

# Follow – Walking in the Way of Jesus

Jesus' Sexual Ethic

Mark 10:1-12

Pastor Ben Hall – Saanich Baptist Church

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Review: The gospel doesn't tell us to think less of ourselves, but to think of ourselves less.

Jesus' teaching ALWAYS:

- Raises the bar beyond minimalism
- Calls disciples to faithful obedience from transformed hearts
- Anticipates the costly faithfulness of the kingdom

**Mark 10:1-12, "...Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"** The question is a TEST, not a sincere inquiry. It seeks to both:

- TRAP Jesus into contradiction with Moses, or
- Place Him at ODDS with Herod's marital situation.

Jesus' Hermeneutical RESPONSE: From CONCESSION to CREATION

Moses as Concession - "**Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment.**"

- Divorce is not a moral ideal, but a legal concession.
- The law regulates brokenness. It does not define righteousness.

Jesus cites CREATION, not CASE law: "**Male and female He created them**" AND "**The two shall become one flesh.**" He roots marriage in Genesis 2, where "one flesh" includes:

- Bodily union
- Shared life
- Mutual responsibility and calling
- Relational permanence

**"What God Has Joined"** There is Divine Agency in Marriage

- Marriage is not primarily contractual, but covenantal.
- Emphasizes divine action.
- Human authority (even legal or religious) does not override God's creation intent.

**The Nature of marriage is Covenant, Not Contract** - Covenants only work when they are made on the basis of love and can only be fulfilled by faith in God's transformative work through grace.

In Scripture, marriage is consistently framed as a covenant, not merely a legal arrangement. That matters because:

- Marriage covenants are defined not only by sexual exclusivity, but by faithful presence, protection, and care.
- Covenant-breaking is therefore broader than sexual infidelity alone.

We now enter relationships knowing that their purpose is transformation, through hearts that embrace repentance as the means to reconciliation.

**Date: Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**Series: Follow**

**Title: Jesus' Sexual Ethic**

**Primary Passage: Mark 10:1-12**

**Secondary Passage: Matthew 19:9**

**Big Question: What does Jesus' teaching on marriage reveal about our ability to live out God's intentions apart from grace?**

**Big Idea: This passage exposes human inability as much as it reveals divine intention, driving disciples toward dependence on grace, not self-confidence, in relationships.**

**Keywords: Sex, Marriage, Creation, Covenant, Divorce, Adultery, Abuse, Abandonment, Restoration, Renewal, Redemption.**

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### **Going Deeper Questions**

When recently did you receive an act of love that reminded you of Christ's sacrificial love? When recently did loving someone cost you something?

Read Mark 10:1-12. What stands out to you about this passage? How does Jesus' appeal to creation in Mark 10:6-8 reshape the way we think about marriage, not primarily as a personal arrangement or legal contract, but as a covenantal gift meant to reflect God's faithful, self-giving love?

Where do you see the Pharisees' posture (seeking clarity, permission, or justification rather than transformation) mirrored in your own approach to obedience, relationships, or sexuality?

In what ways does Jesus' teaching expose not just broken marriages, but broken hearts? How does it reveal areas of reliance on self-control, willpower, or moral confidence rather than humble dependence on grace to maintain relationships?

How does the gospel reality that Jesus both, names sin and restores sinners shape the way you respond when marriage has been marked by adultery, abuse, abandonment, or deep disappointment?

Who in your life needs to know the restorative power of Jesus' grace and truth after experiencing heartache or heartbreak from marriage?