Berstein noted that: Marriage is a school of experience where husband and wife are classmates.

And yet with all that is said, we see over half the marriages in our society failing.

But even in Jesus' day, marriage was at best a fragile union which so often ended in hurt and separation.

Mark 10:1

And rising up, He went from there to the region of Judea, and beyond the Jordan; and crowds gathered around Him again, and, according to His custom, He once more began to teach them.

From chapter nine onward we see the ministry of Jesus shifting both in geography and in method.

He leaves behind the negative volition and rejection of Galilee and -

He also leaves behind the offer of the Kingdom to Israel and begins to look ahead to the Cross and the Church. What we see from here on is the training of his disciples for the tasks they will undertake as they turn the world upside down.

When we read "he went from there", we have a middle voice verb indicating this was of benefit to him.

Even His sacrifice on the cross would be beneficial to him. He would die for us, yet he would gather many who would believe in Him into his Church. We, even today, are part of that advantage to Christ.

He went to Judea and then to the East side of the Jordan in the region known as Perea.

Mark records these events that occurred in the six months prior to the crucifixion to show how the Lord was teaching and preparing the disciples.

Every thing that happened, even when it included others was designed to train the twelve.

We are told that his custom was to teach the people. Here we have the more formal word for teaching, a teaching that required preparation and would include application.

Mark 10:2

And Pharisees came up to Him, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.

The question asked by the Pharisees was designed to test and trap the Lord Jesus Christ into either contradicting the Old Testament Law or disagreeing with popular Rabbinic teaching.

They wanted him to give a self-incriminating answer and in light of the current thinking on divorce in Jesus' day that would be rather easy.

We really have four positions in view regarding divorce:

1. The Old Testament Law of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 which allowed for divorce by the husband of a wife found in some indecency. The passage goes on to say that she can marry another and that if she is dismissed by the second husband she cannot remarry the first.

The question was, what is meant by indecency? Some believed that this was a way of keeping a wife from being found guilty of adultery which would have been punishable by death. So instead the husband wrote out a bill of divorcement.

2. In Jesus, time the Rabbis who followed Schammai interpreted this Old Testament Law to allow for a man to divorce his wife only in the case of continued immorality.

3. The Hillel school of the Rabbis took a broader view and said a man could divorce his wife for almost any reason, even simple uncleanness, which could be caused by visiting the home of a loved one who died or even menstruation.

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4. Also the Roman view of divorce must be considered because not only is Jesus living in a Roman occupied country where Herod Antipas had divorced his wife to marry his niece, but Mark, remember, is writing to Roman Christians.

Under Roman law either spouse could write a bill of divorcement for almost any reason. It merely had to be stated in the presence of seven adult citizens of Rome.

So in answering the question, Jesus could have very easily incriminated himself before the Old Testament Law, either of the two schools of Rabbinical thought, or before Herod and Rome.

Mark 10:3

But Jesus answers their question with another question so as to make the issue clear:

And He answered and said to them, What did Moses command you?

By asking this question, Jesus makes the foundation for the argument the Word of God, not merely the ideas of men or even the interpretation of the Old Testament by man, but the Word itself.

The one who gave this truth to Moses now asks the Pharisees to recite this truth.

Mark 10:4

And they said, Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.

The word PERMITTED in the Greek text actually means the liberty or right to do something by way of license, liberty, or mandate.

They were seeing this as something that God commanded or gave man (husbands) the right to do. Jesus is going to give them the broader context which is the hardness of the heart on man.

Mark 10:5

But Jesus said to them, Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment.

Jesus does not speak in historical terms of the hardness of the heart of those who lived 1400

years ago. He speaks to the Pharisees about their hardness of heart.

The preposition BECAUSE is PROS which would be better translated in the face of your hardness of heart.

Here we see the difference between the ideal and the real and the fact that God knows us better than we know ourselves.

Divorce is never part of God's perfect plan even when it is permitted by the Scriptures. There is not one divorced person here who can say divorce is great, no problems at all. Even when you have gotten away from an abusive or adulterous spouse, there is still hurt and pain even when you know you did what was best.

Divorce is never the ideal, but it is part of the real. The mandate of Moses was given in light of the real.

And the real includes sin which builds scar tissue on the soul and results in a real situation of hurt, pain, and sin which result in divorce.

In verses 6 to 9, Jesus makes a statement regarding the ideal

In 10 to 12, in the house with the disciples, He teaches His disciples about the real

Mark 10:6-9

Jesus quotes from Genesis 1 and 2:

But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and the two shall become one flesh; consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.

The prohibition of verse 9 is given in light of what God said in Genesis 1 and 2.

What God has joined together as one flesh, no man (with the husband in view) is to disrupt.

In other words, the Lord says to the Pharisees, stop allowing men to disrupt their marriages by a lax interpretation of the Law.

It is clear that the Lord reaffirms God's ideal view of marriage. That it is not a mere contract of temporary convenience that can be readily broken.

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But rather, a covenant of mutual fidelity made before God.

The Rabbis and the Romans both made divorce easy, and a convenient way out of a self made problem.

Mark 10:10

So now he has given the Pharisees who wanted to trap him an answer, he gave them the Word of God, God's ideal standard for marriage - but the disciples have questions.

And in the house the disciples began questioning Him about this again.

Notice that when the Pharisees questioned the Lord it was to test and trap him. But now the disciples question him to learn more truth.

Mark 10:11

And He said to them, Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery.

The issue here is not the divorce or separation. Jesus left the door open for divorce under the Law of Moses in verse 5.

The issue here is the right to re-marry after a divorce. Mark directs his readers, mostly Roman, to both possibilities. Either a husband or a wife divorcing and re-marrying.

Under Rabbinic law in Jesus' day, re-marriage was permitted. But here Jesus puts a restriction upon that supposed right.

The situation then is directly parallel to our situation today. The legal code of the day permits re-marriage after divorce while the higher law of God for his people permits divorce or separation, but not necessarily the right to re-marry.

These two verses must be considered in the larger context of everything that is said about divorce and the right to remarry by the Lord and by the other divinely inspired writers of the Scriptures.

Here, Jesus is telling his disciples that the legal code of the Rabbis is not the basis upon which a

believer should operate. That there is a higher law, the law of God.

Principles:

1. In the parallel account in Matthew 19:9 the writer includes the Lord's phrase, except for immorality or fornication. That is an exception. When divorce occurs because of immorality, there is a right to re-marry.

2. Immorality in Matthew 19:9 is the word is PORNEIA where we get the prefix of the word pornography.

PORNEIA refers to unrepentant sexual immorality of any kind. Thus, in marriage, this would be a situation in which a married person continues an affair with another with no intention of stopping it.

In that situation, divorce with the right to remarry is granted by God.

3. The right to re-marry also occurs when the divorced spouse re-marries. According to Old Testament Law that we can use as a guideline to sound practice, reconciliation of a marriage is out when a spouse re-marries.

Deuteronomy 24:3-4 And if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, then her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife.

Since reconciliation is out, re-marriage is permitted

4. When the former spouse dies the remaining spouse is free to remarry, because reconciliation is no longer possible.

This principle is used by Paul as an illustration of being free from the control of the SIN NATURE, the former husband of Romans 7:2-3.

5. In 1 Corinthians 7:15 Paul gives a situation where a spouse who is an unbeliever divorces a believing mate. In that situation the believer is a victim and is no longer under bondage and thus is free to re-marry.

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I Corinthians 7:15 Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases.

6. Desertion, under the principle given in I Cor 7:15 can lead to the right to re-marry after a period of time.
 7. Many other situations including the threat to the life of wife, children, abuse, molestation, are grounds for separation or in our legal framework, divorce, but not having the right to re-marry.
 8. The time factor is always essential to consider in the right to re-marry. Time must be used to get over the hurt, to get the person out of the soul, to grow in doctrine and to grow closer to your best friend, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 9. In any divorce it is always the innocent victim who has the right to re-marry. The guilty party, if they re-marry, are in an adulterous marriage.
- In our passage the Lord is talking about the guilty party:

Mark 10:12

and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery.

