

FG Midweek

The Gospel of Mark

Class 8: Mark 7:1-30

Good evening! Welcome back to our Midweek gathering. This time on Wednesday nights focuses on equipping you to do the work of ministry. God calls you to do more than just sit on the sideline—He has a plan and He has a purpose for you in His mission. Wednesday nights serve as an opportunity for you to learn, be built up, and to be equipped to the ministry that God has called you to.

Reminder: study in spring, share in fall

REVIEW

In the first three chapters of Mark, Jesus is introduced as the long-awaited Messiah and divine Lord. Following Jesus requires repentance and faith, but also requires counting the cost. We will face opposition because Jesus faced opposition. And still, we are called to live with faithfulness, boldness, and perseverance in the face of opposition. Amidst examples of false disciples, we see that the mark of a true disciple is one who is both with Jesus and sent out by Jesus. Parables are introduced by Jesus as a means to distinguish between those who rightly respond to the kingdom of God and those who don't. After the introduction of the parables, we have another showing of the power of Jesus, over the natural, supernatural, physical, and even over death. But He is nonetheless rejected in His own hometown. After the parables, Jesus sends His disciples out to share the gospel. They will experience opposition, as is highlighted by John the Baptist's murder at the hands of King Herod. Compared to Herod, Jesus is a better king—one who has power over nature and sickness, and one who rules with kindness and love.

The eighth section in Mark poses the question, what makes a person pure? The answer may surprise some of the characters in our story. The answer is faith!

The Gospel of Mark

- Mark 6:33-56
 - The section contrasts King Herod with Jesus. One holds a feast in his own honor and the other feeds others to meet their needs. One is held captive to the opinions of others, and the other has power over nature and sickness.
 - 6:33-44: Jesus feeds five thousand, showcasing His concern and love for others.
 - 6:45-52: Jesus walks on the water, showcasing His power over nature. The disciples don't recognize Him, showing their continued failure to understand and know Jesus.
 - 6:53-56: Jesus heals the sick in Gennesaret, showcasing his power over sickness. Where the disciples fail to recognize Jesus, the crowds show their trust in Him to heal.
 - Application & Takeaways
 - The way of Jesus is so much better than the way of the world.
 - Jesus is the Messiah who holds power over creation—having the power to heal and walk on water. The question is, do you recognize Jesus as the Son of God, or are you missing Him?

The Gospel of Mark

Mark 7:1-30

This particular section in Mark has two parts. The first part (7:1-23) poses the question of what a disciple really looks like—is it someone concerned with the law and ritual purity? How is one made pure before God? The answer is given in a terse

This passage has two sections:

Text	Description	Summary
7:1-23	Pharisees and Tradition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whenever the Pharisees show up, it's bad news. Remember they begin planning to kill Jesus all the way back in Mark 3:6.• The Pharisees ask about the disciples not washing their hands before they eat. This law is not found in the OT, it was a law that they had placed upon others to make themselves feel more holy. In the OT, only priests were required to wash their hands, and only before a sacred meal, but not for a normal meal. Over the years, the Pharisees and scribes expanded this law to all people and judged others for not following it.• Jesus calls them out for this egregious practice, telling them that they value their own traditions over the word of God. This fulfills what Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 29:13.• Leave the commands of God → Hold to tradition of men• Reject the commands of God → Establish own tradition• Void the Word of God → Handing down own tradition• Jesus gives the example of this practice of Corban. In the Mosaic law, children were expected to honor father and mother, which included caring for them as they aged. But one could also donate money to the temple (declaring the

		<p>money, “corban” or an offering to God). By declaring the money as “God’s” they would no longer have to give it to their parents to help them. But corban funds could also be kept if one desired, and oftentimes, people would cut off their parents by saying they would offer the money to God, but in reality hold onto the money for themselves. This reveals the evil of their hearts! They want to be justified according to the law by seemingly following it through loopholes. But Jesus says this all simply reveals their heart.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● So what defiles a person? Is it eating with unwashed hands? No, Jesus explains—it is what is in our hearts that defiles us. ● We cannot justify ourselves by following the law. This would upset the Pharisees and scribes because they spent their entire life creating a system where they justified themselves according to the law and judged others who were “less holy” than they. Jesus turns all of this on their head. ● Foods don’t make one unclean...what makes us unclean is our sin (see list in 21-23). ● If this is what defiles someone, then how can one be made clean? Verses 1-23 beg the question and the next paragraph answers the question.
7:24-30	The Faith of the Syrophenician Woman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who is clean or unclean? Jesus travels to Tyre and Sidon...a Gentile location, and meets with a Gentile woman, about her daughter who is possessed by an unclean spirit. The entire description of this scene shouts out: “unclean!” ● This Gentile woman asks Jesus to help her daughter who has an unclean spirit. The response of Jesus is quite

		<p>shocking. He notes the priority of Israel over Gentiles and uses strong language to do so. He refers to Gentiles as “dogs.” Why does Jesus do this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contextually, we see that this is a sort of test of this woman’s response. Jesus gives an answer that might have been said by a Pharisee, but the woman responds with faith and understanding. She trusts Jesus. ● The shock of this dialogue does three things: first, it shows the faith and trust of this Gentile woman, bringing her resolute faith to the surface. Second, it displays to the disciples what a real faith looks like. Third, it reveals that God’s plan of salvation, though originating with the Jews, will extend to every nation, tribe, and tongue. Something that was promised way back in Genesis. ● The woman departs in faith, with no assurance of the exorcism, but she trusts that when she gets back home, her daughter would be restored. She has the faith of a true disciple.
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Sharing This Passage With an Unbeliever

This is a great opportunity to share how Jesus is not after ritual purity, but instead, He is after our hearts. People aren’t saved because they don’t drink or smoke. People are saved because they have faith in Christ that produces fruit in their lives by the power of the Spirit. Even today, many people in the American south have a faulty view of Christianity, thinking that the Christian faith is about avoiding particular sins or immoralities. It is good and helpful to emphasize that Christianity is about the good news that Jesus saves us by grace through faith.

In addition to this, it is important to emphasize that the people of God are not just uber-religious folks. They are those who have been radically changed by grace. Certainly, we are called to live

for the Lord and pursue holiness, but we do this in response to grace, not in order to earn it. God includes even the most unlikely people in His kingdom—Gentiles, unclean people, “outsiders.”

Conclusion

This passage is all about genuine faith. Do you have genuine faith? Are you living in view of grace, or are you trying to earn grace? We are defiled in our sin, but God offers us hope and mercy through Christ Jesus, His Son.