**BCM Bible Study – October 13/14, 2021**

**Mark 10:1-11:11**

**Read 10:1-12 // Divorce**

* How do you feel about the topic of divorce? What does it make you think of? How has divorce impacted your life?
  + Are more of these responses neutral, or negative? What might that tell us about the overall nature of divorce?
* The passage starts with the Pharisees coming to question Jesus and “test him.” In many ways, the Pharisees are basically asking “what can I get away with?” In Jesus’ response, he points out this wrong line of thinking and instead focuses on the main purpose of marriage.
  + When have you been tempted to jump into the details or end results of something...before even considering the main purpose of the process? For example, have you ever tried to figure out the bare minimum grade you needed to pass a class? This is similar thinking to the Pharisees -- asking “what can I get away with?”
  + How can we prevent this line of thinking?
* A large part of Jesus’ response to the Pharisees includes the original design and purpose for marriage. **Read Genesis 2:18-25.**
  + What is God’s original design and purpose for marriage?
  + How does this differ from the marriages and relationships you hear/know about in our culture? How does it differ from the marriages and relationships you know of personally in your family and friends?
  + How do you feel about these differences?
* We are sinful, broken humans. There will inevitably be divorce, but that is not God’s design for us -- for marriage. Instead of focusing on what happens when there is divorce (God’s grace is enough for us in the midst of a broken marriage and everything that follows), we should focus on God’s original design for marriage and how we can try to honor that in our lives.

**Read 10:13-16 // The Little Children and Jesus**

* Do you see any significance in having this passage follow directly behind the one about divorce? How so?
* What are childlike qualities that you appreciate and/or wish you still had?
  + Would any of these qualities lean towards glorifying God and having dependence on Him? How so?
  + How could you bring some of these qualities into your life right now in a way that would glorify God?
* What might it look like to pray like a child? [trusting the parent, having no filter, saying exactly what you want and how you feel, talking to God EVERY time you need/want anything]

**Read 10:17-31 // The Rich Young Man**

* This rich man had a very hard time accepting Jesus’ truth and giving up his riches to follow Jesus.
  + How have you seen a focus on money and possessions cause negative impacts on people’s lives?
  + Have you ever experienced this in your life, and valued money or possessions more than your relationship with Jesus? How can you keep this from happening in the future?
* Jesus makes the point that it’s not enough to just follow the commandments and do good deeds. That will never be enough. We have to respond to Jesus and follow Him.
  + Is there anything in your life that is keeping you from responding to Jesus?
  + What good is the law (in this context, the 10 commandments) if it’s not enough to save us? [it is for our protection, our guidance, our witness to non-believers, it tells us about God and his heart, it creates order]

**Read 10:46-52 // Blind Bartimaeus Received His Sight**

* Think about the setting. There was a large crowd at the roadside entering Jericho. Bartimaeus did not hesitate to shout out to Jesus as soon as he realized that Jesus was nearby. He could have said, “oh, let me just wait until Jesus walks back through later, when there aren’t so many people around,” but he didn’t. He cries out to Jesus! And when people in the crowd rebuke him, he just shouts louder.
  + Do you ever find yourself hesitating and waiting to cry out or pray to Jesus? Why or why not?
  + What would it look like to remove all hesitations from your prayer life?
* Bartimaeus was shouting -- and he kept shouting -- out to Jesus.
  + What can we learn from this perseverance?
  + How can we exercise this in our relationships with the Lord?
* V. 47 & 48 -- What does Bartimaeus shout when he realizes that Jesus is near?
  + “Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me” -- This is sometimes known as the Jesus Prayer, a short prayer phrase based on this verse. It acknowledges His power, our weakness, and it is an easy phrase to use to call out to Jesus whenever we want him near to us.
* V. 51 -- Bartimaeus says “Rabbi, I **want** to see.” He tells Jesus what he WANTS.
  + How do you feel about telling Jesus what you WANT? Is that easy or difficult for you?

