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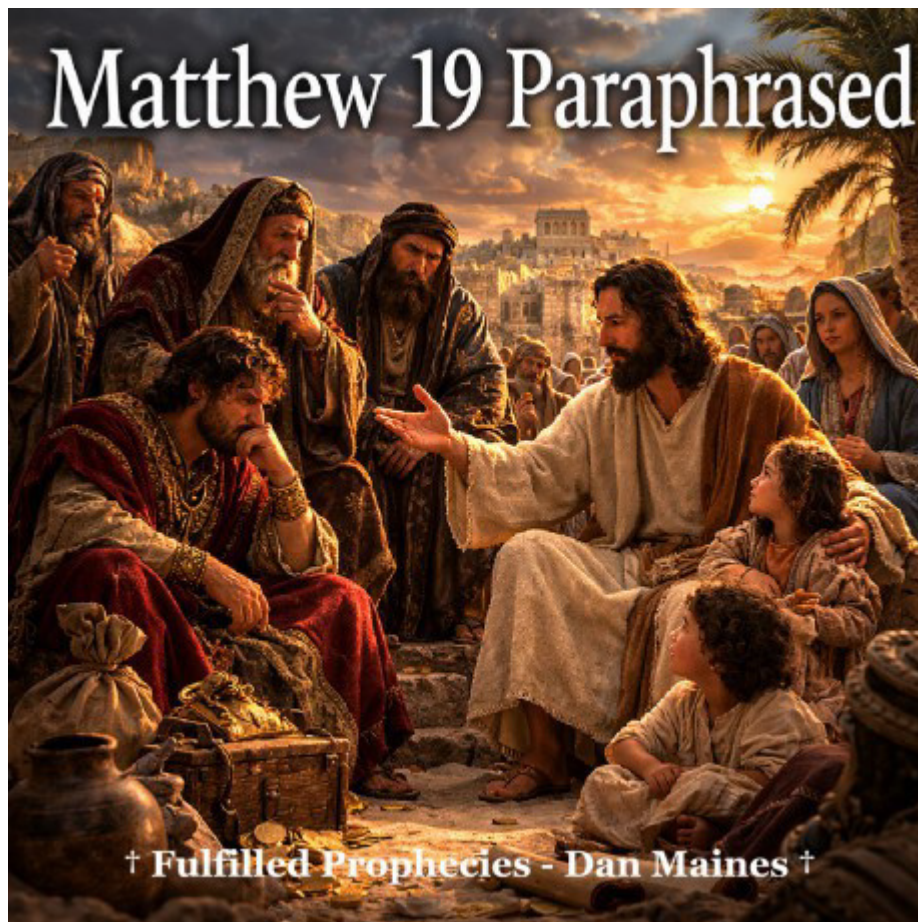
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## Matthew 19 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## Matthew 19 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† Matthew 19 continues Jesus' public ministry as He moves closer to Jerusalem, where the covenantal judgment on that generation would soon unfold (Matthew 16:27-28; Matthew 24:34).

† This chapter deals with marriage, divorce, children, wealth, sacrifice, and reward, all spoken to real first century hearers living under the fading Old Covenant order.

† Jesus keeps exposing the heart, not just the outward act. The

Pharisees wanted legal loopholes, but Christ brought everything back to God's original design.

† The rich young ruler also shows that outward morality wasn't enough, because whatever rules the heart will keep a man from following Christ fully (Luke 14:33).

### **Matthew 19:1**

Now when Jesus had finished these words, He departed from Galilee and came into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.

† Matthew often uses this wording to mark a transition from one major section of teaching to the next (Matthew 7:28; Matthew 11:1).

† Jesus is now moving closer to Judea and Jerusalem, where the final confrontation with Israel's leaders would happen.

† This journey matters because the things He had been warning about would center in that land and city (Luke 21:20-22).

### **Matthew 19:2**

And large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there.

† The crowds followed because His authority was undeniable, both in word and in power.

† His healings were signs of the kingdom and evidence that the promised Messiah had come (Isaiah 35:5-6).

† These miracles showed that Israel was being visited by her King, yet many still refused to believe (Luke 19:44).

### **Matthew 19:3**

Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?

† The Pharisees weren't seeking truth, they were testing Him.

† Divorce had become a debated issue among Jewish teachers, and they were trying to trap Jesus in that controversy.

† Their question already shows a corrupted view of marriage, looking for permission instead of asking what pleased God.

## **Matthew 19:4**

And He answered and said, Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female,  
† Jesus goes straight back to creation, not later rabbinic arguments.

† He reminds them that Scripture had already spoken clearly from the beginning (Genesis 1:27).

† This is how Christ handled error, He brought people back to the plain Word of God.

## **Matthew 19:5**

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?

† Jesus quotes Genesis 2:24 to show God's original design for marriage.