10. If you find that you were the guilty party and you are in an adulterous marriage, there is a biblical solution:
 - 1) No guilt reaction. Recognize your culpability and face what you have done as sin.
 - 2) Admit the sin and appropriate by faith the grace that God has for you.
 - 3) Do not divorce, that is just adding sin to sin and hurting more people. Once re-married even when you did not have the right to do so there is no possibility of reconciliation to the former spouse.
 - 4) Once you confess and have repented, your sin of divorce and remarriage is forgiven, and your adulterous marriage becomes a legitimate marriage.

The Lord is teaching the disciples that marriage is honorable and given by God, and man stands in harms way when he begins to tamper with it - do not disturb the great grace of God that your

heavenly Father has given you. Follow his plan, not yours, to His highest and best.

The episode that is covered in verses 13 through 16 is both a postscript and a prelude to its context.

The subject is children, which is a natural postscript to the Lord's comments on the sanctity of marriage.

The attitude of the children, which is one of acceptance and dependence, is a natural prelude to the story of the rich young ruler.

As we have seen in this portion of Mark, all this is happening to train and prepare the disciples for their future mission as the pillars of the church.

Mark 10:13

And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them.

Jesus and his disciples were in a home in Perea east of the Jordan river across from Judea. As the Lord finished his comments about marriage, some of the local people began to approach the home with their children seeking the Lord to bless these little ones.

The pronoun THEY is part of the verb, THEY BROUGHT, but at the end of the verse when THEY are rebuked by the disciples, the masculine pronoun AUTOIS is used.

The significance of this is that while we automatically presume a picture of mothers bringing their children to the Lord, it was the fathers who brought them.

Now they, the fathers, brought the children to Jesus, in order that he might touch them.

Bringing a child to a rabbi that he might bless them for their future life and well being was part of Jewish tradition in Jesus' day.

The tradition dates to Genesis 48:14-16 when Jacob blessed his grandsons, Ephraim and Manasseh, by laying his hands upon their heads.

The word BROUGHT is PROS + FERW which is much stronger than the simple word to bring.

This intense form was commonly used for bringing sacrifices and here suggests the idea of dedication.

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This looks at the dedication of the ones who bring the child they will train in the ways of God and his word.

When we put these elements together, the fathers bringing the child to be blessed for future life, and the dedication on the part of the fathers, we see a very important challenge.

It was the fathers who were the leaders, the spiritual leaders, over their children. They, the fathers, were the ones who took responsibility to see to the spiritual well being and spiritual growth of the children.

So unlike today when we see this privilege and challenge given to the mothers while fathers think they can do their job by just bringing home a pay check.

The biblical ideal is always and always has been the father as the spiritual leader in the home.

The reality may be that the mother has to take this responsibility neglected by the fathers of our present society -

But men, husbands, fathers, it is your job and in that job there will be blessings untold as you bring your children to Jesus Christ.

The word for CHILD is significant, PAIDION, and is used throughout these verses.

There are nine words in the Greek Text translated CHILD this one refers to anyone from an infant up to twelve years old.

What is in view with this word is a child who is dependant upon another for its care and well being.

So these children, infants to pre-teens, were brought to the house for Jesus to bless.

BUT THE DISCIPLES, hanging around outside the house, rebuked the fathers for bringing the children.

QUESTION: When are these men going to learn?

Remember back in Mark 9 the disciples found a man casting out demons in the name of the Lord and they rebuked and hindered him.

Now these fathers bring their children for a blessing and instead they get rebuked .

The word itself means to unjustly scold or blame another and to do it ineffectively.

So not only was their rebuke unwarranted but it was without results.

This verse brings into the mind's eye a frightening picture: These fathers, who are the ones taking the responsibility of spiritually guiding their children, these sincere and devout fathers, coming to the Lord for encouragement and blessing but instead getting chewed out by the disciples, the servants of Jesus - They reach out to Jesus for help and are hindered by his disciples.

But is that so removed from what we see today. When God puts us in a place to help, and one comes reaching out to the Lord, and we give him rebuke instead of blessing, we scold instead of encourage, and instead of help we hinder.

I want you to see four problems these disciples have:

1. A misuse and abuse of their authority. They were using their authority to protect Jesus from being disturbed, without regard to the ones who needed the help that only He could give.
2. They presumed what the Lord wanted: They did not ask him what they should do. They just started to scold and rebuke. They could have turned to the master and sought guidance and direction - just like we can.

But just like us today, we would rather ride our own presumptions than turn to the mind of Christ for the true answers.

3. They forgot a prior lesson:

Mark 9:37 Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me.

When we studied that passage we saw that to receive a child you had to be aware, sensitive, selfless, and willing. And the disciples were none of these and forgot the doctrine they had been taught.

4. They failed to understand GRACE:

What God has to offer is freely given to all and in giving grace God gives to the helpless, to the

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insignificant, to the dependant ones who just come to him. Instead of helping, they hurt -

Too often today the church stands as a club, restricted to only those who qualify according to the same standard the disciples were using, some human merit. But this church stands as a refuge for the hurt, the helpless, and we offer hope.

In the months and years to come I have no way of knowing who or what may walk through those doors, but we do not pre-qualify. If you want Jesus Christ, you are welcome here.

Mark 10:14

The serious nature of the actions of the apostles and similar actions today by Christians can be seen in the Lord's response:

But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

You get the picture that Jesus may have walked to a window out into the courtyard and overheard and saw what was going on.

INDIGNANT is AGANAKTEW and is used only seven times in the scriptures, in most cases where the religious leaders were angry with Christ. But here, Christ is angry with the disciples.

It means to be greatly grieved resulting in an expression of irritation. And the Lord was irritated, irritated at the disciples for their lack of grace and lack of application of truth.

Jesus gives two quick commands that have a staccato like effect. Short, terse, to the point, one positive and one negative:

Allow the children to come to me - do not prevent them.

The disciples were attempting to turn the children away because they saw them as being unimportant. They were thinking in the human viewpoint terms that Jesus had earlier challenged when they were hindering a man who was casting out a demon.

Jesus used the same words here that he used in Mark 9:39, do not forbid or prevent -

How many times must they hear this before they get the point. Probably about as many times as we must hear the Word and its truth taught before we get the point.

Principle: Repetition is essential to locking truth into the soul. And it is only when truth is locked in that it can be applied.

Then Jesus tells the disciples why:

For you see (GAR) the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Lewis Sperry Chafer defines the Kingdom of God as all intelligences in heaven and on earth who are willingly submitted to God.

With that submission there is tremendous benefit and value, what we might call blessings.

So Jesus is saying that the blessings that God has for you in life belong to those who are like children.

Mark 10:15

Now he teaches a principle and in the following verse he will illustrate the principle:

Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

The comparative adverb stands in the middle of this verse to show that there is an approximate comparison of the attitude of a child and the attitude we must have as we receive all that God has for us.

The word RECEIVE is middle voice and means to openly welcome. The Lord indicates in middle voice of the word that there is benefit, value, blessing to receiving the kingdom of God.

But the qualification is to receive it as a child:

There are SEVEN things that can be said of the attitude of a child:

1. A realization of helplessness: Have you ever seen the frustration that can come when your child tries to do something and they just are not big or strong enough.

They may try and try but to no avail. Man tries and tries to receive the blessings of God but only

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when we stop trying are the gates of grace opened wide.

True spiritual success is born in the parched soil of helplessness rather than the fertile ground of achievement.

We must abandon the false piety of achievement that stands in the way of receiving all the highest and best God has to offer.

2. A realization of dependence: The very word that is used for a child looks at one who is dependant on another.

From helplessness comes the need to depend upon one who is able.

This is interdependence not co-dependence

3. A realization that what God has is for those who have no claim on it: What rights belong to a child, what property or claims to possessions can they make, none.

And it is only with that attitude that we also, like a child, can have it all. When we realize that we have no claim on grace, that is when we will awaken to grace.

When we awaken to grace, that is when we will awaken to the abundant life he was for us.

4. A child also takes openly and confidently that which is given: As a child were you ever fooled by an adult? You were open and trusting, but perhaps your trust was misplaced.

5. A child doesn't earn or deserve what is given: They freely receive the gifts that are offered. And we as adults must realize that we cannot earn or deserve the free gifts of God.

6. A child freely receives unconditional love:

One writer has said of this passage that: The child's immaturity, and need of assistance, though commonly disparaged, keep the way open for the fatherly love of God, whereas we as grown-ups so often block it.

And when it is blocked, when the attitude of child is not there, there is no receiving of the Kingdom and its blessings.