**11:1-11 // The Triumphal Entry**

* What did the crowds outside Jerusalem exclaim? [v. 9-10]
* These people who were cheering and exalting Jesus did not fully understand what was happening. They thought Jesus was going to save them from political enemies and government oppression and bring about a new city/kingdom that rivaled that of Caesar.
  + How do you see this in our world today? Do you or other people you know fall into this -- cheering along with the crowd without fully understanding what’s going on?
    - We see this a lot in modern-day politics, but Jesus did not come to fulfill anyone’s political agenda. “The one who comes to Jerusalem comes as the king of the entire world and dies for all people. His people will not be confined to any one nation and his sacrificial love will reach beyond all national borders and races.” (Garland)
  + How can we remember this in our daily lives -- especially when the world is so full of politics, division, and “going along with the crowd?”

**Challenge:** Pray the Jesus Prayer (“Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me”) at least once every day this week -- in moments when you are frustrated, upset, anxious, etc. -- and think about how Bartimaeus continuously shouted out to Jesus, without hesitation. To go a step further, try praying like a child -- no filter, telling God exactly what you want at the moment you want it.

**Extra Notes**

**10:1-12 // Divorce**

* Main idea: “Marriage is a sacred covenant that ideally is dissolved only by death.”
* The Pharisees followed the school of thought that “said divorce could be granted for ‘any indecency.’”
* “The Pharisees need to discover what God commands, not what Moses has permitted. The Pharisees’ approach to the law is wrong, their approach to marriage is also wrong. They begin with the end of the marriage relationship and scrutinize the correct procedures for ending it.” (Garland)
* Jesus is responding to the Pharisees -- people who were trying to test/trap him with his answers.
  + Because of this, Jesus responds with further questions that poke at the sinfulness of the Pharisees’ hearts and motivations.
  + In this, we cannot expect there to be any advice or counsel about struggling marriage relationships. We cannot expect there to be pastoral care for divorced people. We cannot expect there to be advice for people who are contemplating divorce. These are not the audiences Jesus is speaking to at this time.
* Other relevant scripture:
  + Matthew 19:3-12
  + Romans 7:1-3
  + 1 Corinthians 7:8-16, 39-40
  + Malachi 2:13-16

**10:13-16 // Children**

* Main idea: Jesus loves and cares for children.
* This passage probably follows v. 1-12 to emphasize the importance of children, despite what happens in a marriage relationship or relationship between parents.
* “Jesus goes against the grain and identifies with the powerless, with those who have no rights and whom most regard as insignificant. The new community Jesus founds embraces the powerless little ones rather than dismissing them or banishing them. Since he has special regard for them, so should his disciples.” (Garland)
* We should have a childlike dependence on God.

**10:17-31 // Rich Man**

* Main idea: It’s not enough to follow the commandments and do good. You have to respond to Jesus and follow him -- then you will be saved and have eternal life. The rich will have a hard time entering the kingdom of God, because they are being ruled by money and are happy with their wealth and life on earth as is.

**10: 46-52 // Blind Bartimaeus Received His Sight**

* Main idea: Jesus is merciful and has mercy on those who are faithful to him, especially those who have persevering faith even though they cannot see physical evidence.
* “A Praying Life” by Paul Miller was a good resource I used when looking at the Jesus Prayer. *Please see Sydnee if you want to borrow a copy.*
* Moment-by-moment prayer is a normal way to pray, but we don’t always realize that. We think it needs to be this long, drawn-out prayer about everything going on, but that’s not always the case. God listens and enjoys our prayers no matter what the length, and sometimes, calling out with the Jesus Prayer can be a great way to let God know that you want Him near to you in a moment of hurting or weakness. Just that one phrase is fine, and God hears you!

**11:1-11 // The Triumphal Entry**

* Main idea: Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and with crowds of people laying their cloaks and branches on the ground before him. They exclaimed “hosanna” and praised him as he entered the town.
* These people thought that Jesus was going to save them from political oppressors and become the king of a new earthly kingdom for them. In reality, Jesus “comes as a king who will be crowned with thorns, enthroned on a cross, and hailed as the chief of fools. His entrance points to a different kind of triumph than the one envisioned by the crowd, one that will be more powerful than any Davidic monarchy and more far-reaching than the narrow borders of Israel or even the Roman empire.” (Garland)