

MARK CHAPTER 10 – Marriage and Divorce: Jesus Blesses Little Children; Jesus Counsels the Rich Young ruler; With God All Things Are Possible; For the Third Time Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection; Greatness Is Serving; Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: http://www.missioncalvary.com/ Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Marriage and Divorce

Mar 10:1 Then He arose from there and came to the region of Judea by the other side of the Jordan. And multitudes gathered to Him again, and as He was accustomed, He taught them again.

Mar 10:2 The Pharisees came and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" testing Him.

Mar 10:3 And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?"

Mar 10:4 They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her."

Mar 10:5 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

Mar 10:6 But from the beginning of the creation, God 'MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE.'

Mar 10:7 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE,

Mar 10:8 AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH: so then they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Mar 10:9 Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

Mar 10:10 In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter.

Mar 10:11 So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her.

Mar 10:12 And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

Mar 10:13 Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Jesus Blesses Little Children

Mar 10:14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Mar 10:15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Mar 10:16 And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

v. 1 Jesus never tired of teaching. When people came to Him or gathered around Him, He taught them. I hope we never tire of studying Scripture. It's the bread that sustains us, the fuel for our faith.

v. 2 These Pharisees came trying to trip up Jesus with the most theologically controversial question of the day, an issue that remains controversial to this day: the issue of divorce.

vs. 3-4 In Jesus' day, divorce was so common that in order to keep the rabbinical courts from being clogged with divorce proceedings, if a man simply said to his wife, "I divorce you," three times, she would be given a bill of divorcement. Cf. *Dt 24*

v. 5 The Greek word translated "hardness" is *skleros*—from which we get "sclerosis," a word most often used in conjunction with a **hardening of the arteries**. Whenever a divorce occurs, the reason is never what people say it is. The reason is **always hardness of heart**.

v. 6 "Let's go back to the beginning," Jesus says.

vs. 7-9 **The first paradox is that two become one**. In the marriage ceremony, when a man and woman stand before the Father, when prayer is offered for their relationship and blessing pronounced upon their marriage, the two of them become one in the eyes of the Father.

vs. 10-12 This would have been a radical statement in the ears of the disciples. You see, **nowhere in Levitical law or rabbinical thought could a woman divorce her husband**. Thus, Jesus is placing woman **on a level she had never before known**—not only in the history of Israel, but in the history of the Roman and Grecian empires as well.

Paul would go on to say that in Christ there is neither male nor female (Galatians 3:28). We have different functions and responsibilities, to be sure—but there is a wonderful equality in Christ. ...*and be married to another, she commits adultery*. This doesn't say the person who remarries after divorce will live in adultery, but that theirs is an act of adultery, the missing of God's best. After a failed marriage, there can be a second opportunity—but it must be approached with great sobriety. No matter how innocent they think they might be, both parties must accept responsibility for their part in the failure. For where sin abounds, grace abounds more.

v. 13 The word "*they*," being masculine in Greek, it was the fathers who brought their children to Jesus.

v. 14-16 ...*He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them*. **The second paradox is that adults must become as children to enter the kingdom**. This doesn't mean we are to be childish. It means we must be childlike. One of the most obvious characteristics of children is their trust. My kids never ask me if there will be food in the refrigerator next week. They have absolute confidence that when it's dinnertime, they'll be able to eat. Secondly, although children can't explain a lot, they sure enjoy a lot. As adults, on the other hand, we want to explain everything, but enjoy very little, if anything. The way of the kingdom is not explaining. The way of the kingdom is enjoying—just trusting that our Father will see us through, that He'll provide for us and never give up on us.

Chapter 10 In the chapter before us, we see Jesus employing a **method of teaching called the paradox**, a statement that turns conventional thinking on its head. We will see in the chapter before us **five such paradoxes—statements that appear to be impossible initially, but which change our thinking eventually**.

v. 5 **Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept**. What should a husband do when he finds something in his wife that he does not like? According to the further revelation of the New Testament in this regard, a husband ought to understand why his wife is like this. This is the word of Peter to husbands: "*1Pe 3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered*."

That is, do not merely react to them; understand why they are acting the way they are. Dwell with them with much understanding: give affection to them, honor them, share yourself with them, understand them, restore them, love them. This is what a husband ought to do. This is what a marriage is for -- to provide opportunity to work out the problem areas, the difficulties, the offensive occasions which arise.

APPLICATION: How would you assess the hardness of your heart? How do you resolve conflicts in your marriage or in your relationships?