The word used for not ENTERING IN can also be translated to state that they have no share, or part in what God has to give.

And why should they, they are more involved with their ability and achievement than their helplessness and need.

No child ever would think of presenting a resume to the Lord to qualify for God's highest and best but we as adults too often think our achievement will win the favor of our Father, but his favor is given in grace.

Mark 10:16

Then Jesus did an amazing thing. He did not just let the principle of truth stand, he illustrated its application.

And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands upon them.

The phrase TAKING IN HIS ARMS is one word in the Greek text and it means to fold them in his arms. More than just sitting on the Lord's lap, but rather to be folded, held tight, secure, in his arms.

We occasionally sing of Leaning on the Everlasting Arms of the Lord, but how about being folded in his arms.

Can you remember back when you were a child, what it was like to be held tightly by Mom or Dad, to be folded in their arms? You were safe, you were secure, you knew you were loved.

Do you dare to think that we do not need that from our Lord ,even as adults, as even maturing Christians from our Lord - to be folded into his arms. If you have never needed that from your heavenly Lord I do not envy you, I pity you, you do not know how to be a child.

As people hurt for others and because of others, we must remember that no one hurts for us more than did the Lord Jesus Christ. His love and compassion goes far beyond what we could ever imagine. With that love he laid down his life for us.

The story of the Rich Young Ruler is a story of arrogance and yet also a story which reveals to us the tremendous love that Jesus has even for those who reject Him.

Mark 10:17

And as He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him,

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and began asking Him, Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Remember, all that is happening in this portion of Mark is designed to teach the disciples and prepare them for their future mission in the church age.

Jesus has just taught on the attitude of a child, that we must have that child-like innocence and willingness in receiving the kingdom.

Now the disciples are going to see one who wants to earn the kingdom.

The young man ran up to Jesus, he knelt before Him, and addressed Jesus as a good Teacher:

This suggests that he had a great respect for this Teacher and saw Jesus as a distinguished Rabbi.

But then the question he asks brings the focus back to himself:

What must I do to inherit eternal life?

Both verbs WHAT MUST I DO and INHERIT are aorist, active, subjunctive in form:

Two things are apparent from this form:

1. That form puts this into the future indicating that the young man was looking ahead to heaven not to the blessings of a life lived in Jesus Christ.
2. Secondly, the double active voice shows us that this young man wanted to do something so he could be in a position to inherit eternal life.

Just prior to this the disciples hear the Lord say that man must RECEIVE the kingdom of God and its blessings, not earn it, deserve it, or work for it.

Mark 10:18

And Jesus said to him, Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.

By the very title with which this young man addresses the Lord and by the very form of his question, the Lord clearly knew that this man was hung up on being GOOD.

Jesus diverts his attention away from human good, even the divine good that could be found in the humanity of Christ, and focuses attention on God.

The man was seeing Jesus as a good man, a wise teacher who had some answers. He was not

seeing that all that is truly good is found in God. He was not seeing Jesus as the Christ, as God in the flesh.

Mark 10:19,20

You know the commandments, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, Do not defraud, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.

And he said to Him, Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up.

Is this a test of the man's goodness and his pride and arrogance?

Like many people today this young man was hung up on morality and while morality is part of Christianity, it is only part. We are called to a much greater way of life, a way of life that is found in a person and not in a list of ethical values. Many are good, but many are not believers in a person, Jesus Christ.

And believe me, if Satan can't get you into sin he will get you into legalism, living a list of do's and don'ts rather than living every day with your best friend, Jesus Christ.

So here is the test. How far will this young man go in his arrogant thinking regarding what he can do?

The Lord lists six commandments:

1. Murder, the taking of human life which is the prerogative of God.
2. Taking another's wife, and the hurt caused by such actions.
3. Stealing, a result of greed and covetousness
4. Bearing false witness: Judging others with false accusations and lies
5. Fraud: Which means to present yourself to others as something you are not
6. The basic rule of life that sets up a pattern: Honor father and mother.

Let's be serious about ourselves. Murder, adultery, maybe not. But never having stolen anything, never telling a lie, never trying to be what you are not, and never giving your father or

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mother (this is Mother's Day, be honest now) any reason for grief?

No man or woman or child on earth could attest to following these commandments - but listen to the response of the rich young ruler.

The preposition used does not indicate that he is saying that he has done this since he has gotten past his youth, but that even while a youth he did all these things.

Zane Hodges in his book *Absolutely Free*, states that: *This is easily the most self-righteous boast to be found anywhere in the New Testament.*

This is arrogance personified in this young man. He is telling the Lord that he is about as close to perfect as you can get.

But even in his boast he slips up: The verb OBSERVED is a middle voice, so the reason he was doing these things was not because he wanted to please God or even his parents, he was doing them to benefit himself.

He had learned early how to play the game, how to do the right things, please the right people, what to do and not to do to benefit himself.

And he was good at it. He was a smooth operator who had managed to get rich by winning friends and influencing people with his goodness, while all the time putting up a front and giving people what they wanted.

He is cocky, he is arrogant, he is a manipulator, he is a user of people, he is self-righteous - but he is also one other thing - he is loved by Jesus Christ!

Mark 10:21

And looking at him, Jesus loved him -

The aorist tense of looking would make this a specific look, one single long look of the Lord upon this young man.

And then we read of what was going on in the Lord's soul:

Not disgust at the arrogance, not anger at the self-righteousness, no loathing or hate - he loved him.

The Lord loved and the young man was loved:

And there was nothing in this man that deserved the love of Jesus Christ. He was arrogant, self-centered, selfish, and yet Jesus Christ loved Him.

In Hebrews 13:5 when Jesus said: I will never leave you nor forsake you - he meant it.

Even when we allow sin and arrogance to become the pattern of our life, Jesus continues to love us.

That love is based on His character and His virtue, not upon our worth or total lack of worth.

He loved him so much that He took him to a point that He would take everyone of us that he loves, and he loves us all. A point where we must decide, our way or God's way.

Every one of us depend upon something that is standing in the way of either salvation, if you are an unbeliever, or truly knowing the happiness of the plan of God.

Remember what the Lord said at the end of Mark 9 about the hand, the foot, or the eye being a source of offence? They had to be cut out or plucked away.

This young man's wealth was a source of offence. He was depending upon it for security, for safety, for his very life.

Jesus had already said, if you want to follow him, lose you life, deny yourself, and all you depend upon in the flesh.

And said to him, One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.

Jesus zeroed in on the one thing that was for this man a distraction. His possessions and his wealth.

This was not a requirement for salvation but rather a statement designed to get this man off his arrogant high horse.

The man asked about eternal life, heaven, so the Lord told him about heaven. You want the riches of God for all eternity? Then stop depending on your riches on earth.

And for us, whatever we depend upon, apart from the Lord, becomes a stumblingblock of offence to us as we press on to maturity:

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For him it was his wealth, what is for you, what is for me?

SOME Principles:

1. We all carry baggage from the past. What is the sin you hold within? What is the pain from the past? Things once forgotten are now in the way, of Jesus' love that will last -

2. This baggage from the past can range from sin to self-reliance. It can be almost anything, even success that we have achieved. But whatever it is, it is a stumbling block to advance in the Christ dependant life.

3. The things that we hold on to are often the things that we think shape our image of self.

For the rich young ruler it was his wealth. Perhaps some was inherited but then he made even more money. He had the latest model chariot, the best designer robes, sandals purchased at Gucci of Jerusalem.

He saw himself as one who could not only make money, but then pay the price for whatever he wanted.

A new robe one day, a fine meal, and even eternal life - but what God gives is not for sale.

4. Because this baggage from the past shapes our self-image, we will not easily abandon it. We stand in fear of giving up that which we have relied upon for so long.

We think that this is the real me, this is what we are. This is who we are. This is what we do.

5. For some it can be a attitude of rebellion, control or manipulation of others, of being able to get others to like you, or something you have worked on and developed.

For others it might be some aspect of self-reliance. Your strength or your beauty. For one young woman it was her common sense, her street smarts. She relied on that as a fallback to always get her through.

For others maybe some secret sin that looms from the past, something you return to for comfort and security. Maybe a bottle, or drugs, or sex -

For some it is the very real horrors of the past, you were unwanted, you were abused, molested as a

child. And you think that is what you really are so these pains from the past are not given to the Lord to heal. But you hold onto them and use them as an excuse for what you do and who you are.

