

Pastor Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church

Mark 7:24-30 | TBD

December 27, 2020

Unlovely Disciple

REVIEW

Last week the Holy Spirit of Almighty God taught us about the Illusion of Religious Tradition.

Jesus taught us about man-made traditions, legalism and what defiles a person.

Jesus showed us that nothing from the outside world can ruin our relationship with God.

What ^{does} ruin our relationship with God is the condition of our hearts.

It's the state of our heart that determines how the outside world influences you.

It's your heart condition that determines what you do and how you behave and how you spend your free time.

What goes in is what will come out.

We witnessed Jesus call the Pharisees and the Scribes—“hypocrites.”

We learned that a hypocrite is a person who hides his real intentions under a mask.

^{that} The word itself comes from Greek theater—someone who plays a role without sincerity.

The religious leaders of Jesus day were very interested in the outward appearance.

So they created rules to make themselves look good. *godly.*

And then they imposed their rules on others.

These rules and traditions were taken out of context from Scripture.

Ultimately they truly believed that taking a bath, washed away their sin, and made them right with God.

How wrong they are.

This brings us to legalism.

rightful God
 ↳ SALVATION BY WORKS
 ↳ ~~that~~ Heresy that says you can earn a place in heaven by your personal integrity.

KEYPOINT:

Legalism outwardly mimics Christianity. — False substitute

Jesus taught us that He doesn't care about outward appearances — He only cares about our hearts.

KEYPOINT:

There's only one way to worship God — joyfully obeying the Word of God.

The seventy-two, returned with joy... (Luke 10:17)

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure, buried in a field, that a man found and reburied. Then in his joy he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field. (Matthew 13:44)

'Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master's joy.' (Matthew 25:21)

KEYPOINT:

Religious Activity

Religious activity, apart from a relationship with God, is empty ritual. —no joy

You may feel loved, but that's only because you're basing God's love on your performance. —no joy

It means nothing—you only have the illusion that you know God.

You may know about God, but you don't know Him.

Because there's no joy in empty religious ritual.

There is no heart in serving a God who you personally don't know.

Scariest Verses in All Scripture

+ cf. **Matthew 7:21 CSB**—"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

+ cf. **Matthew 7:22 CSB**—"On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?'

See what these people did, they are giving a list to Jesus.

Jesus, look at my resume—look at all my works.

+ cf. **Matthew 7:23 CSB**—"Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you lawbreakers!'

They kept their own law of tradition, rules & regulations. But they neglected the most important - Love God & Love People. = +

KEYPOINT:

Experiencing God has everything to do with your relationship not activity.

Jesus didn't come from Heaven to give you another set of lifeless rules.

He came to set you free from those rules.

He has opened the prison door to our guilt and shame.

cf. **Galatians 5:1 NLT**—So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law (works/traditions).

It's scary how free we truly are.

Jesus has set us free from our past, we are not the sum total of our mistakes.

Our identity is not based in our past regrets.

Many of us have a hard time comprehending this kind of freedom.

The type of freedom that Jesus offers is so scary that many of us voluntarily choose to walk back into that prison cell.

It's interesting how the human heart works prefers the structure and repetition of spiritual prison rather than walking into the Promised Land—hand in hand with Jesus.

This is a primary reason Jesus came from Heaven.

To put a face with a name.

Jesus is the image of the invisible God, (Colossians 1:15)

Have you ever thought about how personal this is?

That Jesus came from Heaven to Earth so that you can personally know Him?

When you read the through the Gospels, you are witnessing the words and actions of the One person who created it all.

You don't have to guess what God is like, you only need to look to the Gospels.

God is not this mysterious force, nor is He Casper the friendly ghost. God walked this earth as the second person of the Trinity—

The God-Man, Jesus Christ, so that you can have a relationship with Him.

God never intended that you read the Bible as a biography,

KEYPOINT:

There is nothing that you can do to please God. *- Because if you are a child of God, He loves you unconditionally.*

Scripture is very clear—it's impossible to work your way into Heaven.

It's impossible because, we are spiritually dead because of our sin. (Ephesians

2:1) *Scripture says that the person who does not know Christ is the walking dead.*

cf. **Ephesians 2:8 CSB**—For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—

cf. **Ephesians 2:9 CSB**—not from works, so that no one can boast.

