

MARK Lesson 07

Mark Chapter 7

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I. Conflict with Pharisees over Cleansing

Mark 7:1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

Mark 7:2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

Mark 7:3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

We find that some of the Pharisees have traveled over 100 miles away from Jerusalem to gather with other Pharisees to find fault with Jesus. His greatest critics came from Jerusalem, not Galilee. They were watching and looking for a reason to condemn Jesus or his disciples.

To get at Christ they attacked His disciples. The word "defiled" is from "koinos" meaning common. The New Testament was written in "koine" Greek meaning that it was the language of the common people. Their tradition was human tradition, but doctrinal truth handed down through the prophets and apostles, and recorded in the Bible, is Godly tradition.

***II Thess. 2:15**, Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*

***II Tim. 2:2**, And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

These Pharisees observed some of the disciples eating with unwashen hands. When I was a child, I marvelled at how my mom could spot any sign of dirt on my hands from the other end of the dinner table. She had a rule, and we were to wash our hands before we eat. Like my family, the Pharisees had a tradition that the hands should be washed before the meal. And they had some special ways that you were to wash also.

Hands had to be washed downward, and then lifted, and water poured from the tops down. They had so many rules concerning traditions, it is a wonder they could do anything. I'm glad Jesus has freed us to serve God and not be worried about a thousand rules that might offend someone.

Matthew Henry explained about some of these rules concerning washing.

We have here an account of the practice of the Pharisees and all the Jews, v. 3, 4. 1. They washed their hands oft; they washed them, the critics find a great deal of work about that word, some making it to denote the frequency of their washing (so we render it); others think it signifies the pains they took in washing their hands; they washed with great care, they washed their hands to their wrists (so some); they lifted up their hands when they were wet, that the water might run to their elbows. 2. They particularly washed before they ate bread; that is, before they sat down to a solemn meal; for that was the rule; they must be sure to wash before they ate the bread on which they begged a blessing. "Whosoever eats the bread over which they recite the benediction, Blessed be he that produceth bread, must wash his hands before and after," or else he was thought to be defiled.

3. They took special care, when they came in from the markets, to wash their hands; from the judgment-halls, so some; it signifies any place of concourse where there were people of all sorts, and, it might be supposed, some heathen or Jews under a ceremonial pollution, by coming near to whom they thought themselves polluted; saying, Stand by thyself, come not near me, I am holier than thou, Isa. 65:5. They say, The rule of the rabbis was—That, if they washed their hands well in the morning, the first thing they did, it would serve for all day, provided they kept alone; but, if they went into company, they must not, at their return, either eat or pray till they had washed their hands; thus the elders gained a reputation among the people for sanctity, and thus they exercised and kept up an authority over their consciences.

4. They added to this the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, which they suspected had been made use of by heathens, or persons polluted; nay, and the very tables on which they ate their meat. There were many cases in which, by the law of Moses, washings were appointed; but they added to them, and enforced the observation of their own impositions as much as of God's institutions.

Mark 7:4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.

Mark 7:5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their

heart is far from me.

The Pharisees come to Jesus and ask why the disciples did not live according to the tradition of the elders. Jesus answers them by referring to the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah stated that "This people honour God with their lips, but their heart was far from him. It is easy to say we serve the Lord, but to truly do it from the heart takes effort and sincerity.

After possible contact with Gentiles, the Pharisees believed the disciples must wash, the Greek word being baptizo. Baptizo means "to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge. They attack the practice of the disciples. It is not that Jesus and His disciples condoned eating with dirty filthy hands, but rather they opposed a false religious ceremony. The traditions of men, only added to the burdens of the people.

***Matt. 23:4**, For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*

Mark 7:7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Mark 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

The people were worshipping in vain because they taught for doctrine the commandments of men. We are to worship God, and to honor His commandments, not some tradition man has created. Jesus tells them that you do lots of things like washing pots and cups, but you reject the commandment of God by keeping your traditions. Effectively, they had cast aside God's commandments in order to substitute the traditions of men.

Mark 7:10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

Mark 7:11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

Mark 7:12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

Mark 7:13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

Jesus quotes one of the ten commandments and shows how they had changed it by their tradition. What Jesus was saying is that by the following manner, they

had changed the commandment. "It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, (Something that was vowed to the Lord I am making Corban....that is a temple offering) instead of helping their parents as God had intended. They felt that by offering a gift in the temple, it exempted them from having to give to their parents.