† Marriage is a covenant union, not a temporary arrangement for personal convenience.

† Becoming one flesh means this bond is real, sacred, and not to be treated lightly.

## **Matthew 19:6**

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no person is to separate.

† Christ makes the point plain, marriage is not just man's arrangement, it is something God joins together.

† Because God joins it, man has no right to tear it apart for selfish reasons.

† This rebuked the loose view of divorce that had spread among the leaders.

## **Matthew 19:7**

They said to Him, Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?

† The Pharisees twisted the law by calling a concession a command.

† They were using Moses to defend hardness of heart.

† This is what false teachers often do, they misuse Scripture to protect sinful desires.

### **Matthew 19:8**

He said to them, Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it has not been this way.

† Jesus explains that the divorce allowance was a concession because of sin, not God's ideal.

† Hardness of heart was the real issue, not a lack of technical legal guidance.

† Christ keeps bringing them back to the beginning because God's design had not changed.

### **Matthew 19:9**

And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.

† Jesus restores the seriousness of marriage and rejects the casual divorce culture of His day.

† The exception He gives shows that covenant breaking through sexual immorality is not the same as selfish separation.

† This teaching exposed how far the leaders had drifted from God's righteousness.

### **Matthew 19:10**

The disciples said to Him, If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry.

† The disciples understood that Jesus' standard was much stricter than the common view around them.

† Their response shows how deeply the culture had normalized easy divorce.

† Christ's teaching forced them to see marriage as weighty and covenantal.

### **Matthew 19:11**

But He said to them, Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given.

† Jesus acknowledges that not everyone is called to the same path.

† Some are called to marriage, and some are given grace for singleness.

† Both callings must be received with humility and faithfulness.

### **Matthew 19:12**

For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by people, and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

The one who is able to accept this, let him accept it.

† Jesus describes different reasons a person may remain unmarried.

† Some would willingly embrace singleness so they could serve the kingdom without distraction.

† The focus is not self denial for its own sake, but devotion to God's purpose.

### **Matthew 19:13**

Then some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray, and the disciples rebuked them.

† The disciples treated the children as if they were interruptions.

† That exposed a worldly mindset, measuring importance by status.

† Christ was about to show that the kingdom doesn't operate by that kind of pride.

### **Matthew 19:14**

But Jesus said, Let the children alone, and do not forbid them to come to Me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.

† Jesus welcomes the lowly and humble, not the proud and self important.

† The point is not childishness, but childlike dependence and trust.

† This rebuked the disciples and showed what kind of heart belongs in the kingdom.

### **Matthew 19:15**

After laying His hands on them, He departed from there.

† Jesus didn't treat the children as unimportant, He blessed them.

† His actions matched His words, showing compassion, dignity, and care.

† This also showed that the kingdom wasn't reserved for the elite.

### **Matthew 19:16**

And someone came to Him and said, Teacher, what good thing shall I do so that I may obtain eternal life?

† This man approached Jesus thinking eternal life could be secured by doing some great work.

† His question reveals a works centered mindset.

† Jesus will expose that the problem wasn't lack of religious effort, but an unsubmitted heart.

### **Matthew 19:17**

And He said to him, Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good, but if you want to enter life, keep the commandments.

† Jesus directs the man to God's standard, not man's opinion.

† The law reveals righteousness, but it also exposes sin

(Romans 3:20).

† Christ is leading the man to see that he has not truly fulfilled God's will as he imagined.

### **Matthew 19:18**

Then he said to Him, Which ones? And Jesus said, You shall not commit murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not give false testimony;

† Jesus lists commandments dealing with human relationships.

† This is where a man's heart is often revealed, in how he treats others.

† The ruler still thought he was doing well, but Christ wasn't finished yet.

### **Matthew 19:19**

Honor your father and mother; and You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

† Loving your neighbor is not a small command, it sums up true covenant conduct toward others.

† This exposes whether obedience is real or just outward religion.

† The man would soon learn that he did not love rightly because his possessions ruled him.

### **Matthew 19:20**

The young man said to Him, All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?

† He believed he had kept the commandments, yet his conscience told him something was missing.

† Outward morality can give a false sense of spiritual security.

† Jesus now touches the very thing the man would not surrender.

### **Matthew 19:21**

Jesus said to him, If you want to be complete, go and sell your

possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me.

† Jesus doesn't give a universal command here for every person to sell everything, He exposes this man's idol.

† His wealth had become the rival lord of his heart.

† True discipleship means Christ must come before comfort, security, and possessions (Luke 14:33).

### **Matthew 19:22**

But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property.

† He went away sorrowful because he wanted eternal life without surrender.

† His grief proved that his riches owned him more than he owned them.

† Many in Israel did the same thing, they refused Christ because the cost was too high.

### **Matthew 19:23**

And Jesus said to His disciples, Truly I say to you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven.