6. But whatever it is that you think is shaping your self-image, it is that which is keeping you from being conformed to the image of Christ.

You will never fall back into the arms of Christ by faith if you have something you hold to so tightly that you think is the real you, and forms a source of security apart from Christ.

Solomon saw this in every form, as he entered a frantic search for happiness that was always just beyond his reach. He tried everything, he relied upon his wealth, fame, popularity, wives, education, and like the rich young ruler, his wealth.

David sought security in his children and family; and those sons closest to him brought him heartache belong compare. Ammon raped his sister, Absalom killed Ammon, and then Absalom took away the kingdom from his father.

Paul saw it on the road to Damascus. He was very self-reliant, could do anything, even kill and persecute the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. But then he was blinded, and a blind person is not self-reliant, he is dependent.

7. In all these examples and even more, and right here with the rich young ruler we see the patient love of Jesus Christ.

With Solomon the Lord let him run his own course and learn that nothing worked. With David the Lord took away everything, except himself. With Paul he took away his sight and then gave him three days to do nothing but think.

And with the rich young ruler, he challenged him to the very core of what he thought he was:

And looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him, and said to him, One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.

How often has Jesus looked at us, loved us, and then worked in our lives and circumstances to give us the chance to set aside that very thing that

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we so depend upon, that very thing that is apart and distant from Him.

The Lord gives every one of us a choice: You can look at yourself in the hard and honest mirror of the Word. Then go to Him and pray for wisdom that you do not rely upon anyone else but Him.

You can seek His Word to shape your image, to let Him conform you into the person you can be in Him.

Or you can hide away the baggage, ignore it, rationalize it, pretend it doesn't exist, and just excuse it by saying, well, that is just what I really am.

And in your sin nature, you are right. That is what you are, but only in the flesh. In Him, armed with the power of the Spirit and the Truth of the Word you are so much more.

Jesus even said this to the rich young man -

"Give it up and you will have more, give up the wealth that you can't take with you, and I'll give you a wealth that no one can ever take away."

Jesus will let you see the problems!. If you depend on yourself, he will put you in a position where you cannot ignore or rationalize. You will have to make a choice:

YOUR WAY - OR GOD'S WAY. Dependence upon the weakness of self or the eternal strength of a Lord who loves you so much, he gave His life for you.

Mark 10:22

This young man was put against the wall of decision:

But at these words his face fell, and he went away grieved, for he was one who owned much property.

He came face to face with the God of the universe who only wanted to give him wealth beyond compare, and he walked away sad and grieved.

His sadness was minor when we consider the sadness of Jesus, who loved so much that he would give his life for this young man.

The young man wanted something, But the Lord wanted him, the young man wanted to make a purchase, But the Lord wanted to give Him his

very life. The young man held on to that which would tarnish with time, But the Lord wanted to give him that which was eternal -

There is no sadness that can compare with the sadness, the hurt, the pain of the Lord Jesus Christ when one who is offered everything, turns and walks away.

What is it that you hold to so tightly that you will never know the wealth that Jesus has for you?

Our Lord was not lying when he said he wanted to give you life and life more abundantly -

You may have wealth, strength, beauty, common sense, intelligence, or you may have hurt and pain from the past.

Don't rely upon those things, they will let you down. Begin right now depending upon the only one who can really hold you up. The one who has done for you what you could not do for yourself.

Many years ago during a war in India, a young soldier was given a very difficult assignment. A hilltop that seemed inaccessible was an ideal position for the placement of a gun, and the recruit was commanded to carry the weapon to that strategic location. He made several strenuous attempts, but failed each time. Finally he went to his commanding officer and declared,

This assignment is impossible! When his superior heard these words, he replied emphatically, Impossible! Impossible? Soldier, I've got an order for it right here in my pocket! The embarrassed young man determined to try again. He returned to the hill and with great effort succeeded in accomplishing his mission.

We have looked at the encounter between the rich young ruler and the Lord Jesus Christ. The outcome of that encounter was that the young man trusted in his wealth and that, for him, became the stumblingblock of offence that prevented faith in Christ.

We noted that we all carry with us old baggage that keeps even the Christian from knowing the abundant life that Christ has for him.

Principle: If we have any human merit, ability, resource, or even sin to fall back on we will never

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depend upon Jesus Christ our Lord for the abundance of life.

This whole concept of grace and receiving the gift and continual gifts that Jesus has for us is very appropriate for our society.

We live in an age in which man is being told He can do it, graduation speeches will be filled with the Human viewpoint statements that you can do anything and everything.

But you cannot, you are limited and you limit yourself. One of the most important truths that we will ever discover from the Word is that with man some things are impossible.

Once you say "no way," God says "YES, My way."

The Lord is going to use the encounter with the rich young ruler to get a point across to his disciples, and to us. Remember that everything we are seeing in these chapters is designed to prepare the disciples for their future mission. In the same way we are prepared for whatever lies ahead. And it is in that preparation that we secure the victory for the future.

Mark 10:23

And Jesus, looking around, said to His disciples, How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!

After the young man left, the Lord's eyes swept over the twelve, and after a moment of silence he makes a statement:

How hard is it for the ones having riches to enter into the kingdom of God.

We have two verbs: First HAVING riches and then ENTER into the kingdom of God.

The form of these two verbs shows us the problem. The ones having riches is a present, active, participle.

They keep on having an activity towards their wealth, and that continual activity is one of trusting in it, depending upon it, holding to it for security, comfort, and the future,

The verb ENTER is a future, middle, indicative. The future tense in the Greek text looks at the result of something occurring in the present. But

there is no present trust or faith in Christ to result in this future tense. The middle voice reminds the reader of the benefit of entering the kingdom, the plan, the purpose of God.

The Lord at this verse does not eliminate entirely the idea of a rich man entering the kingdom of God, only that it is difficult. There is always the volitional option to stop depending on your wealth and start depending on Christ.

This same option was given to the rich young ruler.

Psalm 49:6-8 There are those who trust in their wealth, And boast in the abundance of their riches. No man can by any means redeem his brother, Or give to God a ransom for him For the redemption of his soul is costly, And he should cease trying forever.

Mark 10:24

And the disciples were amazed at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!

The amazement and astonishment of the disciples came because what Jesus had just said was so contrary to the teaching of the Rabbis which influenced current theological thinking in Jesus' day.

The Rabbis taught that wealth and prosperity were God's favor upon man. This is the prosperity gospel 2000 years ago. They no doubt had bumper stickers on their chariots that said, Prosperity, my Divine Right.

Notice also that he calls them children, here we have TEKNON which reminded them of the children whom Jesus took into his arms previously. The word for child here is different than that previous uses, TEKNON is a very endearing term for an obedient child. So Jesus is calling the disciples obedient, good, children. That in itself should remind them that being good is just a fable. They can't because they are not able, they have to leave it to the Lord?

He says: How hard it is to enter the kingdom of God?

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This statement leaves out any mention of wealth and throws the whole idea of entering the kingdom wide open and into near impossibility.

He changes the word ENTER to an aorist, act, infinitive to show results of any present activity.

This wide open statement looks at all that man could be doing right now with the idea that it could result in getting him into God's heaven.

And of all those things only one counts, depend upon Christ, and not self. Believe, have faith in Him, the one who has done for you what you could never do for yourself.

Mark 10:25

v 25 The Lord illustrates the inability of man with an absurd illustration:

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Our Lord loved hyperbole, and that is exactly what this is. Now there was a low gate in Jerusalem that was called the needle and the camels had to stoop down to go through it, but that is not what Jesus is talking about.

The Rabbis used this statement along with one about an elephant going through the eye of a needle to describe the impossible.

This is an idiom for the impossible and the disciples get the point.

Mark 10:26

And they were even more astonished and said to Him, Then who can be saved?

They were astonished before, now even more so. They begin talking among themselves and asking:

Who then can be saved. Aorist, passive, infinitive.

What is remarkable is that the disciples, after ten chapters, finally use the word SWZW for salvation in the spiritual sense. Up to this point the word was used for physical healing and now the disciples make the connection.

What Jesus had been doing in the physical He can also do in the spiritual, and we can be saved.

The problem is, they have just heard that it is impossible for a man to enter the kingdom of God.

So they take one step ahead, and two steps back, in their minds.

