**Matthew 19: Marriage & Divorce; The Rich Young Man**

**Matthew 19:1-12; Marriage and Divorce**

* When the Pharisees came to Jesus to ask Him questions it was never to learn but to test Jesus.
* They wanted Jesus to say something that they would be able to use against Him. To entrap him.
* Jesus is asked if divorce is lawful. Jesus answers their question with Scripture.

***“Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female” 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’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.”***

* God’s plan from the beginning was for marriage to be indissoluble. The Pharisees ask why Moses permitted a man to divorce his wife with a certificate of divorce.
* Jesus replied that Moses only permitted divorce due to the Israelites hardness of heart.
* With Moses there were two covenants. There was the Covenant of Sinai which was the covenant God originally intended.
* The Israelites were not able to keep the Sinai Covenant. God gave Moses the Deuteronic Covenant.
* Deuteronomy means second law. The Deuteronic Covenant lowered the bar so that the Israelites could keep the covenant.
* Thomas Aquinas believed that God allowed divorce to prevent the murder of the unwanted wife.
* The Pharisees are not able to refute Jesus for he answers them with Scripture.
* With Jesus’ teaching on the indissolubility of marriage the disciples ask if it is worthwhile to marry.
* Jesus indicates that there are different states of life. Some are called to be married in a monogamous relationship while others are called to be single and celibate.
* Both states are necessary.

**Matthew 19:16-30; The Rich Young Man**

* The rich young man asks Jesus, ***“Teacher what good must I do to gain eternal life?”***
* Jesus responds, ***“Why do you ask me about the good? There is only one who is good.”***
* Jesus is not rejecting his divinity. In Judaism to ask a question or pose a riddle was a common teaching method.
* Jesus advises the rich young man that he needs to keep the commandments. The rich young man responds that the has kept the commandments. He asks what he still lacks.
* Jesus replies “***If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”***
* This scripture on the rich young man does not question Jesus’ divinity but confirms Jesus’ divinity.
* Jesus looks upon the man and knows what is in his heart. He knows that he is too attached to material possessions. A human being would not be able to look upon another person and know the state of their soul.
* The rich young man departs sorrowful for he had many possessions.

***Again, I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”***

* Wealth and material possessions are not bad in themselves. Wealth and material possessions are bad when they take the place of God in our lives.
* People focus on attaining wealth and material possessions believing they will find fulfillment and independence in these things.
* We were made in the image and likeness of God. We will not find fulfillment in anything other than God.
* *“O God our hearts are restless till they rest in you.”* St. Augustine

The Navarre Bible; The Gospel of St. Matthew; Scepter Publishers; New York; 1986

William J. Murphy