

### 19:1-2

Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, *that He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.* Jesus did not go through Samaria, the middle region, then. **2 And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.** Like Matthew 4:32-33, 8:16-17, 9:35, 12:14, 14:14, and 15:29-30. One might surmise that the doctors had nothing else to do. Seems like this is a sneak peek into the kingdom. Again, He shows Himself “qualified” by healing.

### 19:3

**The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just any reason?*”** They are referencing a very nebulous passage in Deuteronomy 24:1 (as discussed more in verse 7). What is “uncleanness?”

**for every cause.** One should expect, then, Jesus to answer the question that is asked with this same specificity. This is how Matthew treats it. Let’s look at Mark’s version:

*Mark 10:2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. 3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?*

The person who cites only Mark as an argument for the “never divorce” better have a reason why they would ignore the Matthew guidance.

*Matthew 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, **except it be for fornication**, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*

*Mark 10:11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.*

It could be that Mark doesn’t include the exception clause because his audience wouldn’t know about the “every cause” question introduced by the antagonizers in Matthew’s record. It seems like this speaks of an abuse that had developed out of the Deuteronomy 24:1-4 allowance of divorce for “unclean-ness.” There are really two “exception clauses:” One is in the question of the Pharisees while the other is in the answer from Jesus. Neither “for every cause” in their question nor “except for fornication” in Jesus’ answer are found in Mark’s record. These must, therefore, be related. Probably, Mark’s audience would not know about this abuse and that its explanation would have taken more time on the topic than Mark wanted to give. Since Mark didn’t include “for any cause” there is no need for Jesus to give “except for fornication.” Mark’s Gospel did not have the purpose of giving the causes for divorce that were within God’s acceptance.

### 19:4-6

**And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read** This is funny because this is all they do! **that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’** We were made this way, and Jesus is not confused about the nature of creation or gender identity. **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’?* Quoting Genesis 1 in verse 4 and Genesis 2 here. Furthermore, Jesus believes the Old Testament is authoritative for He gives a “bottom line” in the next verse. This **one flesh** idea is nothing more than sexual intercourse (1 Corinthians 6:16). **6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together,** God created the **together-ness**, and He did it through the sexual union.<sup>1</sup> One might notice, then, that two people must be able to do the Adam-Eve sexual union in order to marry by biblical definition. Two men, therefore, cannot be married. A review, then: the two becoming **one flesh** is the sex act and that is when God joins them **together**. Why do we then get licenses? Titus 3:1 says to “obey every ordinance of man.” Why do we have marriage ceremonies? As a testimony before God’s people for accountability’s sake.

**let not man separate.”**

**19:7**

**They said to Him, “Why then did Moses** So they will pit **Moses** (verses 4-5, the author of Genesis 1-2) **against Moses? command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”** It seems like Joseph considered this course of action found in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 back in Matthew’s first chapter.

**19:8-9**

**He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your<sup>h</sup>wives, but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”**

**19:10**

**His disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of the man with *his* wife, it is better not to marry.”** Strange thing for **disciples** to say considering there is no better picture of the Gospel (besides baptism and the Lord’s Supper). Everybody seems to love extremes: Leave the door open to divorce any time, or “don’t get married.”

**19:11-12**

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<sup>1</sup>Not just the command to procreate (Genesis 1:27) or the nakedness (2:25), but also the definition of the sexual union as defined by Paul (1 Cor 6:16) make it clear.

<sup>h</sup> Mal. 2:16

But He said to them, “All cannot accept this saying, but only *those* to whom it has been given: 12 For there are eunuchs a simple word meaning “bed keeper.” who were born thus from *their* mother’s womb, Some were born without the ability to have sexual relations. and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, made unable to perform sexually to perhaps work in a royal office (as the kings of Judah were promised concerning their young men in the prophets). and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. This seems to be quite figurative since Heaven and Hell are discussed for the

		Matthew	Corinthians
1	Avoidance of judging	7:1-2	11:31
2	Wisdom: Christ’s person	11:25	2:6-7
3	Stewards of mystery	13:11-12	4:1-2
4	Faith in the Gospel	17:22-23 & 18:6	15:1-4
5	Offending unbelievers	17:27	10:32
6	Church Discipline	18:15-17	5:12-13
7	After restoration	18:21-35	2 Cor 2:6-9
8	Presence “in spirit”	18:20	5:3; 2 Cor 2:10
9	Marriage Definition	19:4-6	6:15-16
10	Possibility of divorce	19:6	7:26-28
11	One cause for divorce	19:9	7:2, 14-15
12	Kingdom Eunuchs	19:11-12	7:6-8; 7:27-33

self-maiming person in 18:8-9 and it appears figurative there. **He who is able to accept it, let him accept it.** Since I have already said I believe this to be figurative, let me say that: 1. I think Paul’s letters, particularly 1-2 Corinthians, were influenced by the Gospel of Matthew; 2. I

think the Gospel of Matthew may have made it to Corinth before Paul did (Acts 18:8-10). So, with that in mind, let’s see the parallels<sup>2</sup> between these two tracts of Scripture and what is meant by **eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake.**

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<sup>2</sup>Other parallels between these two are found in later chapters of this commentary in the same format.