



Inner Growth - Jesus 8

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Matthew 1:1

Journey - Luke 9:3

Enlighten - Job 33:30

Saves - Psalms 18:31, 1 Timothy 1:15

Unity - Ephesians 4:13

Sinners - Luke 5:32

Jesus continues His ministry in Matthew nineteen, responding to the Pharisees concerning **Marriage and Divorce**, which starts from verses one through eight. They ask Him, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Jesus responds in verses four to six. (Where this is summarized) When both man and woman married as one, let no man separate.

The Pharisees were desirous of drawing something from Jesus that they might represent as contrary to the law of Moses. Cases about marriage have been numerous and sometimes perplexing, made so not by the law of God but by the lusts and follies of men. Often, people fix what they will do before they ask for advice. Jesus replied by asking whether they had read the account of the creation and the first example of marriage, pointing out that every departure needed to be corrected. That condition is best for us and to be chosen and kept to accordingly, which is

best for our souls and tends most to prepare us for, and preserve us to, the kingdom of heaven.

Embracing the gospel makes men kind relatives and faithful friends. It teaches them to bear the burdens and to bear with the infirmities of those with whom they are connected, to consider their peace and happiness more than their own. And we learn marriage should be entered upon with great seriousness and earnest prayer. However, as for ungodly persons, it is proper that laws restrain them from breaking the peace of society.

Then the Pharisees asked in verse seven of Matthew nineteen, "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" Jesus responds in verse eight, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." Through Moses, God commanded this because the scribes had almost turned separation into a duty, although there was no ground for it but incompatibility of temper or other lesser fault.

Jesus continues ministering concerning the **Divorce for marital unfaithfulness** section in verses nine through twelve. Jesus begins in verse nine, calling out fornication and why many couples separate, which the Lord introduced back in Matthew five, verse thirty-two under the **Divorce** section.

God's plan and standard is for one man and one woman to join together in a marriage dissolvable only by death, as in verses five to six of this chapter. However, Jesus specifies fornication would be a reason for separation by either spouse. Fornication is marital unfaithfulness and includes adultery or any sexual immorality. Therefore, a split up in marriage is to be permitted when sexual immorality is involved. When Jesus criticizes separation in verses seven through eight, He is not criticizing a breakup because of adultery but a divorce allowed in the Old Testament in those cases where a husband discovered "uncleanness," perhaps premarital unchasteness, after the marriage had taken

place, as in Deuteronomy twenty-four, verses one through four. God's desire in such cases was that the two remain together. However, He permitted annulment due to premarital unchasteness because of the hardness of people's hearts.

For the believers under the new covenant, they are no less than unbelievers. Divorce is a tragedy. Still, marital unfaithfulness is such a cruel sin against one's spouse that Christ states that the innocent [arty has a proper right to end the marriage by annulment. Then, that godly person may remarry another believer, as in First Corinthians seven, verses twenty-seven to twenty-eight.

The ministry continues when **Jesus blesses the little children** section from verses thirteen to fifteen when Christ is deeply concerned about salvation and the spiritual upbringing of children. Th Christian parents should use every means of grace available to bring their children to Christ, for He longs to receive, love, and bless them. Jesus then continues the notable passage of **The Rich Young Ruler** in verses sixteen through twenty-six of Matthew nineteen. However, verse twenty-one is where Jesus tested the heart of the rich young man in the area of His greatest weakness: his wealth. He was not willing to put Christ before and above his possessions. Does Christ's statement mean that all believers should sell everything they own? No, for we must care for our families and others. However, we must be willing to give up anything Christ asks of us. Our commitment to Him should be nothing less.

Then Jesus continues His ministry with **the worker in the vineyard**. However, in Matthew nineteen, verse twenty-seven, Peter responds to Jesus, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" The question betrayed the thoughts that had been working in the disciples' minds and of which Saint Peter made himself the spokesman. They had complied with their Master's commands. What were they to have as the special reward to which they were thus entitled? It is obvious that in asking for that reward, they showed that they had complied with the letter only, not with the spirit of the

command. They had not in the true sense of the word, denied themselves though they had forsaken the earthly calling and the comforts of their home, and were dwelling on what they had done, as in itself giving them a right to compensation.

The parable of the workers in the vineyard teaches that entrance to the kingdom of God is a matter of privilege, not merit. Christ here warns against three wrong attitudes. Do not feel superior because of a fortunate position or assignment. Do not fail to share God's concern in offering His grace to all. Avoid the spirit of envy toward the spiritual blessings of others.

The Son of God continues His ministry in **Jesus foretells His death** section, in verses seventeen through nineteen of Matthew twenty, followed by **the ambition of James and John**, from verses twenty to twenty-eight. Those in this world who "exercise authority and dominion" in verse twenty-five are considered great. Jesus says that in the kingdom of God greatness will not be measured by authority over others by giving one's self to service. Believers must try to reach the top to exert their authority or rule. Instead, they must give their lives to helping others and especially in laboring for the spiritual good of the people, as in verse twenty-eight, John thirteen, verse thirty-four, First Corinthians thirteen, Colossians three, verse fourteen, and First John three, verse fourteen, and chapter four, verse eight, accordingly.

The last section within this chapter is the **Healing of two blind men**. They heard Jesus and cried out to Him for mercy not once but twice amid the multitude rebuking them. The perseverance of these two blind men should indicate to fellow believers to keep calling on God within our relationship for mercy in whatever we face, especially having the motive to help others in whatever we intend to do for God.