

# Weekly Devotional Guide – April 26<sup>th</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup>

**Monday, April 26:** *Mark 10:1-12* -- Do you think Jesus would respond in the same way to someone in a troubled marriage who was sincerely asking the question?

In the beginning, You created men and women and You saw that marriage was good. But sin entered the world and men and women developed hard hearts against You and each other and then there was divorce. Sin was also in the Pharisees when they tested You about divorce. John the Baptist denounced Herod Antipas for the unlawful divorce that cost him his life. They were within Herod's jurisdiction and the wrong answer could have gotten You seized. Divorce was a very controversial question as husbands who did not strictly follow the law to limit divorce to defined conditions, divorced their wives for anything that displeased them. The law was given to unveil sin and to drive us to grace. Law can never heal the problem, but it points it out. It reveals hard places in our hearts to soften them and make us the people You intended us to be. Divorce is a violation of Your intention for marriage. It always is, and it always involves some form of sin. We have all sinned and have all done wrongful and hurtful things to one another in our marriages as well as outside them. But thank You that grace comes in to tell us that sin can be forgiven. Through You, there is the possibility of restoration and healing. You begin the work of creating oneness again as lessons learned can facilitate the beauty of a relationship that You had in mind. Lord, I pray for a soft heart. Help me to rely upon Your wisdom and power in the difficult situations in my marriage. Always keep my heart tender, mellow, flexible, and reasonable out of my love and obedience to You. All marriages have problems, but I pray that we face up to our problems, discover where the hardness of heart exists, and learn how You can soften it. Thank you for your cleansing, forgiveness, and willingness to put it all back together. Through Your love, we are healed. In your loving name, Amen.

**Tuesday, April 27:** *Mark 10:13-31* -- What has helped you to see the impossibility of earning the kingdom?

I am a doer. I like to work and I enjoy accomplishing things. There were times when I checked off lists of things I needed to do for You. I was enthusiastically trying to show my love for You by trying to make You happy, but in the process, I got bogged down with the details. Instead of nurturing my relationship with You and absorbing Your wisdom through reading the Word, praying, and loving others, I was getting burned out and tired. It has never been about what I can DO to earn salvation. Instead of focusing on how much I can accomplish, help me to accept Your gift of salvation as openly, freely, and willingly as a child. Let me step outside of my orderly box and enthusiastically accept the mysteries and wonders of Your mercy and grace. Change my focus of serving from being a chore to conquer to an opportunity of sharing Your love as a response of compassion. Although You paid the price for my salvation, there is a cost to follow You. Let me accept the cost. The reward of heaven is greater than anything I can achieve, possess, or may lose because of my faith in You. Lord, I humbly confess my sinfulness and submit completely to Your sovereign Lordship of my life. Your grace is not based on what I do, what I have, or who I am but it is only based on what You have done. Let me enthusiastically accept Your gift of salvation. Amen

**Wednesday, April 28:** *Mark 10:32-45* -- Do you resist following the servant's path to greatness?

Lord, how great you are!! You knew what you had to do for me and you did it, help me Lord to always be able to be your willing servant. You have modeled perfect love and leadership for everyone but sometimes my pride gets in the way of doing the right thing. I pray that I would always be aware of your Holy Spirit trying to be at work within me filling me with strength, grace, and kindness to do all I can to bring you glory. Amen

**Thursday, April 29:** *Mark 10:46-52* -- If Jesus asked you ‘what do you want me to do for you?’ what would you do?

Lord, sometimes my prayers are more like casual wish lists than a serious conversation with You. I find myself shooting up prayers for good weather for a party, for the team I am rooting for to win, or that I make traffic lights when I'm in a hurry. Before meals and before bed I recite memorized prayers that ask You to be my guest for dinner or to keep me safe until morning light but that is sometimes just familiar words. It is such a privilege to speak directly to the God of all creation but sometimes I take that privilege for granted. Forgive me, Lord. I do spend time daily in prayer asking for healing for those who are sick, those who are lonely or grieving, for those who have been hurt or otherwise need Your care, and pray for relief from my ills, aches, and pains. I pray for salvation for my kids and grandkids, that they accept You as Lord and will dwell in Your house for eternity. I ask for wisdom and faith and for You to direct my path. But if You would ask me what one thing, I want You to do for me, as You did to Bartimaeus, I would look You in the eye without hesitation and ask for revival. A global revival to bring people to see Your Glory and have faith in You. As part of the revival, I would pray that my church would be on fire for You. That Your Spirit would fill people's hearts, including my family's, with Your love. I would pray that with the revival people will not only know You as Lord but their lives would be transformed with the biblical principles of integrity, morality, respect, and honor. I pray that the gospel message of Your love, grace, and salvation spreads like wildfire. I pray that eyes are opened to see Your Glory and people are released from the grips of hatred and evil. Revival starts with me. Let my prayers be personal conversations for You so that I grow in righteousness as I spend quality time with You. Strengthen my relationship with You as I share my heart with You and then share You with others. Lord, open the eyes for all to see You and to understand all that You have done through Your death on the cross. Let a revival bring unity and give us a foretaste of the joy of heaven on earth. Let Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen

**Friday, April 30:** *Psalms 43* -- What progression of faith or mood swing do you see in Psalm 43?

Lord, I love You and I have faith in Your power and glory. I have hope in Your forgiveness and grace. But I am human. I am worn down from being surrounded by an ungodly nation, a deceitful and wicked people. The wait is long. Life is not easy. I have faced battles of opposition and even depression. Culture suggests that we depend on ourselves for help rather than from You. The result is isolation and fear. Lord, I know better. I know You, why am I discouraged and restless? David was human too. In this psalm he moved from complaint to petition and ended in hope. He demonstrates that it is not about what is happening or feelings, it is about hope in You. Lord, Today I run to You for protection. I pray for Your guidance and presence. Obedience is all about turning to You, trusting Your goodness, no matter what the situation. What I need in darkness is to seek Your presence and I can trust that is ultimately what I will find. Your final word is not in the chaos of this world but it is a word of hope and trust. You have promised to show Your Glory and I hold onto Your Word. Send your light and your truth to guide me. Help me to play the role you want me to play in reviving faith in Your people. And I will continue to praise You because You help me and You are my God. Amen

**Saturday, May 1:** *Ecclesiastes 3:16-22* How do you respond to those who act as if there is no God or final judgement?

There has been a push to silence You. There is a total disregard for You, for who You are, and what You say in Your Word. There is no gratitude for what You have given us. The result is that injustice and wickedness have invaded and impacted our schools, workplaces, and even places of justice and righteousness have been corrupted and defiled. There is abuse, brokenness, and even wickedness in churches, in families in government, in our role models and heroes. There is pride, greed, selfishness, anger, and hate. No one's sins go unnoticed. The truth is You are always watching. In these times of testing, we get a display of our own ignorance, nature, and destiny apart from you. You are just. You are patient. You have Your purposes. You will judge in Your own time. Thank You, God, that You do not judge us in our time frame. I pray for patience to wait out Your timing. I have faith that You are good and just. I pray for revival that those who are lost will be found. I pray that You would revive our nation and set those in civil government free from pride, selfishness, and the lust for power. I pray that you would make us a Godly nation once again so that we can be a blessing to You and shine the light of Jesus to the whole world. You are who You say You are! You are the one who can fix everything, I just need to point people to You. Let revival start with me. Amen