Vs. 6-9 Though Jesus has put His finger on the reason why **marriages fail -- because of hardness of heart** -- He goes on now **to show us how they can be cured, by revealing to us the purpose of marriage**, Verses 6-9: The real issue, the real question, is not how to get a divorce; the real question is: **Why maintain a marriage?** This is what we ought to know. To answer this question Jesus focuses on three important factors: **first, the actions of God (v.6); second, the desires of God (vs. 7-8); and third, the warning of God (v. 9).**

v. 9 APPLICATION: "Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." Does that refer to a wedding service or to what has been going on in the marriage?

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young ruler

Mar 10:17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"
Mar 10:18 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

Mar 10:19 You know the commandments: 'DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' 'DO NOT MURDER,' 'DO NOT STEAL,' 'DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,' 'Do not defraud,' 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.'"
Mar 10:20 And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."
Mar 10:21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."
Mar 10:22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

With God All Things Are Possible:

Mar 10:23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!"
Mar 10:24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!"
Mar 10:25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."
Mar 10:26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"
Mar 10:27 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."
Mar 10:28 Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You."
Mar 10:29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's,
Mar 10:30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

v. 17 This is the only instance in the Bible where a man comes and kneels before Jesus and leaves worse off than when he came. Matthew 19 tells us this man was young. Luke 18 tells us he was a ruler. Mark tells us he was rich. But he comes running to Jesus because he's aware there's something wrong inside. He's everything our society values. He's rich, he's young, he's a ruler—but he's empty.
v.18 "If you're calling Me good," Jesus says, "is it because you understand that I must indeed be God?"
vs.19-21
This man was not only rich, young, and a ruler—but he was also religious. His morals were impeccable. He was a man of integrity. And when he said, "I've done these things from my youth," Jesus didn't disagree.
v. 21 *One thing your lack... The third paradox is that the poor will be rich.* "You may have kept certain commandments," Jesus said to the rich young ruler, "but the problem is that you are controlled and dominated by money. Be free. Get rid of it." I don't believe the point was for this man to divest himself of all of his money, but rather to recognize his wrong priority. Throughout Scripture, there are four hundred ninety verses that deal directly with faith, five hundred or more that deal with prayer, and two thousand that deal with money. Two hundred eighty-eight verses in the Gospels alone—one in every ten—concern money. The Bible contains more verses dealing with our use and handling of money than it does concerning prayer and faith combined.
vs. 22-24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. Because at this time it was believed that a man who walked with God would be blessed by God financially, it is no wonder the disciples were astonished.
vs. 24-27 It's impossible for a rich man to be saved. It's impossible for a poor man to be saved. It takes a miracle for any man to be saved.
vs. 28-30 If my house burned down tonight, I know there are believers who would take my family and me in. If I walked out into the church parking lot and discovered my car wouldn't start, I know someone would take me home. Thus, I have hundreds of houses and cars and family members. So do you. The more we give, the more we enjoy the benefits of the entire kingdom—the hospitality, love, support, networking, strength, and community of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Yes, there is sometimes persecution. But the extent to which we give is the extent to which our needs will be met in this life, and to which heaven will be enjoyed.

v. 22 *Mat 6:21 "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*
APPLICATION: Would Jesus say to you? "One thing you lack"! If so, what would it be?

v. 25 *"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."* This is a very remarkable statement that Jesus makes, highlighting two facts. **The first is the terrible danger of affluence, of riches, of seeking to get rich and loving the things money can buy. This, He says, does terrible things to the soul.** They are deprived people. There is so much they are robbed of by the things they have. So Jesus goes on to point out **the terrible danger of affluence.** "It is impossible," he says, "for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." The disciples interpreted him correctly. Jesus is saying to them, *"It's impossible."* And that is what they thought. They said, "Well, then, who can be saved? What rich man will ever make it, if that is what riches do to you?" And Jesus admitted it. "With men it is impossible..." Why is it impossible? What do riches -- money, wealth affluence -- do that make it so impossible?

- **Riches and money and wealth and affluence tend to destroy the qualities you must have in order to enter the kingdom of God.** They destroy the childlikeness of life -- and you can see why.
- **Affluence creates a concern for secondary values.** They are not concerned about whether they worship God rightly or not, but whether they are in a beautiful building which pleases them aesthetically. **Riches transfer their concern from the elementary, the necessary things, to the secondary things** This destroys simplicity in life.
- Furthermore, **affluence destroys teachability.** Affluence destroys a teachable spirit, because it **creates a false sense of power and authority.** The man who has power because of his money begins to feel that he ought to be the teacher. He does not need to learn -- he already knows everything! It is a dry rot which eats away at the simplicity of life, and at the sensitivity of the heart, and removes people from the realities of life.
- **Finally, affluence gradually enslaves those who are attached to it. It builds an increasing dependence upon comfort, upon "the good life," until people reach a point where they cannot give it up. They are owned by their possessions.**

APPLICATION: How do you view rich people – over-privileged or underprivileged? How does Jesus view them with respect to their salvation? (*"who then can be saved?"*)

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Mar 10:31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

For the Third Time Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection;

Mar 10:32 Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:

Mar 10:33 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; Mar 10:34 and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

Greatness Is Serving;

Mar 10:35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask."

