

Mark 7 – 23 May 2021

“The Hinderance Of Stiff Methodology”

Introduction

- *Jesus is travelling for 3 years teaching (last wk of earthly life begins in Mark 11)
- *Preaching all should repent & prepare for the Kingdom
- *As we come to believe that Jesus is trustworthy, we begin to follow Him. IT’S A LIFE OF FAITH.
- *Jesus calls us to put aside self-effort to earn salvation (Read Gal 2:19-20)
- *Just as we’ve been saved by faith in Jesus, that’s the way we are to now live our lives (Read Col 2:6-7a)
- *It does no good to go back to self-effort & dead traditions (Read Gal 3:2-3)
- *So a life of faith and a unbending methodology are opposites from each other

So today we’ll give you 3 tools to prevent you from becoming unbending in religious methodology

1st tool to prevent religious stiffness in your life: Don't follow the rigors of religion at all (Vs 1-23)

Read Vs 1-5

1. Notice they're coming out to see Jesus now
2. Jesus' disciples washed for cleanliness but didn't bother trying to follow any of the many traditions & rules sent down from the Jewish ancestors
3. There is no value in trying keep up with the religious traditions of man to exhaustion.

Read Vs 6-8

1. How does Jesus desire for people to worship?
 - a. In worship in Spirit & truth (John 4)
 - b. Not in fleshly efforts & rules that violate God's Laws
2. You know you're in a religious rut when...
 - a. You're not open to ongoing learning from God
 - b. You're willing to sin to stay in your religious rut. (see Luk 22:2)

Read Vs 9-13

1. Jesus gives exp of how they're rules are just fleshly effort that violates God's Law
2. They used this man-made rule to trump God's Law of caring for your parents.
 - a. As if their wealth is dedicated to the Lord, therefore they can't support their aging parents
3. There's no end to the inconsistency of religious rules but the fruit of the Spirit "against such there is no law". (see Gal 5:22-23)

Read Vs 14-16

1. Now Jesus gives the general teaching showing why the Pharisee's teaching is meaningless
2. He's teaching about *spiritual* defilement, not about physical bodily defilement
3. Not about drug use, but about spiritual holiness
 - a. Can't say, "see Jesus said I can do drugs."
4. Key to parables is to know that Jesus is speaking spiritually!

Read Vs 17-23

1. You'll know them by their fruits, what comes out of them.
2. THIS is how you know if someone is spiritually defiled (Pharisees), not by what they eat

WHAT'S THE RESULT OF NOT FOLLOWING THE RIGORS OF RELIGION?

It keeps the focus on God's Word, not man's opinion

1. So many of the troubles in modern church life and personal life comes from following some man's opinion that isn't founded in true things
2. Trying to keep up with the "rules of religion", written or unwritten is exhausting and endless.
 - a. Well, if you want to be a "cool Christian" you should dress like this or do that.
 - b. Then, other extreme is entire written systems like the Catholic church or Mormonism
3. Peter said, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables...but [we] were eyewitnesses..."

2nd tool to prevent religious stiffness in your life: Be willing to go beyond simple mission (Vs 24-30)

Read Vs 24-26

1. This woman is a foreigner, a non-Israelite
2. Matt 15:22 tells us that she said, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David”.
 - a. This shows her faith in the Messiah
 - b. Some falsely have the impression that only Jews had faith and were going to heaven

Read Vs 27-30

1. Jesus knew His specific mission
 - a. His mission was to show & prove that He’s the Jewish Messiah & die for all sin
 - b. There’s always more that can be done
 - i. Not possible for Jesus to go touch every person on the planet
 - ii. It’s the very cross that will usher in eternal life once and for all

2. Matthew 15:28 tells us that Jesus said, “great is thy faith”. That’s what saved her daughter.
3. Notice an important application here
 - a. Jesus didn’t adjust for ritual washing
 - b. But He did for the lady’s great faith
 - c. Although Jesus task was toward the Jews, He never ignored a person of faith

WHAT’S THE RESULT OF GOING BEYOND SIMPLE MISSION?

It keeps the focus on the people of the mission

1. For Jesus
 - a. The activity is all things leading to the cross
 - b. The purpose is the salvation of people
2. For us
 - a. The activity is finding your specific role and calling of God
 - b. The purpose is to edify each other (Read Eph 4:13) “...til we all come in the unity of the faith & of the knowledge of the Son of God...”

3rd tool to prevent religious stiffness in your life: Don't limit Jesus to one narrow method of working

Read Vs 31-37

1. Not even going to attempt to explain the specific method that Jesus used.
 - a. If we knew more, I'll bet we would find out that Jesus healed in a way that was specific to each person's need
 - b. Jesus healed with a multitude of methods
 - i. This points to the fact that *it's not the method but the Man*
2. Jesus didn't often do or teach what was expected of Him

WHAT'S THE RESULT OF NOT LIMITING JESUS TO ONE NARROW METHOD OF WORKING?

It keeps the focus on the Man not the method

1. The power we need is in Jesus not in an item
2. You don't have to keep dead routines; you just have to follow the Spirit of God like the wind.

Conclusion

We need to be firm in our understanding of the truth of God, but the methods we use to apply God's truth need to be flexible.

- 1. Don't follow the rigors of religion at all**
 - a. It's endless to attempt to please all of man's rules.
 - b. Keep the focus on God's perfect truth
- 2. Be willing to go beyond simple mission**
 - a. We each have a task that God has given us
 - b. But the point behind each mission is to reach people with your gifts and abilities
- 3. Don't limit Jesus to one narrow method of working**
 - a. You're Christianity may look very different than mine or your parents.
 - b. We can have different methods as long as...
 - i. Our truth is the unchanging Word of God
 - ii. And the power is that of Jesus Christ