

writer, and here the **images** He uses are **horrific** indeed. One can hardly think of it for a prolonged period with out become repulsed and horrified. But they are solemn and stern warnings indeed. See here that Jesus tells us the real **culprit** of what sends people to **hell** which is **sin**, and it is a massively penetrating and **radical call to repentance** for all of us. The obvious and simple truth laid out here, no sin in life is **worth** dying and **going to hell** for. It reminds me of a similar quote from Thomas Watson, "*What fools are they who for a drop of pleasure drink a sea of wrath.*" Indeed, **no sinful activity** in life is worth the **eternal torment** of hell's **unquenchable fire**, and we would do well to warn people not to go there, but to seek **refuge** in the Gospel of Christ. The Lord continues with a statement referring to the fact that no one will be beyond divine scrutiny, "**49 "For everyone will be salted with fire,"** but that it is best for us to be strongly devoted in our faith, "**50 "Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."** Salt of course was used as a preservative in those days and the reference here is no doubt a call for our faith to remain **pure and undefiled** and this is illustrated in Jesus words to "**be at peace with one another.**" In light of Jesus radical language concerning the killing of sin, this section seems to call us to a pure and strongly devoted faith that we strive to preserve.

Mark 10:1-12 - 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. 2 And some Pharisees came up to Him, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. 3 And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?" 4 And they said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." 5 But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. 6 "But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. 7 "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, 8 and the two shall become one flesh; consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." 10 And in the house the disciples began questioning Him about this again. 11 And He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; 12 and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery."

Jesus is now making His way towards Jerusalem. During this time He is still giving **intense training** to the disciples. As He makes His way, He is again encountered by the **religious rulers**, who ever and always seem to try to discredit Him and test Him. "**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. **2 And some Pharisees came up to Him, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.**” Now the questioning will focus on the controversial and moral question of **divorce** to which the Lord will give clear answers. Notice, even though they **already permit divorce** in the culture for just about any reason, they still seem to doubt its legitimacy asking **“whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.”** Jesus responds, **“3 And He answered and said to them, “What did Moses command you?”** See here Jesus immediately appeals to the authority of the Bible for the answer, **“4 And they said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.”** This of course was a reference to **Deuteronomy 24:1-4** where Moses allowed divorce in certain circumstances. **“5 But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment.”** See here that Jesus attributes divorce to the hardness of heart of those who seek it. Here is a great lesson in **searching our own hearts** concerning the issue of divorce. But Jesus knowing the current state of how that **law** had been **misused**, points them to the **original intent** of the **monogamous marriage** that **God had intended** from the beginning. **“6 “But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. 7 “For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, 8 and the two shall become one flesh; consequently, they are no longer two, but one flesh.”** Jesus here in verse 7 quotes from **Genesis 2:24** concerning the oneness in **physical** and **spiritual unity** in **marriage**, but also explains the great **permanence** that God **intended** for it. He therefore gives a commandment for His followers that is very decisive, **“9 “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”** This of course was very controversial as divorce was prevalent in that day and time as it is today and it raises the standard for **Christian marriage** to the highest level of **importance** in this most basic human institution. This would have been a **serious rebuke** for the **Pharisees** who held that a woman could be divorced for just about any **insignificant reason** at all. Later Jesus clarifies His decisive command by explaining to the disciples the obvious ramifications of divorce, **“10 And in the house the disciples began questioning Him about this again. 11 And He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; 12 and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery.”** Jesus word on that matter is so final that it implicates anyone who **practices divorce** as **adulterers**. This of course completely redefines the importance and permanence of marriage. In fact, there are only two **exceptions** to this injunction in all of the New Testament. The first would be the exception of **marital infidelity** on the part of one of the parties. In the same incident recorded

by Matthew 19 (also see Matt 5:31-32), Jesus gives this **exception clause** that is not recorded in Mark.

Matthew 19:9 - 9 "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, **except for immorality**, and marries another woman commits adultery." NASB

See here the Lord both **does not require** but **permits divorce** in the case of **marital infidelity**. The word for “**immorality**” in Matthew 19:9 is *pornea* and refers to any kind of sex outside of marriage. The other exception that is given is by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:15.

1 Corinthians 7:15 - 15 Yet **if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases**, but God has called us to peace. NASB

Of course, the context of this **exception** is concerning **divorce** between **believers and unbelievers** and when Paul says “**the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases,**” he refers to the **marriage covenant**, they are **not bound to stay married** if the unbelieving spouse **abandons** the believer in marriage. The Heritage Christian Fellowship Statement of Faith explains this biblical teaching in the section on Orthopraxy.

Divorce and Remarriage

We teach that all divorces are based on sin although not all divorces are sinful ([Matthew 19:8-9](#)). A divorce is not sinful when it is acquired on biblical grounds. There are two provisions that grant permission (not require) to divorce: 1) unrepentant sexual sin ([Matthew 19:3-9](#)) and 2) desertion by an unbelieving spouse ([I Corinthians 7:15](#)).

Remarriage is permitted only when the divorce is established on biblical grounds ([Matthew 19:9](#); [I Corinthians 7:15](#)). God regulates all unbiblical divorces ([I Corinthians 7:11](#)) and makes no provision or grants permission to remarry. Remarriage without biblical grounds to divorce will result in adultery ([Matthew 19:9](#)).

Jesus teaching on marriage established a much needed **injunction** to **protect** the **sacred institution** of **marriage** from the hardness of heart that so often accompanies and compounds the number of divorces. No doubt this has preserved many Christian marriages in history and has been a **curb** on the sins of many, causing us to **contemplate** and **hold sacred** the **permanence** and **importance** of the **marriage covenant**. Let us hold it in the same esteem as the Lord Himself.

Mark 10:13-16 - 13 And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. 14 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. 15 "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all."