Mar 10:36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

Mar 10:37 They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."

Mar 10:38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

Mar 10:39 They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized;

Mar 10:40 but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared."

Mar 10:41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John.

Mar 10:42 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.

Mar 10:43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant.

v. 31 The fourth paradox is that the last shall be first. This statement runs cross current to that which our culture propagates. Our society is becoming increasingly competitive in its orientation. And yet those who win society's competition seem to be increasingly disillusioned with the prize. This explains why top athletes, for example, often find themselves being sucked into the drug scene. They got the prize—but the prize was too small. Jesus comes on the scene and calls us away from competition. How does this work out practically? In your mind's eye, travel back two thousand years ago to a place called Bethesda... There you see hundreds of people with all sorts of physical ailments positioned around a pool of water. Why are they there? The understanding of the day was that the first one in the water after an angel supposedly stirred it would be healed. Consequently, these blind, lame, hurting people jockeyed for position in order that they might be first in the pool. But what does Jesus do when He arrives at Bethesda? He finds a lame man seemingly at the back of the pack and says, "Do you want to be made whole?" "I have no man to help me into the water," the man answers. "I don't have a network. I don't have the skills. My college education is outdated. I don't have connections. How can I compete in this culture? I have no one to help me." This man had no stock options. He wasn't a member of the health club, nor on the city softball team. He wasn't competitive. Yet it was he and he alone who captured Jesus' attention that day. "Arise," Jesus said. "Take up your bed. I'm freeing you from this pool of competition." And the man was healed (John 5:9). I believe Jesus says the same thing to us today. Maybe we've been jockeying, struggling, planning, conniving, attempting to get the edge, to make it happen, to get ahead—be it financially or relationally, in ministry or in spirituality. But Jesus would remind us that the paradox of the kingdom is that the first shall be last and the last first.

vs. 32-40 James was martyred. John was placed in a cauldron of boiling oil and then exiled on the island of Patmos. They did indeed drink of Jesus' cup of suffering and were baptized into His baptism.

vs. 41-43 "Unlike Gentile rulers who dominate, manipulate, and control, the great among you shall be your minister;" or, literally, "your waiter," said Jesus.

Vs. 36-37 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" [37] They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."

They ask for three specific things: First they ask for preeminence. They want to sit on those thrones and have the honor and exaltation that a throne represents. This is what they had been promised. **Second, they want proximity.** Once the disciples knew that twelve thrones were waiting for them, and as they had twice now fallen into a discussion as to which of them would be greatest among them, you can understand why they would discuss where these thrones would be placed in relationship to Jesus. James and John, talking this over with their mother, decided there was no good reason why they could not belong to the inside circle, with one on the right hand and one on the left. And, **third, they want power.**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

*Mar 10:44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.
Mar 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

Mar 10:46 Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging.

Mar 10:47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Vs. 44-45 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." **The fifth paradox is that the servant shall rule.** The easiest way to know if you're a servant is by how you react when people treat you like one. All too often, I'm afraid, my heart is, "Yes, Lord, I want to be a servant as long as people realize I'm serving. I want to be a slave as long as I become Slave of the Year." If you're gladly slaving in the nursery, in the kitchen, or in the Sunday-school class without being noticed, appreciated, or thanked—yours is the heart of a true servant. Does the Lord want us to be slaves because He likes to see us grovel? No, it's because He's preparing us for the kingdom—for the next billion years—and He knows that the best exercise for strengthening your heart is stooping down to pick up someone else. Others might not acknowledge you. You might not be rewarded presently. But when you move into the kingdom, and the Lord says, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Father," you'll do so with a large heart and a huge capacity to enjoy eternity. When we get to heaven, gang, not one of us will regret the times we weren't applauded by people for serving the Lord. Instead, we'll say, "Thank You, Father, for sparing me from getting my reward on earth where it passes away so quickly." If you want to rule, become a slave. It's a paradox indeed. But it's true.

v. 46 Now they came to Jericho ... Historians tell us that at this time Jericho was the most trafficked intersection in the world due to the fact that all commerce, travel, and movement of troops between Europe to the north and Africa to the south passed through Jericho. ...*As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging.* It has been said that there are three basic categories of people: **those who make things happen**, **those who watch things happen**, and **those who wonder what happened**. Bartimaeus, I believe, would fit into the third category. No doubt he would hear the creaking of the wagon wheels being pulled by snorting oxen. He would hear the shuffle of sandals on rocky roads, the sounds of camels, the conversations of people—everyone moving, while he sat still. Maybe you can identify. Maybe you feel like all around you things are happening, people are moving, times are changing. But you? You're just sitting, wondering, begging. Bartimaeus sat by the side of the road because he was blind. Perhaps his blindness was the result of heredity. You see, "Bartimaeus" literally means "son of the unclean one." Thus, it is very possible that Bartimaeus was so named because his mother or father passed on a disease that produced blindness in their son.