Mark 10:27

But what they do not know is that now they are at the point in their thinking that Jesus has wanted them to be ever since he called them. They are listening to Him, looking at themselves, and saying - No Way, Impossible, insurmountable, can't do it.

And that is where the Lord wants them, to come to the conclusion that the rich young ruler and so many believers even today never reach.

I love to hear a young person say the Christian way of life is hard, when they are defeated perhaps by their own decisions and sins. I love to hear a Christian say they are helpless. They admit that there is no way they can do it.

And that is when the God of grace and mercy says, My Way:

Looking upon them, Jesus said, With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.

The little preposition WITH is PARA which means to stand along side.

Jesus is saying that if you stand along side man, his ways, his viewpoint, his abilities, and efforts. You are right. It is impossible.

But are you willing to step out of the crowd, to walk the plank of the cross, and stand along side God. For when standing alongside God, all things are possible.

You are never a fool when you let go of the things you cannot keep, to have the things you could never have.

Stand with man and his ways and the sum total of life will be impossible. Stand with God and your life results in the possible.

I want to give you nine things you can never have when you stand with man but can have when you stand with God:

1. Love: For God and for others, others who love you and even those who don't

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2. Joy: Something on the inside that makes you happy in every circumstance and relationship
3. Peace: Something else on the inside that gives you peace even in the midst of problems.
4. Patience: The ability to wait for the best and never give in to second best which is not best at all.
5. Kindness: Being able to treat others as Christ treated you. In grace. This word comes from the same root as grace and is your graciousness to others.
6. Goodness: Victory over sins that tear you up, hurt you soul, and harm others.
7. Faithfulness: Loyalty to the Lord and to others, a virtue that is given because of who you are, just as the Lord is faithful to us.
8. Gentleness: Humility which includes authority orientation and knowing that you have a place in God's plan and what that place is.
9. Self-control: Self discipline, being able to get the job done, see the task and the relationship in life through to there completion.

These are listed for you in Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

We look at that list and we say, impossible, and we are right. What kind of God would ask us to be and do all those things. A God who gives us His power, His ability, His provision, His own Spirit. Then says "stand with me - and all things are possible."

Now up to this point with the encounter with the rich young man, and all the talk of the Kingdom, the emphasis had been on eternity. But the Lord is not just talking about the great by and be, he also is talking about the sometimes not so great right now. So under the inspiration of the Spirit, we have Peter's question.

Mark 10:28

Peter began to say to Him, Behold, we have left everything and followed You.

Peter goes way back to the decision he made that day on the shores of the sea of Galilee when he left a lucrative fishing business to follow Christ. He speaks for the other disciples who also left wealth and fame and family to follow Christ.

This is almost a boast, BEHOLD can be translated LOOK NOW.

WE LEFT is aorist tense which looks at a past decision, TO FOLLOW a perfect tense, from the past to the present

This is like saying, look what we lost, what we gave up, what we have done for you, look at our sacrifice, and yet now you are saying it is not enough.

AND PETER, THAT IS RIGHT. By leaving everything, you just set aside that which you could depend upon, but that only takes you away from the viewpoint on man. One more step needs to be taken, stand with God and then see the impossible become possible. Not just in eternity, but right now.

Mark 10:29,30

Jesus said, Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.

Here we have the motive and the reward of leaving behind that which can never make the impossible possible -

The Lord does not state this leaving behind as a requirement but only as a possibility. We may have to leave behind a great deal, or just one thing or two.

But whenever we do, it is so we can press the advance towards Jesus Christ, to follow Him and His Word.

Everything listed can be the old baggage that becomes a source of dependence. Everything listed can be a distraction to the abundant life God wants for you.

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And the list the Lord gives is just the overt good things and good relationships. We could add the mental attitudes of self-reliance, rebellion, arrogance, and the sins that we cling to for some false hope of comfort.

But who you are is not wrapped up in any of these. You are a child of the King, an heir of eternity, a member of a royal family with all the rights and privileged afforded to you that are afforded to every spiritual aristocrat.

So a time may come when you have to end a relationship, even with family, to move ahead and follow the Lord. A time may come when wealth or farms, or lands, or business must be left behind in order to move ahead with your Savior.

And a time will come when you will have to leave yourself behind, the old baggage of attitudes on which you have depended for strength and security, in order to have the very best with Jesus Christ.

The motive for this is for the sake of Christ. Now we have seen on prior occasions, that little phrase looks at our motive, that we do what we do because of who Christ is, what he has done for us, his grace. We respond to His grace and we are motivated by His grace.

But then there is a further motive, Reward:

There is not one person who leaves anything behind who will not receive a hundred times as much in time -

This is a promise for RIGHT NOW, not just the million times as much in eternity, but right now, in time, a hundred fold.

Who would ever want to hold onto that which they could not even keep, when it prevents them from having that which they could never gain? The Lord said that we will receive, from His grace, so much more.

At verse 30 he lists everything again, but leaves out one relationship, father.

That is because you have a heavenly Father who will never leave you nor forsake you.

You may have to wait for the Lord to provide some of these hundred fold blessings, but your Father is always there.

The time factor in blessings and rewards is there to keep us from thinking of God as a genie in a bottle. It also develops patience, reveals God's perfect timing, and allows us time to develop capacity for blessing.

But with one thing left out there is also one thing added, persecutions. We will face persecution when we leave behind the relationships and the material things that are standing in the way of spiritual advance.

And almost as a side note the Lord adds: Eternal Life

These verses put the emphasis on our lives right now. Eternal life is secure, but there is something the Lord wants for you right now and in your lifetime, an abundant life filled with his highest and best.

Verse 31 is a summary of how we can have the best.

Mark 10:31

But many who are first, will be last; and the last, first.

The verb used in this verse is middle voice, adding to the benefit the Lord has for us when we are willing to set self aside, to leave the old baggage, to dispel the things upon which we depend, and serve Jesus Christ.

This sets up what the Lord will be saying to James and John about being servants.

A wise man once said: *Do not ever stoop to be a king if God has called you to be a servant.*

So now, for a moment, in some thing or relationship, we may be last, but God's plan in time and eternity is for us to be first.

Nathan Schaeffer said: At the close of life the question will not be, how much have you got, but how much have you given? Not how much have you won, but how much have you done? Not how much have you saved, but how much have you sacrificed? It will be how much have you served, not how much have you been honored?

In this passage we are going to see our Lord talk about being the greatest, being first, by being a servant.

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In this portion of the tenth chapter of Mark we have communication, contradiction, and then confrontation. The Lord Jesus Christ is continuing to prepare his disciple for their future mission. But as we will see, it is a struggle.

Mark 10:32

And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking on ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were fearful. And again He took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him.

The disciples and those who followed are the same, the English text appears to show two groups but the style employed by Mark would indicate only one group, the disciples

They are following him and they are amazed and fearful.

Their amazement is at what he is teaching and their fear is out of respect as they begin to become aware of his mission.

We are told that the Lord begins to tell them what will happen to him in Jerusalem.

The verb HAPPEN is an infinitive and indicates that what will occur is a result of previous plans. The previous plan here is the plan of God for salvation, set from eternity past - it is now to be fulfilled.

Mark 10:33,34

This is the most specific prophecy of His suffering and death given thus far and expands the prophecies of Mark 8 and 9.

Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and will deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they will mock Him and spit upon Him, and scourge Him, and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again.

1. Betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes
2. They will condemn him to death

3. They will deliver him to the Gentiles for execution

4. They will mock him

5. They will spit at him

6. They will scourge him

7. They will kill him

But after three days he will rise again -

Now notice: The seven horrible things that are done by man are offset by one thing that is accomplished by God, He is risen.

Principle we can apply to life: The many things that man might do to you are offset by a single act of grace from God.

The harm we face and the hurt we endure cannot stand up to or overcome the grace of God - if we stand upon that grace.

Mark 10:35-37

The response to this communication is a contradiction. James and John listen, they hear the prophecy, and then ask a question.

And James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, came up to Him, saying to Him, Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask of You. And He said to them, What do you want Me to do for you? And they said to Him, Grant that we may sit in Your glory, one on Your right, and one on Your left.

In Mark 3:17 these two are called the sons of thunder. They were bold and had considerable energy in following the Lord. Their boldness is demonstrated in their question.

