

The Character of Jesus 62
Positions on Divorce
Matthew 19:1 – 12, Mark 10:1 – 12

- Characteristic: Invoking fundamentals
 - Note: Matthew 19:9 has been badly translated. It should read, “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, regardless of the debates about immorality, and marries another...”
 - (3) The Pharisee position was that divorces was permitted only in cases of adultery. The Sadducee position was that divorce was permitted for any reason. The Pharisees wanted Jesus to endorse one side or the other.
 - (4 – 6) Jesus did not go to the passage upon which the controversy was based (Deuteronomy 24:1 – 4) but to the fundamental concept of marriage. Logically, if the two become one flesh, they cannot be again separated. Both sides in the controversy had based their arguments on an illogical position that divorce was acceptable to God under some circumstances.
 - (7) Good question. Both sides assumed that the fact that God had regulated divorce implied that, under certain circumstances, divorce was acceptable.
 - (8 – 9) Jesus addressed the root of their illogic that the existence of a regulation implied endorsement. Jesus says, “God never endorses divorce.”
 - (10) The reaction of the disciples reinforces to us that Jesus was not just siding with the Pharisees.
 - (11 – 12) Jesus acknowledged that this was a difficult teaching. Paul addressed the point (1 Corinthians 7:1 – 9) that some do not have sexual desires, while others do. If you do, get married. Insisting that a disastrous marriage that ends in divorce somehow reverses Paul’s observation is illogical.
- Application: Invoking fundamentals
 - The example here is not about divorce per se. It is about making an assumption that results in divided opinions. Jesus’ method was to drop back to the fundamentals, in this case the nature of marriage. Do we do that with other doctrines?
 - Church practices:
 - Lord’s Supper: who can participate?
 - Baptism: infants due to original or inherited sin, sprinkle or immerse, etc.
 - Leadership: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers
 - Singing and instruments
 - Acceptability
 - Behavior first – so how can we get there?
 - Liberty versus authority
 - To what do we drop back?
 - The nature of faith
 - The nature of grace (the nature of God)
 - Redemption and forgiveness as two different concepts
 - God’s objective and the purpose of creation.
 - Evidence and God’s communication

Review:

1. Jesus baptized (Matthew 3:13 – 17, Mark 1:9 – 11, Luke 3:21 – 22, John 1:29 – 34) Unconcerned about position
2. The temptation (Matthew 4:1 – 11, Mark 1:12 – 13, Luke 4:1 – 13) Trusting God
3. Calling His first disciples (John 1:35 – 51) Flexibility
4. At the wedding feast in Cana (John 2:1 – 11) Balance
5. First cleansing of the Temple (John 2:13 – 25) Personal responsibility
6. Talking with Nicodemus (John 3:1 – 15) High expectations of others
7. The woman at the well (John 4:5 – 42) Taking opportunities outside the plan
8. Public teaching in Galilee (Matthew 4:17, Mark 1:14 – 15, Luke 4:14 – 15, John 4:43 – 45) Simplicity
9. Healing a Nobleman's Son (John 4:46 – 54) Challenging
10. Calling the First Four Disciples (Matthew 4:12 – 22, Mark 1:16 – 20, Luke 5:1 – 11) Developing future leaders
11. Healing a Demoniac in a Synagogue (Mark 1:21 – 28, Luke 4:31 – 37) Competency
12. Healing Peter's Mother-in-Law and Others While Preaching in Galilee (Matthew 8:14 – 17, Mark 1:29 – 39, Luke 4:38 – 44) Purposeful
13. More Healings in Galilee (Matthew 8:2 – 4, 9:2 – 8, Mark 1:40 – 2:12, Luke 5:12 – 26) Love
14. Jesus Heals on the Sabbath (John 5:1 – 47) Evidence
15. Plucking Grain on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:1 – 8, Mark 2:23 – 28, Luke 6:1 – 5) Consistency
16. Healing a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:9 – 14, Mark 3:1 – 6, Luke 6:6 – 11) Love – doing what is best – doing good
17. Healing the Multitudes beside the Sea (Matthew 12:15 – 21, Mark 3:7 – 12) And Choosing the Twelve (Matthew 10:2 – 4, Mark 3:13 – 19, Luke 6:12 – 16) Proactive
18. Healing the Centurion's Servant (Matthew 8:5 – 13, Luke 7:1 – 10) Seeking Faithful Spirits
19. Raising the Son of the Widow of Nain (Luke 7:11 – 17) Compassion
20. John the Baptist's Question (Matthew 11:2 – 30, Luke 7:18 – 35) Expectation of Discernment
21. Jesus' Feet Anointed in the House of a Pharisee (Luke 7:36 – 50) Forgiveness
22. Accusations by the Pharisees (Matthew 12:22 – 37, Mark 3:19 – 30, Luke 11:14 – 23) Logic
23. Mindsets out of Step (Matthew 12:38 – 50, Mark 3:31 – 35, 8:11 – 12, Luke 8:19 – 21, 11:24 – 36) Addressing hidden assumptions
24. Exposing Contradictions (Luke 11:37 – 54) Addressing logical flaws
25. Contentment (Luke 12) Contentment
26. Expanding the Question (Luke 13:1 – 9) Addressing the Root Problem
27. Jesus Stills the Storm (Matthew 8:18 – 27, Mark 4:35 – 41, Luke 8:22 – 25) Challenging incomplete thinking
28. Jesus Heals Two Demoniacs and Eats with Matthew (Matthew 8:28 – 34, 9:10 – 17, Mark 2:15 – 22, 5:1 – 21, Luke 5:29 – 39, 8:26 – 40) Responding to the Heart
29. Jairus' Daughter, an Invalid Woman, and Some Blind Men (Matthew 9:18 – 34, Mark 5:22 – 43, Luke 8:41 – 56) Responding to Faith
30. Third Circuit in Galilee (Matthew 9:35 – 38, 10:1, 5 – 42, 11:1, 13:54 – 58, Mark 6:1 – 13, Luke 4:16 – 31, 9:1 – 6) Realistic Expectations
31. Around the Northeast Side of Galilee (Matthew 14:13 – 36, Mark 6:30 – 56, Luke 9:10 – 17, John 6:1 – 21) Challenging Others to Step Out in Faith
32. Spiritual Food (John 6:22 – 71) Lifting understanding out of the physical
33. Tradition (Matthew 15:1 – 20, Mark 7:1 – 23, John 7:1) Thinking through Tradition
34. Lebanon and Decapolis (Matthew 15:21 – 38, Mark 7:24 – 8:9) Meeting Faith Where It Is
35. Signs, Peter's Confession, Hard Times (Matthew 16:1 – 28, Mark 8:11 – 39, Luke 9:18 – 27) Expecting People to Think
36. The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1 – 13, Mark 9:2 – 13, Luke 9:28 – 36) Pushing for Greater Understanding
37. Healing a Demon-Possessed Boy (Matthew 17:14 – 23, Mark 9:14 – 32, Luke 9:37 – 45) Revealing Hindrances to Faith
38. False Ambition Versus Childlikeness (Matthew 18:1 – 14, Mark 9:33 – 50, Luke 9:46 – 50) Humility
39. Forgiving Others (Matthew 18:15 – 35) Forgiving Others
40. Doing the (Unexpected) Right Thing (John 7:2 – 10, Luke 9:51 – 62) Focus
41. Pointing to God (John 7:11 – 52) Letting the Spirit Work
42. The Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:12 – 59) Convicting Legalism
43. Countering Typical Accusations (John 8:12 – 59) Confronting Convenient Excuses
44. The Man Born Blind (John 9:1 – 41) Dealing with People, not Theories
45. The Good Shepherd (John 10:1 – 21) Godly Leadership
46. The Seventy Sent and Returned (Luke 10:1 – 24) Intensity
47. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25 – 37) Consistency
48. Jesus as a Guest of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38 – 42) Physical Priorities
49. Teaching about Prayer (Luke 11:1 – 13) Trusting God with Requests
50. Healing as an illustration of the Kingdom (Luke 13:10 – 21) Not Overlooking the Seemingly Insignificant
51. The Feast of Dedication (John 10:22 – 42) Refusing to be Manipulated by the Opposition
52. The Narrow Door and a Warning about Herod (Luke 13, 22 – 35) Uncomfortable truths spoken in a comfortable way
53. Healing at a Sabbath Dinner with a Pharisee (Luke 14:1 – 24) True humility
54. Cost of Discipleship (Luke 14:25 – 35) Realistic
55. Parables about the Lost (Luke 15:1 – 32) Valuing Potential
56. Parables about the Lost (Luke 16:1 – 18) Using or Being Used?
57. Parables about the Lost (Luke 16:19 – 31) Those who listen are the right audience
58. Summary about the Lost (Luke 17:1 – 10) A forgiving attitude
59. Raising Lazarus (John 11:1 – 26) Patience Healing
60. Ten Lepers (Luke 17:11 – 37) Exposing apathetic expectations
61. Parables about persistence and humility (Luke 18:1 – 14) Persistence and humility