

## LIFE GROUP GUIDE – Week Beginning Sunday 22nd March 2026

### KEY SCRIPTURES – Mark 7:1-30

#### This Week's BIG IDEA

This is a relatively long and detailed passage compared to the others we've looked at from Mark's Gospel recently, involving three or four different scenes and the start of a new phase in Jesus' ministry in Gentile-dominated territory. However, the theme of spiritual "cleanliness" threads through it all. There are many different worldviews about what makes somebody acceptable to God and what doesn't. Jesus' teaching on this is as radical now as it was then. It requires a new heart!

#### Focussing on God (15 mins)

Kick-start a time of open worship by reading Ezekiel 36:24-30 or by singing a song, such as the golden oldie, [I Am A New Creation](#). Lift your voices together and encourage people to pray out, start a song or bring a spiritual gift.

#### Getting into Scripture (40 mins)

Read Mark 7:1-30

- Q1. What do you find interesting, insightful or challenging about this passage or from the sermon on Sunday?
- Q2. Why has Mark strung these four different conversations together? What theme or themes can you see threading through it all?
- Q3. Jesus says some rather surprising things in this passage, calling people hypocrites (verse 6), dull (verse 18) and dogs (verse 27). What do you think Jesus is feeling or thinking, and why is he being so assertive?
- Q4. What's so different about Jesus' view of what makes someone "clean" or "unclean" and that of the Pharisees? Compare how the thread of conversations starts (in verse 5) and ends (in verse 18-20).
- Q5. How does Jesus' interaction with the Syrophenician woman test Jesus' teaching on spiritual cleanliness?
- Q6. To what extent do you think this woman changes Jesus' message and priorities, if at all?
- Q7. How is the New Covenant so much better than the Old Covenant? And why were the incarnation and crucifixion the only solution to the problem of the human heart?

#### Prayer (20 mins)

Spend some time in missional prayer. For example, pray for:

- Opportunities to show kindness to your non-Christian colleagues in the lead up to Easter.
- Those finishing an Alpha Course or something similar over the next couple of weeks.
- The non-Christian family, friends and neighbours you might see more of over the Easter holidays.
- Many guests to come to our Easter Services.

#### Everyday Church Wimbledon, Southfields and Croydon Only (5 mins)

Explain that Life Group meetings will be pausing for four weeks from week beginning 26th April to make space for a season of Growth Groups and then an ASK Prayer meeting (19th May). Encourage people to sign up to a Growth Group by following this link – [everyday.org.uk/growth-groups](http://everyday.org.uk/growth-groups) – or scrolling through Events on My ChurchSuite. Alternatively, you can sign people up to a Growth Group on their behalf.