By their traditions, they told the people they were free from the obligation to their parents if they gave this temple gift. Nothing exempts us from helping our parents as Jesus so clearly states. He saw in verse 13 that they were making the word of God of none effect by their traditions. They might have thought they were free, but God would still hold them accountable.

They conveniently ignored the Word of God.

Ex 20:12, Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

These hypocrites (or play actors) avoided this. The money or property that should have gone to maintain the parents was dedicated as a gift, but not necessarily given then are later to the Temple, thus depriving the parents. Corban means "a gift offered (or to be offered) to God." And the false teachers condoned this unlawful deed. Thus by tradition they cast aside the law of God. This was to rob God's Word of its power.

Mark 7:14 And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand:

Mark 7:15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

Mark 7:16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

Jesus' desire was that the people know the truth. That is still true today. When we know the truth, it will set us free. Free from sin, free from slavery to the ways of this world.

The source of sin and defilement is from within. There was a fundamental difference in their theology of sin. The Pharisees viewed man as innocent more or less and only needing to keep from being defiled from without. Our Saviour taught the depravity of man and that the source of evil was in the heart. Moses taught that God wanted love and obedience to come from the heart, and not be by obedience to rules.

Deut. 6:4-5, Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Deut. 10:12, And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Jesus explains what true defilement is in verses 14 through 16. A person is not defiled by the food he or she eats, but by the thoughts that emerge from our wicked heart. Jesus makes the distinction that what the Pharisees WAS NOT what God had taught. The Pharisees gave primary attention to the outward looks and the formal observance of prescribed rules and regulations. Jesus' emphasis was on the inner attitude and motive. When any religion places more on the outward versus the inward, it has ceased to be true religion.

Remember what Jesus told the Samaritan women by the well.

John 4:21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

John 4:22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

John 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

When Samuel went to the house of Jesse to anoint a new king for Israel, he was sure each of the sons was the one. But all in the house were not the one God had chosen.

1 Sam 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Mark 7:17 And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

Mark 7:18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;

Mark 7:19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

Mark 7:20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

In privacy Christ's own disciples question Him. Their lack of perception is

amazing. I'm sure the Lord is surprised sometimes when we are not quick to learn also. Christ explains that the evil black procession is marching forth from the heart.

James 1:14-15, *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

Food ends up in the stomach and passes through the body. Sin begins in the heart, and remains to defile and bring spiritual death.

Mark 7:21 *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,*

Mark 7:22 *Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:*

Mark 7:23 *All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*

Christ was amazed at the disciples' lack of knowledge concerning His teachings on defilement. He lists out the many things that can not defile a man. What we eat is not will defile us. The food does not enter into the heart and defile it, but out of the heart, we have evil thoughts that defile us. He lists them all there in verse 21 and 22. These evil things are what defile a man or woman.

J. Vernon McGee explains what defiles a man in his commentary.

I'll guarantee you that if you will buy the morning paper wherever you live and will read it through, you will find that this is what came out of man during the last twenty-four hours:

Evil thoughts

Adulteries and fornications—unlawful sex relations

Murders (anger should also be avoided)

Thefts (loafing on the job is also stealing)

Covetousness—grasping and greediness for material things and positions

Wickedness—all the acts that are intended to hurt people

Deceit—the pretense that people put up

Lasciviousness—sensuality

Evil eye—envy

Blasphemy—slander against God or man

Pride (God hates this above all else)

Foolishness—acts done without any respect for God or man

These all come out of the heart of man and that is why the Lord Jesus says, *"Ye must be born again."*

II. The SyroPhenician Woman

Mark 7:24 And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid.

Mark 7:25 For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

Mark 7:26 The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

There was no doubt a need for rest by the Lord. He also showed concern for the Gentiles and attempts to enter unseen into a certain house. Verse 24 says He could not be hid. So it should be today. The light of Christ should shine forth out of every Christian. Many times our works are not shining forth like they should.

We have studied how that twice before this, Christ had withdrawn with his disciples from the crowded west shore of the Lake of Galilee. Both times they went across the east side of the lake. In the first instance, Jesus healed the man that was demon possessed and totally out of mind. Mark 4:35 – 5:20. The second time was when Christ fed the 5,000 there on the hillside which we studied in last week's lesson. Mark 6:30-44 This third time that Christ withdraws from the people to the north about 40 or 50 miles to the border of Tyre and Sidon.

