

**PART 46: A UNIVERSAL LAW: ALL LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATIONS MUST CONTRACT BACK UPON GOD and HIS WORD, 10:1-12. #1.** "...whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife...?", 10:2. The issue was put by the Pharisees in order to test the Lord. Pitting Moses against Jesus was an obvious means, they thought, to His undoing, 10:4. #2. Jesus completes their question: The full question was, is it lawful to divorce one wife and then marry another woman? So the "test" was about how representations stack up one against another. #3. The Lord reverses the test and the motive behind the question was exposed: Carnality. Those people were very much interested in protecting their supposed justification for divorce. Moses permitted a procedure called "a certificate of divorce", 10:4. #4. And that, on the foundation of "your hardness of heart", 10:5. Carnality. The motive was carnal; to be "lawful" in putting one wife away in order to take another woman, 10:11, 12. The Jews redefined "lawful" based on carnal motives. This was by design in order to "lawfully" break up the marriage bond. Marriage was subject to carnal convenience, 10:9. Their representations were carnal and sinful! #5. "But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female", 10:6 (from Genesis 1:27). Nature does not hold the answer. For there is One above and beyond nature. Nature does not determine gender. God does that. So much for gender assignation! Gender is decided by God; revealed at birth. #6. God determines gender and that distinction provides for marriage between man and woman, 10:7. Implied is exclusion of homosexuality. Marriage is limited to male and female. #7. And the marriage is not merely consensual; "What God has joined together, let no man separate", 10:9 (from Genesis 2:24). A marriage between a man and a woman is established by God Himself and is protected from carnal intrusion; "...they are no longer two, but one flesh", 10:8. #8. This is not only a legality. It is represented as an indissoluble union between a man and a woman. Every element of marriage is supernatural. God made and stipulated the two genders; God made the relation of marriage; God created the marriage union between the man and the woman; God "joined" them "together", 10:9. #9. By generalization the Lord makes the case that all linguistic representations must contract back upon the will of God, the word of God and the power of God. Any carnal language manifold is part of the condition of "hardness of heart" and is disallowed. The Pharisees tried to make adultery "lawful"! (a contemporary practice).

**Part 47: REVEALED ABSOLUTES COUNTERMAND THE REPORT OF UNDERSTANDING BY DIRECT EXPERIENCE, 10:13-16. #1.** This text is about how to understand all human experience. "...they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them...", 10:13. #2. The parents were seeking some advantage from Jesus, His touch upon their lives. Theirs was one perspective brought about by the recognition of the absolute in The Lord. #3. The disciples had another understanding of the moment, "...but the disciples rebuked them", 10:13. In spite of all that the Lord had proclaimed and performed, the disciples remained fixed in their reasoning by universals and not by revealed absolutes. #4. There is such a thing as universal experience and dealing with children is one of those universals. The disciples reasoned by universal understanding of direct experience: The presence of the children was an unnecessary

distraction. #5. "But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant...", 10:14. The Lord immediately made a symbol of the children. "...Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these", 10:14. #6. Children possess innocence and willingness to believe. They are not worldly wise, sophisticated, cynical; "for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these". #7. Two disparate understandings collided. The higher understanding was the absolute meaning that children have in the sight of God. And "...whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all", 10:15. #8. The lower understanding is built upon universals. Hunger, anger, need for shelter, happiness, sexuality, religion, means of production and many other things are universals experienced by and pursued by all men. #9. The problem: Universals are inarguable, but universalism is different. It is reasoning based on the assumption that some ideas have universal application and meaning. #10. Revealed truth and universalism clash in the social orders of men.