SUMMARY:

You can practice religion (works), but *tradition you won't experience God.* ~~you will miss God.~~

You'll miss God because you're not worshipping the One True Living God.

Practicing a works based religion is worshipping a god who is slightly more moral than you.

There is only one work that Jesus requires unto Salvation...

cf. **John 6:29 NCV**— "The work God wants you to do is this: Believe the One he sent."

And when you believe, you can't help but to repent? Call on the name of Jesus for salvation
Notice Jesus didn't say, "believe AND". *Do this / that*

He just said "believe."

We are to believe that Jesus is God and that He alone has paid our sin debt by becoming the Lamb of God—the offering for our sin—through the cross.

So we as River Bible Church have to be very careful not to replace our traditions with human morality.

person
rules
regulations
legalism

The Christian faith has morality in it, but it's only a by-product of our joyful obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you ever wondered why some people in the Church act like they've been baptized in pickle juice? 😊

Church People

Have you ever wondered why certain people are irritable and grumpy most of the time?

There's a good chance that their faith in Jesus is based on the morality of God rather than the mercy of God.

Instead of receiving God's love - they work harder to win His approval.

In other words, they're still not free in Christ.

After years or decades, they're still trying to prove something to God/others = bitter

Lastly, I gave you some things to consider —some awareness points—to check yourself and make sure you are not slipping into the spiral of tradition and legalism.

Well, that was all from last week.

INTRODUCTION:

Today, Jesus presses into this issue of purity once again.

over the next several Sundays

He is going to put a nail in the coffin of religious tradition by ministering to a woman that no other Rabbi would ever give the time of day.

Even the Twelve Disciples try to keep her away from Jesus

What's so wrong with this woman?

What horrible unforgivable crime has she committed that makes her unworthy to not even have a conversation with Jesus?

Let's find out.

****Please stand for the reading of God's Word.****

SCRIPTURE: Mark 7:24-30 CSB

+ **Mark 7:24**— He got up and departed from there to the region of Tyre., He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it, but he could not escape notice.

+ **Mark 7:25**— ~~Instead~~ immediately after hearing about him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit came and fell at his feet.

+ **Mark 7:26**— The woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth, and she was asking him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

+ **Mark 7:27**— He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, because it isn't right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

+ **Mark 7:28**— But she replied to him, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

+ **Mark 7:29**— Then he told her, "Because of this reply, you may go. The demon has left your daughter."

+ **Mark 7:30**— When she went back to her home, she found her child lying on the bed, and the demon was gone.

****These are the very words of God****

PRAY:

EXEGESIS: *Jesus*



Mark 7:24—*He* got up and departed from there | to the region of Tyre. | He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it, but He could not escape notice.

So Jesus leaves Capernaum from last week and walks 20 miles north.

Tyre | is Gentile territory. Tyre was notorious for its paganism and its wealth (Ezek. 28).

Don't miss this, Jesus is leaving Jewish land and going into enemy territory.

During the days of King David, Tyre | was friendly to Israel, but soon after things began to change.

The King of Tyre even pronounced that he was god in Ezekiel 28:1.

Tyre rejoiced when Jerusalem was destroyed.

This is the same area that King Ahab and Queen Jezebel chased down the prophet Elijah. (cf. 1 Kings 17:9; 18:10; Luke 4:25–26).

Fast forward to the first century and the people ^{Frontire} ~~in this area~~ never recovered from turning away from the Lord.

They preferred to worship Baal. ^{Among many other idols.}

Today, this is Lebanon.

It is really not clear why Jesus chose to make this road trip.

Verse 24 gives us a hint. Jesus is trying to keep a low profile, so He's trying to get some rest with His disciples.

Jesus most likely is trying to get some private teaching time with the Twelve, ~~Disciples~~.

The Gospel of Matthew is going to fill in some gaps here.

+ cf. **Matthew 15:22 CSB**—Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came and kept crying out, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely tormented by a demon."

^{So much for a low profile}

Jesus wasn't able to keep the crowds away—even the Gentile crowds.

So we have this woman who enters the story.

^{she} This woman happens to have everything against her.

1. She is a woman, which means that she is inferior to men. ^{in the 1st Century}
2. She is a Gentile, meaning she's not Jewish—she's not God's chosen people.
3. She is a Canaanite woman—The Canaanites are arch enemies of the Israelites.