They were close to Jesus Christ, having witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter and the Transfiguration. But what they are about to ask should not to be requested.

Furthermore, in response to the prophecy of Jesus suffering and death, this question is incongruent, out of the context, and demonstrates a self-centeredness.

1. They begin, not by asking the question but by asking for a favor upon demand.

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2. The WE MAY ASK and YOU MAY DO verbs are aorist subjunctives indicating that they are looking to a yet future time, after, as Jesus mentioned, his resurrection.
3. In answering the initial request Jesus changes the verb form to a future indicative, making the basis not something future but the content of the request right now.
4. In verse 37 when they get to the request they use an imperative verb of command, not a request but a command.
5. What they want is stated: That one of them may sit on the Lord's right hand and one on the left in glory, after the resurrection and their physical death.
6. In other words, in their arrogant self-centeredness, they want an eternal position of priority over all the other disciples and believers. They fail to understand that privilege and position and prosperity in time or eternity, in God's perfect plan, is preceded by suffering and persecution. They want the BENEFITS without the BRUISES, the GLORY without the GORE, the POSITION without the PERSECUTION, the FAME without the MISFORTUNE, the BLESSINGS without the BUMPS -
But don't we all! We want to be men and women of iron without ever being set against the anvil of life. We, too, want the blessings without the bumps.
But you cannot become strong without strain, and God will put us to the anvil of life so we can become strong.
James and John wanted it the easy way, but the glory God has in store for us does not come the easy way:

Mark 10:38

But Jesus said to them, You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?

Both the analogy of the cup and the word baptism were used figuratively in the ancient world for suffering.

Jesus prayed in the garden: Take this cup from me, if it be your will.

The word BAPTISM looks at identification and Jesus will be identified with our sins and with death.

These two figures describe the cross, the baptism of the cup, where our sins were poured out upon Christ.

Jesus prefaces his question with the comment: You have no idea what you are asking -

Mark 10:39

But listen to their response:

And they said to Him, We are able.

Their boast is made with a present tense verb. We are able right now.

And Jesus said to them, The cup that I drink you shall drink; and you shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized.

In contradicting their present tense boast, Jesus uses future tense -

You will drink and you will be baptized with suffering.

The suffering and death that Jesus would endure was for them, as it is for us. We are all, as believers, identified with him and the Cross.

Also, the believer will suffer personally when he sets Jesus Christ and His word as the priority of his life.

Jesus has already talked about the sacrifice of family and friends, fields and farms. And he will tell of persecution that is to come upon the child of God.

But all this is to make us strong. Today we are living in an age, in a society in which we may very soon have to be very strong.

The suffering that we are personally experiencing right now may escalate to a national scale as we see the erosion of morality, standards, and ideas.

We may think we hurt now, but that is to allow us to go through even greater calamity that may be around the corner.

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I look at our nation and I think that if God does not do something soon, he will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.

And when he does judge our nation, are we going to be encapsulated in the power of the Word that is in us, or are we going to fall apart alongside those who do not know our Savior?

If you are IDENTIFIED with him, and that identification has become a REALITY, you will be able to stand firm in the faith

Mark 10:40

Jesus tells these two sons of thunde,r who are thundering in their self-centeredness, that what they request is not even his to give:

But to sit on My right or on My left, this is not Mine to give; but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.

The verb PREPARED is a perfect passive and indicates that from eternity past, as part of the divine decrees the Father has set the appointed order of heaven.

Jesus, in his humanity, is raised by the Father, ascends into heaven, and by the Father is invited to sit at the right hand of Almighty God.

What Jesus is saying is that even he, in his humanity, in his sinless and holy character, is limited and must depend upon the Father.

And Christian, if Jesus was limited and had to depend upon the perfect plan of God, so do we. And if from this he received eternal glory, so can we.

Mark 10:41

Now up to this point the other disciples had not be listening in on the conversation. But now they hear the denial of the request. Their reaction sets up a confrontation:

And hearing this, the ten began to feel indignant with James and John.

The word INDIGNANT is AGANAKTEW which means to be greatly grieved, violently irritated. It was also used for fermenting wine so the idea is one of an indignation that ferments, or builds.

The other disciples are now angry at James and John.

Isn't this how divisiveness usually begins?

1. Selective Learning: James and John listened to only part of the message. They forgot about the suffering and death and thought only about the glory of Jesus in heaven.

2. Self-Centeredness: They wanted an inside track to positions of prominence.

3. Exclusivity: They wanted this only for themselves excluding the other disciples.

4. Arrogance: Thinking they could do the ministry that was assigned to and could only be accomplished by Christ.

5. Jealousy: The others were now jealously angry in response to the request.

Now there is anger, grief, conflict, and the potential for bitterness all adding up to division.

Mark 10:42,43

And calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant;

Under the human viewpoint exercised by the unbeliever Gentiles, man takes authority and uses it to lord it over others. They exercise authority apart from responsibility.

But this must not be the case among Christians.

Under Divine Viewpoint the servant is the greatest.

If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

The wish to follow Jesus Christ is a present tense continual attitude of knowing that God's plan for you is right, that it is best, and that it is the most important thing in life.

You may at aorist tense points in time make bad decisions, you will get out of fellowship, you will blow it, at times. But what is important is the

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present tense attitude, wanting to follow Jesus Christ.

The word GREAT is MEGAS which means great or the greatest, and also means surprising.

This is the life in Christ that may even surprise you. We do not know what the Lord has in store for us and when we see His plan unfolding we may be surprised.

Here again we see the divine formula for being a winner to be great, to be a servant.

The word SERVANT in v 43 is DAIKONOS

The word SLAVE in v 44 is DOULOS

AND IN VERSE 45 the Lord establishes himself as the pattern, the precedent, and the example believers are to follow in being a servant.

Mark 10:43 through 45 teach us about the greatest attitude we can have in life, an attitude that will lead to greatness in time and eternity, the attitude of a servant.

We are going to examine that attitude and the actions of a servant as we continue this section.

It has been said that we must never stoop to become a king when God has called us to be a servant.

In our passage, we are going to see the Lord's formula for success in life, to be a servant.

The Lord speaks out in the midst of strife among the disciples. James and John have attempted to get the Lord to grant them special privileges in heaven. The Lord told them this was not his to give, but a prerogative of the Father.

The other disciples, upon hearing of the request of James and John, became angry at them and there is now discord among the twelve.

Jesus is going to use this conflict as an opportunity to give the disciples the divine formula for being a winner, for being first in life and in eternity.

v 43, 44 At the end of this verse he states:

Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant. Whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all.

This concept that the Lord is teaching is a complete contradiction to Human viewpoint thinking. It is totally inconsistent with the

thinking of man yet totally consistent with the Divine viewpoint and the thinking of a Holy God.

Mankind involves himself in ambition, competition, and expectation of self and others that brings him to a point of seeking power and authority.

These attitudes and their attending actions often become unrealistic and drive a person on to a frantic search for power, thinking that it will bring happiness. But it can only bring frustration.

Jesus makes two statements regarding the divine formula for greatness and success:

1. Whoever among you wishes to become great, shall be a servant or minister.
2. Whoever among you wishes to be first, shall be a slave.

In both statements the Lord uses a subjunctive mood for WISH which indicates that some will and some will not wish to be great or first:

Now this greatness and preeminence is not in the world or in man's Human viewpoint, but in God's plan for you.

God wants you to be great, he wants you to be first, and He is willing to provide all that is needed for you to have that as a reality.

It is amazing to think that God offers the unsearchable riches of His grace and a perfect plan to us, and yet we reject it and settle for that which is far less.

When Christ died on the Cross for us, God did for us the greatest thing he could ever do. And now that we are His, now that we are children of the king, He will do even more than the most for us.

The word WISH is present tense indicating an attitude that we are to have. An attitude can be continual while our actions may not be.

The key is to have the right attitude, to come to the point that you wish for the very best that God has to give you - then let God work in you.

The word GREAT used in verse 43 is MEGAS where we get the word mega. It means large or great by way of importance:

The word had a very common use among the Rabbis who divided mankind into the small and

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the great. They saw great men as those who had power and authority. They taught that such greatness was the favor of God.

But now Jesus turns that Human viewpoint and very simplistic way of looking at man all around. He says that if you want real greatness, it comes by being a servant or one who ministers.

Servant in verse 43 is DIAKONOS where we get the word Deacon.