† Riches can blind a person with self sufficiency and false peace.

† The problem is not having money, the problem is trusting it.

† That is why wealth becomes such a spiritual danger when it replaces dependence on God.

### **Matthew 19:24**

And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.

† Jesus uses a vivid picture to show impossibility from a human standpoint.

† Wealth can make repentance harder because it strengthens

pride and attachment to this world.

† His point is not to entertain a riddle, but to shock them into seeing how impossible salvation is by human strength.

### **Matthew 19:25**

When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, Then who can be saved?

† Many Jews connected wealth with God's favor, so this statement overturned common assumptions.

† If even the visibly blessed could not enter by their own standing, then nobody could.

† The disciples were beginning to see that salvation was not earned by status.

### **Matthew 19:26**

And looking at them, Jesus said to them, With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

† Salvation is impossible through human merit.

† God alone can do what man cannot, change the heart and bring true life.

† This destroys boasting and puts all glory where it belongs, on God alone.

### **Matthew 19:27**

Then Peter responded and said to Him, Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?

† Peter speaks for the disciples, who had truly left behind livelihood, family security, and familiar life.

† This wasn't pride so much as a question about the cost they had paid.

† Jesus answers by assuring them that their sacrifice was not in vain.

### **Matthew 19:28**

And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, that you who have

followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

† The regeneration speaks of covenantal renewal, the transition from the old order into the new through Christ's reign.

† The apostles would have authority in the establishment of the new covenant people.

† Judging the twelve tribes of Israel points to the judgment and replacement of old covenant leadership, fulfilled in that first century transition (Matthew 21:43; Matthew 23:36; Matthew 24:34).

### **Matthew 19:29**

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

† Jesus extends the promise beyond the apostles to all who truly sacrifice for Him.

† What is lost for Christ is never truly lost, because He gives greater reward in His kingdom.

† Eternal life belongs to those who follow Him above all earthly ties.

### **Matthew 19:30**

But many who are first will be last, and the last, first.

† Those who seemed first in Israel, the privileged, powerful, and religiously honored, would often be last.

† Those counted small, weak, and unworthy would enter ahead of them.

† This reversal happened throughout the ministry of Christ and in the early church as many outsiders entered while many covenant insiders were cast out.

### **Historical References**

† Josephus describes the corruption, greed, and moral decay among the Jewish leadership in the first century, which matches the kind of hardness Jesus confronted.

† Eusebius records the foundational role of the apostles in governing and establishing the early church after Christ's ascension.

† Irenaeus wrote of the apostolic authority handed down in the churches, showing the importance of the twelve in the new covenant order.

† These historical witnesses support the setting of Matthew 19 as a real first century confrontation in the closing days of the old covenant age.

### **How It Applies To Us Today**

† Marriage still matters because God's design for covenant faithfulness has not changed.

† A hard heart can still twist Scripture today just like it did in the days of the Pharisees.

† Children remind us that the kingdom belongs to the humble, not the self important.

† Wealth is still one of the greatest rivals to full devotion to Christ.

† We can't follow Jesus halfway, whatever owns the heart must be surrendered to Him.

† The Lord still turns human values upside down, what the world sees as first is often last before God.

### **Q & A Appendix**

**Q** What was the Pharisees' real motive in asking about divorce?

**A** They were testing Jesus, not honestly seeking truth. They wanted to trap Him in a controversial issue and justify their loose view of marriage (Matthew 19:3; Malachi 2:16).

**Q** Why did Jesus go back to Genesis?

**A** Because God's original design is the true standard. Christ corrected their abuse of the law by bringing them back to creation itself (Matthew 19:4-6; Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:24).

**Q** Did Jesus teach that wealth is always sinful?

**A** No. The problem was not money itself, but trusting riches and refusing to surrender everything to Christ (Matthew 19:21-24; Luke 14:33; 1 Timothy 6:17).

**Q** What does the regeneration mean in Matthew 19:28?

**A** It points to the covenantal renewal brought by Christ's reign, when the old order was judged and the new covenant order was established, culminating in that first century transition (Matthew 19:28; Matthew 21:43; Matthew 24:34).

**Q** What does it mean that the apostles would judge the twelve tribes of Israel?

**A** It means they would have covenantal authority in the new covenant community and stand as witnesses against unbelieving Israel in that generation (Matthew 19:28; Matthew 23:34-36; Ephesians 2:20).

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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### **Source Index**

† Matthew 19:1-30; Matthew 7:28; Matthew 11:1; Matthew 16:27-28; Matthew 21:43; Matthew 23:34-36; Matthew 24:34; Luke 14:33; Luke 19:44; Luke 21:20-22; Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:24; Isaiah 35:5-6; Malachi 2:16; Romans 3:20; 1 Timothy 6:17; Ephesians 2:20

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews; Josephus, The Jewish War; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Irenaeus, Against Heresies

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