Vs. 47-48 Bartimaeus heard that Jesus had come to Jericho. The name "Jesus" is the Greek transliteration of the Jewish name "Joshua," so it was actually "Joshua" who came to Jericho that day. Thousands of years previously, another Joshua had come into the city of Jericho—not for salvation, but for destruction—for it was his job to bring the people of God into the Promised Land. And here, standing before Bartimaeus, was "Joshua," whose job it was to bring the people of God into the Land of Promise not physically, but eternally—to bring mankind to heaven. As the feet of the priests and Levites touched the water, the Jordan River parted, and Joshua entered into the Promised Land to begin his ministry.

v. 44 APPLICATION: How do you react when people treat you like a servant? Where do you want to receive your reward, such as that for servanthood? Here or in heaven?

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Mar 10:48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Mar 10:49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you."

Mar 10:50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

Mar 10:51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."

Mar 10:52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

vs. 47-48 con't Jesus also began His ministry in the Jordan River when He was baptized at the age of thirty. The water didn't part. Instead, the heavens opened, a dove descended, and the Father declared, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Joshua's ministry was preceded by Moses, who prepared the people in the wilderness as he gave them the law. Jesus' ministry was preceded by a prophet of the wilderness named John the Baptist who preached repentance (Mark 1:15). After circling the city, Joshua told the people to shout. And the walls came down. When Jesus came into the city, Bartimaeus was told not to shout, but to keep quiet. But he would soon stand up.

vs. 49-50 Joshua's greatest victory took place on the day he commanded the sun to stand still (*Joshua 10:12*). So, too, Bartimaeus' life would miraculously change the day the Son stood still. You who are sitting by the highway of life, saying, "I'm blind. I don't get it. I'm not seeing properly. I'm not going anywhere. Does Jesus care about me, or is He just passing by quickly?" take hope. Bartimaeus cried out—and the Son stood still. Why? I suggest three reasons... Bartimaeus cried out in humility. All too often, we say, "Poor me. Life isn't fair. Why do bad things always happen to me?" Humility, on the other hand says, "I'm a sinner. I deserve judgment. But, Lord, I thank You for Your mercy." And such is the voice the Lord hears most clearly. Bartimaeus cried out tenaciously. "Keep quiet!" the crowd said to Bartimaeus. It's amazing to me how often perhaps well-meaning people try to get us to quiet down. "Don't keep bothering the Lord," they say. "Just accept your blindness. Accept your confusion. Accept the fact that you don't know what's happening." Bartimaeus, however, kept crying—with humility, yes—but also with tenacity. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, *Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.* And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. Bartimaeus cried out expectantly, for when Jesus called him, he left his garment behind. The garment beggars wore was specially striped in order that people would know the wearer was legitimately begging, that he had no other means of financial support. Therefore, in throwing his garment down, Bartimaeus was saying, "I know Jesus will heal me." Truly, without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6)—for it is faith that sees the invisible, believes the impossible, and receives the incredible.

vs. 51-52 Bartimaeus was "changed in the twinkling of an eye"—just as we all will be one day. It is no wonder he followed the One who had opened His eyes and given him life. May today be the day you do what Bartimaeus did: May today be the day you receive the direction, instruction, revelation you need. May you cry out until Jesus stops in front of you. May you cry out until the Son stands still. And may you join Bartimaeus in following Him anew.

v. 48-51

APPLICATION:

So why do you think Mark has put this account of "the son of honor's" being enabled to see in this particular place? Well, Jesus is saying something to His disciples, and to us. He is saying, **"When you come asking for good things from God, ask also to be able to see what they involve. Ask to have your sight given to you, so that you see yourself, and all that may be needed, before God can answer that prayer."**

THERE IS POWER IN BLOOD

*Would you be free from the burden of sin? There's power in the blood, power in the blood;
Would you o'er evil a victory win? There's wonderful power in the blood.*

Chorus:

*There is power, power, wonder working power In the blood of the Lamb.
There is power, power, wonder working power In the precious blood of the Lamb.*

*Would you be free from your passion and pride? There's power in the blood, power in the blood;
Come for a cleansing to Calvary's tide; There's wonderful power in the blood.[Chorus]*

*Would you do service for Jesus your King? There's power in the blood, power in the blood;
Would you live daily His praises to sing? There's wonderful power in the blood.[Chorus]*