It originally meant to heap dust. Because a good servant moved so fast that dust flew around him. Then it was used for the boys who carried the towels in the bath houses.

In the religious sense, it took on the idea of one who ministered or rendered a service to another.

The emphasis then is on the one who is served by the servant.

The word BECOME is an aorist, middle, infinitive.

The aorist tense looks at specific points in time when you have the opportunity to serve others, the middle voice sees this as a benefit to you, and the infinitive looks at this as a result.

A result of the grace that God gives you.

So then, to be great, make the choice to serve others.

Now in the second statement:

The word FIRST is PRWTOS which is a superlative and would have had special meaning to James and John, remember, they wanted places of preeminence in heaven.

So to be first, first be a slave:

SLAVE is DOULOS and looks at the one who is a slave under a master.

So the word in verse 43 looks at the ones whom you serve as a servant.

Mark 10:44

The word in verse 44 looks at the master.

Principle: To have all the greatness and riches of grace and God's plan, serve and be a servant.

Mark 10:45

Now Jesus Christ never calls us to do anything that he himself has not done or is willing to do:

So the illustration of verses 43 and 44 is the very person of the humanity of Christ:

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

It is Jesus who is the ultimate example of being a servant, it is his life and death that is the ultimate example of serving:

The God who came to serve was foretold in the Old Testament. The Messiah, God's anointed. He would not be great in man's estimation. He would be a servant.

The prophet Isaiah spoke extensively of Christ as a servant:

Three major servant Psalms are found in Isaiah:

Isaiah 42:1-4 Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry out or raise His voice, Nor make His voice heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break, And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not be disheartened or crushed, Until He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law.

The Servant Songs: Isaiah 42:1-4, 49:1-8, 52:13 to 53:12, and possibly Isaiah 42:5-7, 49:7, 50:10-11. And a fifth song in Isaiah 61:1-ff

ATTRIBUTES OF A SERVANT:

1. Chosen by God: Isa 42:1, 49:1

Isaiah 49:1 Listen to Me, O islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me.

2. Empowered with the Holy Spirit: Isa 42:1

Isaiah 42:1b I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.

3. Taught by God: Isa 50:4

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Isaiah 50:4 The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple.

4. Found his strength in God: Isa 49:2
Isaiah 49:2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me, And He has also made Me a select arrow; He has hidden Me in His quiver.
5. He would suffer: Isa 53:10, 50:6, 53:3, 53:8-10
Isaiah 53:10 But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.
6. He was weak, unimpressive, scorned by men:
Isaiah 52:14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His appearance was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men.
7. Meek: Isa 42:2
Isaiah 42:2 He will not cry out or raise His voice, Nor make His voice heard in the street.
8. Gentle: Isa 42:3
Isaiah 42:3 A bruised reed He will not break, And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.
9. Uncomplaining: 50:6, 53:7
Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.
10. He was innocent: Isa 53:9
Isaiah 53:9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.
11. He was reduced to despair: Isa 49:4

Isaiah 49:4 But I said, I have toiled in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity; Yet surely the justice due to Me is with the Lord, And My reward with My God.

12. His faith and trust was in the Lord: Isa 49:4, 50:7-9
Isaiah 50:7 For the Lord God helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know that I shall not be ashamed.
13. He was obedient: Isa 50:4-5
Isaiah 50:5 The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient, Nor did I turn back.
14. He persevered or endured: Isa 50:7
Isaiah 50:7 I have set My face like flint, And I know that I shall not be ashamed.
15. He was victorious: Isa 42:4, 50:8-9
Isaiah 50:8 He who vindicates Me is near; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up to each other; Who has a case against Me? Let him draw near to Me. Behold, the Lord God helps Me; Who is he who condemns Me? Behold, they will all wear out like a garment; The moth will eat them.

Now we must recognize that the Lord Jesus became a servant for a reason. And that reason is you -

And now he calls us to serve him and to be servants to the world:

Some new testament passages:

JOHN 12:26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

There is honor given by the Father to the servants

Romans 7:6 But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

We do not serve in our own power but the power of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your

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freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

We serve with an attitude of love towards others. And when you love someone you are willing to go the extra mile, and the next, and the next . .

Colossians 3:24 Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

The one we serve, even when serving others, is the Lord himself

Hebrews 13:10 We have an altar, from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.

The servant in the church age serves with privileges that have never been available in any dispensation before

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

We are gifted by God to serve others. The spiritual gifts we have are not for ourselves, but for others. And we serve others by grace.

Luke 1:74 That we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear.

And we serve without fear, for we are called to serve by the God of the Universe, to serve the one who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

But one warning about being a servant: Servants are at times ill treated, they are sometimes abused, and they are often hurt by the ones they extend themselves to serve.

But the master is gracious, He loves us and cares for us. He knows what it is like to be a servant and be rejected, abused, and hurt by those He came to serve.

1 Peter 4:12-13 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.

William Dyke was a rich Englishman who had been blind since early childhood. After acquiring his wealth, he fell in love with one of England's most beautiful young ladies. Soon they were engaged and a date was set for the wedding. Shortly before the anticipated event, Dyke submitted to a new surgical procedure that specialists said would restore his sight. Since his bandages had to stay on until the day of the wedding, the couple decided to have them removed during the ceremony. When the day arrived, William Dyke nervously took his place in the church. Soon the bride approached the altar on the arm of her father. Then came the dramatic moment when the doctor removed the last covering from Dyke's eyes. As the groom's eyes grew accustomed to the light, the first sight he beheld was the face of his beloved. As their eyes met, he exclaimed in wonder and joy, At last!

We are going to see in the closing story of Mark, chapter 10 a man who receives his sight and the first thing he sees is the One who loves him, Jesus Christ.

Mark is writing about the closing events of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. While the entire Gospel saw every step Jesus took bringing Him to the mission of the Cross, now His steps quicken and become more definite as He sets his face towards Jerusalem and the betrayal, condemnation, and death that awaits Him.

Luke 9:51 And it came about, when the days were approaching for His ascension, that He resolutely set His face to go to Jerusalem.

Mark 10:46

And they came to Jericho. And as He was going out from Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, a blind beggar named Bartimeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road.

Jesus had been ministering on the East side of the Jordan and now is going to Jerusalem for the Passover and His Passion.

Jericho is on the West side of the Jordan about 14 miles from Jerusalem.

The ancient city of Jericho had been uninhabited since the days of Joshua. But a new Jericho had

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been built by Herod the great and was the location of the summer palace.

The events of Mark 10 probably occurred as he was on the road between the old Jericho and new Jericho.

New Jericho was a Roman city and by crossing the Jordan, Jesus was now under the authority of the Romans and the Jewish Sanhedrin or high council of elders.

Jesus knows that he is in enemy territory but that very present danger did not prevent Him from His mission and His ministry, He still had things to teach the disciples and He still was preparing them for their future mission.

And he still has people to help -

The great multitude mentioned in this verse are the pilgrims going to Jerusalem for Passover. As they leave the city with the Lord and His disciples their pilgrimage is interrupted by the shouts of a blind man, Bartimeus.

BAR (son of) TIMAEOS hence Bartimeus -

Now the other Gospels that record this event give us information that Mark does not include and when we study those Gospels we will examine those details. Here we see the details of persistence and priority.

Mark includes the lineage of Bartimeus as son of Timaeos. Now usually a blind beggar doesn't have a pedigree but Mark, writing at a later time, includes this perhaps because Bartimeus is by the time of the writing someone well known in the first century church.

Sitting by the road indicates that he was there begging alms from the travelers on their way to Jerusalem.

Blindness, both from birth and occurring later in life, is a big problem in the Near East. In the ancient days when the trash, garbage, and discards were burned openly, the soot was damaging to the eyes.

A man who visited the Near East in the 18th century noted even then that half the men he saw had problems with their eyes as a result of infections.

So the blind beggar sitting by the road was a common sight in the ancient Near East.

Mark 10:47

And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!

The sense of hearing in a blind man is very acute. He listens more intently than those who can see. And here we learn that Bartimeus had been listening. He heard about Jesus Christ, and in his darkened world he had the opportunity to think about what he had heard.

He heard of the words and works of this Jesus of Nazareth, and he was thinking that this man was the Messiah, the promised Son of David.