As you read through your OT, you'll come across certain Canaanite tribes, like the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, etc.

^{Termites} ☺

The Phoenicians were also a branch of the Canaanites.

She comes from a region ^{drenched} engulfed in ~~again~~ idolatry, which most likely means that she is an idol worshiper herself.

BUT, this idol worshipping Gentile, Canaanite woman... calls Jesus by the messianic title "Son of David" (cf. Matt. 21:9).

^{Wow} She is showing Jesus that she knows exactly who He is.

It's very possible that she has not only heard about Jesus, but has seen Him perform a miracle with her own two eyes.

So, she comes to Jesus asking for a miracle.

She believes that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel.

She believes the very thing the Jewish leaders rejected from last week.

Even so...

cf. Matthew 15:23 CSB— Jesus did not say a word to her. His disciples approached Him and urged Him, "Send her away because she's crying out after us."

Notice two things in this verse.

First, Jesus didn't say a word— Well, that's a little rude!

Is Jesus having a bad day?

After all, this woman has a demon-possessed child at home, and Jesus doesn't say anything to her?

Where's the compassion of Jesus?

What's going on? Is He completely ignoring her?

That doesn't sound like the Jesus I know!

He was not rude or apathetic to her situation.

This moment is a test for her and the Twelve Disciples.

Jesus wants to know if her faith is real...or is it all lip service, just like the Pharisees from last week?

So Jesus waits to see what will unfold.

Jesus does this a lot. He wants to know what your faith is in.

Pause...
We may say we have faith, but what exactly does that mean?

Who or what is our faith in?

The Pharisees proved that their faith is in themselves and their so-called personal integrity.

Remember what happened when Jesus tested the rich young ruler?

His faith crumbled. His faith was in his money.

KEYPOINT:

Jesus' silence is a test.

Secondly

The disciples misinterpreted the silence.

They thought that Jesus must want her to leave, but He's too nice.

So the Twelve say... "We'll take care of this right now."

After all, this woman is annoying.

She kept asking Jesus over and over to heal her little girl.

The Twelve are trying to get some rest.

Rest and private time with Jesus is why they came to Tyre.

Handwritten: ~~And gets the rest of day with 12 or to say that we must be ready to minister in season 3 out.~~

The Twelve have no idea that Jesus is teaching them a character lesson in faith.

Jesus said, Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you (Luke 6:27)

Have you noticed that the disciples have a habit of trying to keep people from Jesus?

"Send her away."

We see the Twelve do it here. Throughout the gospels, the Disciples try to keep children away.

They tried to send the 20,000 people away without feeding them.

This woman hears this—and knows that the Disciples are getting ready to act like Bouncers...and then we pick ~~it~~ back up in Mark.

+ Mark 7:25—*the story* Instead, immediately after hearing about Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit came and fell at his feet. **+**

So we have some overlap there, but notice she falls at his feet. *immediately*

She's not going away without a fight.

Her daughter's life is at stake.

She is begging for mercy, unlike the Pharisees and scribes from last week.

The Pharisees demanded answers and conformity to their self righteous traditions.

they know about God, but they don't know Him personally - like this woman

Mark 7:26— The woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth, and she was asking him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

Mark gives us a detail that Matthew doesn't...this woman is not only a Gentile, but a Syrophenician.

This means that she was born into the Syrian and Phoenician cultures.

She comes from a city that the Old Testament regarded as a godless oppressor of Israel.

In other words, she is most definitely not a Jew.

Both gospel writers are showing us how wretched this woman truly is from a Jewish perspective.

She is the poster girl of unclean.

Even Matthew, the despised tax collector, as a disciple of Jesus can't believe his eyes.

Matthew, the man who turned his back on his family and his country to join arms with the Romans— all for the sake of money...even he was like, "DANG!"

Isn't it interesting how we see Jesus go directly into the heart of unclean territory—the enemies of the Jews...

And talk to unclean people right after Jesus had the confrontation with the Pharisees last week about these purity issues?

The Pharisees, who considered themselves clean, did not respect Jesus.

But this pagan woman, who is unclean in many ways, prostrates herself before Jesus and begs for mercy.

Worships

And she's begging for mercy because her life and home are under demonic control.

She probably performed whatever pagan religious ceremonies she thought would appease her false gods.

