

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Mark 10:35-45.**
- B. A paradox is: *a statement that seems to contradict itself and yet expresses a valid truth or principle.*
- C. Jesus could have preached long sermons, but instead he healed and used paradoxes to teach the people. We do well to remember these five episodes and apply the paradoxes to our lives.

I. THE TWO SHALL BE ONE.

- A. See **Mk. 10:1-12.**
- B. Divorce was a very controversial subject among the Jewish rabbis. No matter what answer Jesus gave the Pharisees, He would be sure to displease somebody.
- C. The Lord took them back beyond Moses to the record of the Creation (Gen. 1:27; 2:21-25). After all, in the beginning, it was *God* who established marriage; and He has the right to make the rules. According to Scripture, marriage is between a man and a woman, not two men or two women; and the relationship is sacred and permanent.
- D. While the spiritual element is vitally important in marriage, the emphasis here is that marriage is a *physical* union; the two become one *flesh*, not one spirit.
- E. Since marriage is a physical union, only a physical cause can break it—either death (Rom. 7:1-3) or fornication (Mt. 5:32; 19:9).
- F. To remarry after divorce, *other than one granted on the grounds of fornication*, would make the person guilty of committing adultery.
- G. A divorce may be legal according to our laws and yet not be right in the eyes of God. He expects married people to practice commitment to each other, and remain true to each other.

II. ADULTS SHALL BE AS CHILDREN.

- A. See **Mk. 10:13-16.**
- B. Why would the disciples rebuke the people and try to keep the children away from Jesus? They probably thought they were doing Him a favor by helping Him protect His time and conserve His strength. In other words, *they did not consider the children to be important.*
- C. The phrase “much displeased” is too lame. The NIV and NAS say, “indignant” as the Lord openly rebuked His disciples for standing in the way. Then He announced that the children were better kingdom examples than were the adults.
- D. We tell children to behave like adults, and Jesus tells the adults to behave like children!
- E. In what ways are children a pattern?
 - 1. They have humble dependence on others.
 - 2. They are receptive to advice and correction.
 - 3. They accept themselves easily.
 - 4. They accept their position in life without complaint.
 - 5. They enjoy much, but can explain very little.
 - 6. They live by faith, not needing detailed explanations.
 - 7. They trust others to care for them and see them through.
- F. And what does a child do when he/she has a hurt or a problem? They take it to their Father or Mother!
- G. We can learn a lot from a child, so that we can be a child of God.

III. THE FIRST SHALL BE LAST.

- A. See **Mk. 10:17-31.**
- B. The young ruler did not see himself as a condemned sinner before the holy God. He had a superficial

view of the Law of God, for he measured obedience only by external actions and not by inward attitudes.

- C. Looking at this young man, you would conclude that he had everything, but Jesus said that one thing was lacking: *a living faith in God!* Money was his god; he trusted it, worshipped it, and got his fulfillment from it. His morality and good manners only concealed a covetous heart.
- D. The disciples were shocked at the Lord's declaration about wealth, because most Jews thought that the possession of great wealth was evidence of God's special blessing. But in the case of this young man, his wealth *robbed him* of God's greatest blessing, eternal life.
- E. Peter's response, "we have left everything for you..." indicated that there were a few problem in his own heart. This statement reveals a rather commercial view of the Xian life; "We have given up everything for the Lord; now what will be get in return?"
- F. To the general public, the rich ruler stood first and the poor disciples stood last. But God saw things from a perspective of eternity--and the first became last while the last became first! Those who are first in their own eyes, will be last in God's eyes; but those who are last in their own eyes will be rewarded as first!

IV. SERVANTS SHALL BE RULERS.

- A. See **Mk. 10:32-45**.
- B. This is the theme passage in the entire gospel of Mark. Jesus is portrayed as God's Servant, and it is here that Jesus teaches about true servanthood.
- C. In the first two announcements of Jesus' upcoming death, He told them *what* would occur, but now He told them *where* it would occur. In Jerusalem! We must try to understand the bewilderment and fear of His followers, for this was a difficult experience for them and not at all what they had planned or expected. Jesus told His followers the truth, but they were in no condition to understand it.
- D. Salome and her s two sons' request was in keeping w/Jesus' promise of Mt. 19:28. But the problem here is that they were asking (praying) selfishly, and God does not answer selfish prayers (Jas. 4:2,3).
- E. James, John, and Salome did not realize one important thing: *it costs something to get answers to prayer*. Jesus spoke about his upcoming days as drinking a cup or being baptized. Jesus would be enthroned as the righteous One in heaven, but what He had to go through to achieve it!
- F. X's attitude was not one of being ruler, but being a servant. Unless we know how to obey orders, we do not have the right to give orders. Before a person exercises authority, he or she must know that means to be under authority.

V. THE POOR SHALL BECOME RICH.

- A. See **Mk. 10:46-52**.
- B. Jesus heals a blind man by the name of Bartimaeus.
- C. When Bartimaeus called Jesus "Lord," he used the title *Rabboni*, meaning "my Master." "Rabboni" was an expression of personal faith, on the part of Bartimaeus.
- D. Jesus was moved w/compassion and healed him. This is the last miracle that Mark records in his gospel account.
- E. We are poor in our standing spiritually, but can become rich w/the help of X.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Paradoxes need not be difficult. Think of the literal in terms of the spiritual, and one can make the application of truth.
- B. Are you ready to be one, be an adult, be first, be a ruler, and be rich? Then you must become a child, be last, be a servant, and be poor.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.