He put what he had heard together with what he knew and came to a conclusion: "this is the Messiah who can cause the blind to see" - so he then applied it:

He began to cry out and say, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.

BEGAN is middle voice, he cried out for his benefit

Both CRY OUT and SAY are present, infinitives indicating that he keep on crying out and did so as a result of something else, the information he had in his soul regarding Jesus Christ.

After addressing Jesus, the Son of David, Bartimeus now makes a request:

Have MERCY on me

The mercy of God simply defined is the action of Grace. It goes a bit beyond that to the action of Grace to hold back the judgment of God that we deserve.

So with one hand God gives us grace, that which we do not earn nor deserve.

And with the other hand God's mercy holds back the judgment that we should receive for our sin and rebellion against him. Discipline comes when mercy is slacked.

Psalm 25 is great psalm of David recovering from sin and there he asks God for mercy:

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Psalm 25:7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; According to Thy lovingkindness (Mercy) remember Thou me, For Thy goodness' sake, O Lord.

So Bartimeus seeks the Lord for mercy regarding his blindness. Hold back and remove the judgment.

Mark 10:48

Now many in the crowd saw the shouting of this blind beggar as an interruption of their journey.

And many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, Son of David, have mercy on me!

The word translated STERNLY TELLING HIM means to strongly censure or rebuke.

The phrase BE QUIET means that he should or enter a different state, a state of quiet rather than shouting.

You see the harmony of their journey was disturbed, they did not see why this blind beggar should force his misery upon them and Jesus.

But this man continued to cry out, indifferent to the rebuke of the crowd. He knew that Jesus was here, now, and this was his opportunity to seek the Messiah, the son of David.

He was persistent, he did not let up. Even when the crowds rebuked him, he keep on crying out.

Mark 10:49

Jesus, however, would not allow their rebuke to stand. Even while on his way to Jerusalem to complete his mission, he had the time to minister to one who had a need and called out to him.

And Jesus stopped and said, Call him here. And they called the blind man, saying to him, Take courage, arise! He is calling for you.

Jesus stopped and stood in the road and issued a command, call him here (imperative mood).

The crowd, being obedient to Jesus, very quickly changed their tune, they now encourage the blind man to arise and come to Jesus.

The word for TAKE COURAGE is often translated BE OF GOOD CHEER and looks at the mental

attitude of boldness we are to have in life, to seek the Lord and come to him with a mental attitude of confidence and courage.

Mark 10:50

This gives us the response of Bartimeus:

And casting aside his cloak, he jumped up, and came to Jesus.

We do not really appreciate the significance of this until we consider what the cloak was for a blind beggar.

The cloak was the large outer garment that a beggar used to carry his earthly belongings, to wrap around him as he would sleep in the door ways and in the streets, and even spread in front of him to collect the coins given to him by those who passed by.

The cloak was just about the only thing a beggar owned and it was very important to him.

But it was not as important as Jesus Christ.

Now before we go any further, we need to look at the analogy of blindness and the Lord's healing of this physical limitation.

1. Every miracle of healing the Lord preformed was designed to give us an analogy to the spiritual healing we need. We are blind and deaf to spiritual things, we are lepers alienated from God, we are dead in our sins, lame and unable to walk the Christian walk. We need the touch of Christ in our lives to heal us spiritually.

2. Isaiah 42:18 and other Old Testament passages tell of the work of the messiah in giving sight to blind and hearing to the deaf:

Hear, you deaf! And look, you blind, that you may see.

3. When Jesus healed the deaf and blind he was fulfilling these prophecies that were written about Him. And He was teaching us that we are spiritually deaf and spiritually blind.

4. By way of analogy deafness relates to the unbeliever who cannot hear. Faith comes by hearing and in the analogy the deaf person is cut off from the hearing of the Word.

5. Continuing the analogy, blindness relates to the believer who is blind to the wonderful and great

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things God has for him. He cannot see them, he is blind to the plan of God.

6. Bartimeus knew who Jesus was and believed that he was the Messiah, the son of David, but was blind and could not follow Him.

In the same way Christians believe in Christ but are blind, sitting by the way side as Christ and His people are moving on.

7. The analogy of blindness was used in the NEW TESTAMENT. in a number of passages:

Ephesians 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.

1 John 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Revelation 3:18 I advise you to buy from Me - eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see.

2 Peter 1:9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.

So then, Bartimeus is like the believer who calls after Jesus Christ - and Jesus stops and beckons him.

When Bartimeus threw down his cloak, he threw off dependence on earthly things to come without hesitation to the Lord.

Mark 10:51

And answering him, Jesus said, What do you want Me to do for you? And the blind man said to Him, Rabboni, I want to regain my sight!

I think it is very interesting that Jesus would ask a blind man what that man wanted Him to do for him. Wouldn't it be obvious that the blind man wanted to see?

But when we come to Jesus Christ, it is not always obvious to us what we really need. The Lord always knows, but in our darkened state we do not always know.

So the Lord, with such grace, asks: What do you want Me to do for you?

And that question rings out to us through the centuries, What do you want of your Lord Jesus Christ?

The answer should be the same answer that was given that day by the blind beggar Bartimeus - I want to see.

Not to just see with eye but with the soul, to see clearly the grace of God, His perfect plan, the abundant life He has for you, to see His highest and best.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10 As it is written, Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And which have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

The positive, advancing believer who has doctrine in his soul sees what no else can see - he sees even the deep things of God.

Mark 10:52

Jesus Christ will never refuse a request that is in line with God's will for us.

And Jesus said to him, Go your way; your faith has made you well. And immediately he regained his sight and began following Him on the road.

The faith that makes well is faith that has a proper target or object. That object, or target, is Jesus Christ.

1. "Go your way" looks at Bartimeus now having the free will to determine his decisions
2. "And He immediately received his sight." God immediately answers the prayers for seeing that which we could not see apart from Christ
3. And then he chose to follow him on the road to Jerusalem.

But there is something that is not here. Mark makes no mention of Bartimeus going back for his cloak.

That which was once all important to him, his protection and his livelihood, now is unimportant

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in the presence of the Jesus, the Messiah, the Son | of David.

Mark Lesson 10 Quiz

Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson.

To answer a question, type your response in the space provided after the word "Answer:". A question may be True/False, multiple choice, fill in the blank, or short answer type.

The last question requires you to write one or two paragraphs in "essay" form. Use the space provided; it will expand to accommodate your response.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to Grace Notes.

- If you received an email file containing the quiz, you can use the REPLY feature of your e-mail application to open the quiz. Enter your answers in the reply message. Then SEND the message to Grace Notes.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to Grace Notes as a file attachment. This is handy, but these lessons will average 100K to 200K in size. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to Grace Notes as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to Grace Notes in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

Grace Notes

% Warren Doud

1705 Aggie Lane

Austin, Texas 78757 USA

Whichever transmission method you use, when Grace Notes receives your completed Quiz, the next lesson will be sent to you, by the same means you received this one. EXCEPT: when you have sent in the FINAL QUIZ, we will send your certificate to you, by regular mail.

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Questions on Mark Lesson 10

1. The lesson states that marriage is a triangle. What are the three corners of the triangle?

Answer:

2. The region east of the Jordan river, where Jesus went to teach, was known as _____.

Answer:

3. What was the issue with which the Pharisees challenged Christ?

Answer:

4. In Moses time, divorce was never permitted. [True/False]

Answer:

5. Both Jewish and Roman law allowed either a man or a woman to remarry after divorce; but Christ stated that remarriage after divorce was equivalent to adultery. [True/False]

Answer:

6. What was the action of the disciples toward those who were bringing children to Jesus?

Answer:

7. Jesus did not deal with children, preferring to preach and teach to the parents. [True/False]

Answer:

8. The young man who wanted to earn eternal life saw Jesus as a _____.

Answer:

9. The young man was immoral and therefore not deserving of Jesus' attention. [True/False]

Answer:

10. What was Jesus' attitude toward the arrogant and self-righteous young man?

Answer:

11. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

Answer:

12. Which disciples approached Christ with the request to sit on His right and left hands in heaven?

Answer:

13. The Son of Man did not come to be _____, but to _____.

Answer:

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14. In Isaiah 50 there are a dozen or so attributes of a servant. Write at least three of them here.

Answer:

15. Near what city did Jesus deal with the blind man, Bartimeus?

Answer:

End of Quiz