This was ancient Phoenicia, which today is the country of Lebanon. Christ entered into a house apparently to be alone with his disciples. He apparently was intending to instruct the twelve apostles and prepare them for the time when they would have to carry on His work. But Christ's presence is known, and this woman comes to Jesus that says her daughter is possessed by a devil. She comes and asks Jesus to cast out this demon. By her language, she was a Greek, but by race, she was a Syrophenician which was a descendant of the Canaanites. We see this from the account in Matthew.

Mat 15:22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

Mark 7:27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.

Mark 7:28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

Jesus explains to the woman that it was not meet to take that which belonged to the Jew and to give it to the Gentiles. In the Matthew account, we have record that the disciples asked Christ to send the woman away, because she 'crieth after us.' One of the remarkable things about this woman was her humble spirit. She says "Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." We know the gentiles were referred to as dogs by the Jews,

and she says that this dog would eat from the crumbs that fell from the table. God desires us to be humble people.

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Psa 69:32 The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

Jesus was first sent to the lost sheep of Israel.

Matt. 15:24, But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

He shows the low degree and condition of the woman. The word for dogs refers to little dogs, such as family pets, and not the scavenger dogs that roamed the streets. This gave the woman a little hope and she claimed it. The woman said she understood and by God's grace was equal to the occasion.

Mark 7:29 And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

Mark 7:30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

Because of this woman's faith, Jesus heals her daughter. We need to always remember that without faith, it is impossible to please God. Even when we pray, we are to believe that we will have our petitions. When the woman came to her house, she found the demon gone out of her daughter.

Mat 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

What a gracious reply from the Saviour. Because of her faith, she had her request granted. Jesus healed from a distance, which hints of the spiritual distance between Jews and Gentiles, which would be done away with at the cross.

Eph 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

Eph 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Eph 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Eph 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of

commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;
Eph 2:16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:
Eph 2:17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.
Eph 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
Eph 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;
Eph 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;
Eph 2:21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:
Eph 2:22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

III. A Deaf and Dumb Man Healed

Mark 7:31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

Mark 7:32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

The healing of this deaf and dumb man is only recorded here in the book of Mark. Why God chose to only list some acts one time by one author, where some were listed in all four accounts is unclear. One thing we can be sure of... God had a reason. And if something is repeated we need to always pay particular importance to it. It says after they left the coasts of Tyre and Sidon that he came back to the coasts of Decapolis.

Here they brought a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment. It is bad when a person has a physical deficiency, but when you can not speak plainly nor hear, you are at a distinct disadvantage. God helps those with difficulties to cope I know. In this situation, they come to the right one to find healing. When Jesus comes on the scene, things change. Things that looked hopeless no longer seem so hard. When hearts are heavy, he brings peace and solace. Constantly, Jesus commanded his disciples to 'Fear Not'. We should not be people of fear but people of faith.

Before Jesus left that Gentile region, they were glorifying the God of Israel.

***Matt. 15:31**, Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.*

Mark 7:33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

Mark 7:34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

Mark 7:35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

Mark 7:36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;

Mark 7:37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Christ put His fingers into the his ears and touched his tongue to show others that he intended to heal these two parts of the man's body. And when he did it, the man was instantly and totally healed. I love how that Jesus never half way did anything. You never heard of a man who was blind coming out with partial sight or seeing in just one eye. Jesus healed totally and wholly. And when he saves our souls, it is total and forever... thank the Lord. The people around were astonished in what Jesus was doing. The chapter closes with "He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

Though they were told not to tell it, they still told what had happened. Today, sadly we are told to tell it, and many times we tell it not.

Conclusion. These miracles are meant to teach spiritual lessons.

(1) The deviled possessed girl represents lost children are under the power of Satan. Loving and training them is not enough, but God must do a work in them.

(2) The deaf man with a speech impediment, teaches us that sinners cannot hear God, or speak for God until Jesus has touched them.

J. Vernon McGee said this about the man being healed:

All the things He did were done as aids to faith. The whole thought here reveals the fact that the condition of this man caused Jesus to use this method. His ears were first opened so that he could hear. After this it apparently was useless to try to get the crowd to remain silent. It was this miracle which brought about a great impetus in enlarging the ministry of Jesus, which had already broken all bounds.

At this time pressure upon Jesus was humanly unbearable. In spite of the pressure put upon Jesus, the burdens of the multitudes, the tensions of the times, the long busy days, and the weakness of the body, the crowd could say, "He hath done all things well." We just add our word of agreement to this and say a hearty amen.

Friend, He still does all things well today!

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.