**PART 48: UNIVERSALISM CONTRACTS BACK UPON REVELATION, 10:13-16. #1.** Universalism, believing that universal experience is a sufficient source of meaning, is one contributor to the condition of hardness of heart, 4:1-25, 35-41; 6:52; 8:17. #2. Human reasoning from universals is misleading because there is no inherent meaning in human experience. True meaning is applied by revelation, the word of God, to human experience. #3. Upon the advent of the word of God, what human beings think, how and why they think it, is pushed downstream from revealed truth. #4. Jesus was "indignant" toward the disciples (10:14) because they attempted to "hinder the children" from coming to Him. That attitude demonstrated that the disciples had elevated universalism above revelation instead of the other way around. #5. Revealed truth was always intended to be set above universalism (Genesis 3). While we are surrounded by universals, universalism as reasoning must contract back upon the word of God. Universalism is faithlessness. #6. Universalism was the catalyst for Abraham and Sarah's breach of faith with Hagar (Genesis 16); Israelite behavior in the desert (Exodus); the refusal of battle at Kadesh-Barnea (Numbers 13, 14); Peter's walk on water (Matthew 14); and the behavior of the disciples in the Book of Mark. #7. Today, as well, universalism and not revelation is the preferred source of understanding about human experience. Abortion, marriage, sexual behavior, health, the nature of man, gender identity and other things are approached on the foundation of universalism and not the word of God. #8. Resultant is an ever-deepening crevasse of depravity and degradation. The culmination of this will be judgment, personal and collective. #9. Generalization from universals to thought, speech, and behavior is an ancient contradiction to generalization from revelation to human existence. #10. The Lord's indignation at the disciples' universalism (10:13-16) was proof of His disapproval of its general use to justify depraved behavior of all kinds!

**PART 49: ALL THINGS CONTRACT BACK UPON GOD; THEREFORE, ALL THINGS ARE RELATIVE, 10:17-31. #1.** Here is a simple and compelling logic, but with the most profound implications. If everything contracts, then everything is relative. Nothing temporal holds any intrinsic value on its own. #2. Particularly, the rich in worldly goods

have considerable difficulty with such relativity. "...How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God", 10:23. #3. Some of the rich reverse that revealed logic. Acquisition can make even the kingdom of God relative to it! At the hearing of the Lord's "words", the rich man "...was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property", 10:22. The issue is power and security. In that light not even the poor are immune. #4. Jesus, further, stipulates that this relativity applies to all and every temporal consideration. "...Good teacher", the man declared, to which Jesus responded "...Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone", 10:17, 18. #5. Goodness is an absolute quality, consequently all other temporal, human considerations are relative to just such absolute qualities. Human perception should follow this revealed logic of relativity. But the human race never does that. #6. The "eye of a needle" (10:25) is precisely that change of perception! It is a difficult transition to make, because the visible is, to some, more convincing than the eternal. #7. Temporal loss, we are told, is all made relative to eternal rewards and recognition, 10:29, 30. If that revealed logic is believed and acted upon, then, Peter isolated the right response: "...Behold, we have left everything and followed You", 10:28. No regrets! #8. Why? Because everyone who believes and those who "follow Me..." (10:21) will get back more than they gave up! #9. This present, temporal, material age is quite relative "...to the age to come...", 10:30. #10. All men are relative to the Almighty and in consequence, "...many who are first will be last, and the last, first", 10:31. Our circumstances are all relative to supernatural contraction!

#### PART 50: CONTRACTION and THE BIG QUESTION: "ARE YOU ABLE?"

#1. "But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?'" , 10:39. #2. Jesus asked the disciples that question in a social universe of hatred, rejection and vitriol, 10:33-34. And in that world He became the embodiment of perfect service; His life always in supreme contraction back upon the will of God, 10:33-34. #3. The Lord was preparing us for physical and psychical suffering and distress. He put the case plainly: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many", 10:45. #4. As Jesus "...began to tell them what was going to happen to Him" (10:32), "James and John..." were entertaining ideas and possibilities very distant from the mind of the Lord, 10:35-37. #5. They sought a position of preeminence among men; to serve was not yet in their vocabulary. Jesus instructs: "But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all", 10:43-44. #6. In that moment and with all the dangers maturing to finality, the Master asked the big question: "Are you able...?", 10:38. Jesus Himself provides the example. #7. How, then, shall we confront the duties and obligations of our faith and that under the leadership of such a Captain of action? #8. The answer is indelible: Step into it! We are expected to step into our circumstances with the same fervor with which the Lord stepped into His, 10:32. Even the most dangerous and objectionable! None of the Lord's historical conditions were frictionless; nor will ours be, we might as well assume. #9. Step into it with an unbridled, invariant trust in the God of circumstance.

Mark: The Life of Christ and the Powers of Contraction (10:1-34)

#10. Step into it with the courage and determination to see it through. #11. Step into it with the language of the Holy Spirit. Never permit language thresholds that discourage, promote failure, that dishearten, disdain or doubt the sovereignty of the Almighty. #12. "They will mock Him and spit on Him and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again", 10:34.