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Mark 10:2-12/Matthew 19:3-9

2. “*Some* Pharisees came up to Jesus, 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. 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 REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER,

8. AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh.

9. ‘What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.’

10. 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.””

3. “*Some* Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, ‘Is it lawful *for a man* to divorce his wife for any reason at all?’

4. And he answered and said, ‘Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,

5. and said, “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH”?

6. ‘So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.’

7. They said to Him, ‘Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND *her* AWAY?’

8. He said to them, ‘Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.

9. ‘And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.’”

Truly there is nothing new under the sun. Man has always questioned their religious leaders concerning divorce and remarriage. This is especially true amongst the rich and powerful of any given society. And so this question that the Pharisees asked Jesus two thousand

years ago, is still very prevalent even today.

The rich and powerful many times don't like God's answer. King Herod, for example, married Herodias after she divorced Herod's brother Philip. When John the Baptist publicly declared to Herod that it was unlawful to have Herodias as his wife, John was imprisoned and later was beheaded.

One of the most interesting and historically significant occasions of a ruler seeking a divorce in order to remarry is the British King Henry VIII in the early 1500's. The account goes like this according to the World Book Encyclopedia:

“When Henry came to the throne in 1509, his first act was to marry his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragon. Catherine bore five children, but only one lived--Mary, who later became queen. Henry wanted a son. He turned his attentions to a maid of honor at court, Anne Boleyn. Thomas Cardinal Wolsey, Henry's able and ambitious chief minister, asked Pope Clement VII to annul the king's marriage. He argued that it was wrong for Henry to have married his brother's widow. But the pope refused, and Henry dismissed Wolsey in 1529.

The king was determined to have his divorce. He denied that the pope had authority over England, and secretly married Anne Boleyn early in 1533. Henry's choice for Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, declared the marriage of Henry and Catherine null and void. Anne was then crowned queen.

At Henry's insistence, parliament passed two acts in 1534 that made the break with the Roman Catholic Church complete. One declared that the pope had no authority in England. The other, the famous Act of Supremacy, made the Church of England a separate institution, and it also established the king as its supreme head.

The two acts officially established the Reformation in England.”

My goodness! But isn't this fascinating. Henry, the first Protestant king set up a precedent for the other nations of Europe to follow. And within England, his separation from the pope and Rome, fueled the Puritan and other “back to the Bible” movements. This eventually lead to believers coming to America for religious liberty and instituting the freedom of worship that we now enjoy.

Isn't it amazing how God's hand moves in history. How He could use a self-centered, lustful king pursuing his sin, to ignite a world-wide back to the Bible movement spanning the last five hundred years.

If God can use somebody like that, just imagine what He can do with you or me if we will do His will!