Obviously, worshipping false gods doesn't work...so she throws herself in true homage to the One True Living God.

Take note, this idol worshipping Gentile Canaanite woman is turning away from her false gods and turning to the One True Living God.

What's that look like to you?

It looks like she is turning into a disciple of Jesus!

There is no other Jewish Rabbi that would give this woman the time of day.

But, Jesus refuses to allow religious tradition to get in the way of salvation.

Jesus breaks His silence and gives her a parable:

Mark 7:27— He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, because it isn't right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

Mark 7:28— But she replied to Him, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

What?!

What on Earth just happened here?

Did Jesus just call this poor scared woman who is begging for mercy, a dog?

Yes, He did.

And we say, well that wasn't very nice. That's rude, Jesus!

Oh, we have no idea.

That's one of the worst things you could say to a person in the first century.

We also saw this in the OT all the time.

David and Goliath.

cf. 1 Samuel 17:43 CSB— Goliath said to David, "Am I a dog that you come against me with sticks?"

If you do a study on the word, "dog" you'll be amazed at how many times it's in Scripture.

Many times in Scripture, dogs are not pleasant.

They were wild scavengers.

You'll be shocked at how many times dogs are referred to as they lick up blood and eat corpses.

They were the filthiest animals in the towns.

Jesus Himself said in the Sermon on the Mount, **“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine”** (Matt. 7:6)

Now If you have the NKJV translation, you'll notice that ~~this~~ ²⁷ verse says “little dogs.”

This is an important detail.

Although most of the dogs in Jesus' day were filthy animals...

Jesus uses a different word in this verse
The Gentiles did keep small, domesticated dogs as pets, just like we do.

word Jesus is used the “doggie” or “puppy” in this verse.

So with that background, let's look again at verse 27.

Jesus **Mark 7:27**—~~He~~ said to her, “Let the children be fed first, because it isn't right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.” *puppies/doggies*

Question: What was the tone of Jesus when He said this?

Reading this verse is like reading an email...you don't know the tone.

That's one of the biggest problems with email, btw.

I can't believe for one nano-second that Jesus' tone is harsh.

Jesus is speaking with a gentle tone of voice, possibly smiling or smirking, maybe even having a twinkle in his eyes as he says this...and points to the family pet.

Mark 7:27—He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, because it isn't right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.” *doggies*

In other words, Jesus is saying, “I have to feed my children first—the children of Israel. I can't give the food that that belongs to them to the little dogs.”

ILLUSTRATION:

Every night in our home, Amy and I eat dinner.

As we eat, our two little doggies, watch us.

They stare us with ^{those} pitiful eyes.

Why? Because they want a crumb from our table.

We don't make our dinner and give it to them, and eat what's left over.

That'd be weird. They eat our leftovers.

And we give them our leftovers because we love them.

This is the analogy from Jews toward the Gentiles.

Moving on...

Mark 7:28— But she replied to Him, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

This is one of the best one-liners in all of Scripture!

This woman is clever. *Smart*

She picked up on the fact that Jesus said, *Let the children be fed first.*

This woman recognizes that "the children" in the parable represent Israel and "the little dogs" represent the Gentiles.

Notice what she didn't say... "How dare you compare me to a dog."

"Don't you know that I have rights?!"

"I'm offended!"

She didn't get wrapped up in all that.

In other words she said...

Lord, I understand. I get it. I am not a Jew. I have no right to sit at your table. I'm not even asking for that.

All I'm asking for is one crumb from Your table today. Please heal my daughter. I know she's not in Your family. I know she's not one of your children. We'll wait for the crumbs, but one crumb is all I'm asking for right now.

Wow, what a difference between her and the Pharisees from last week.

She was not interested in fighting for her rights.

She's doesn't demand that Jesus acknowledge her dignity.

- ① She knew who she was. She's not in the family of God yet.
- ③ She also knew that her daughter's life was at stake.
- ② She's a sinner and a beggar...just like the rest of us.

KEYPOINT: #2
She didn't insist on God's mercy.

→ Holding back of God's judgement that we deserve.

Now, as this conversation is taking place, where are the Twelve Disciples?

They're watching this whole thing go down.

This parable was also for them.

Jesus is preparing them for their primary ministry after His resurrection.

And here's the thing...her willingness to humble herself like this is a crucial requirement for discipleship.

She's teaching the Disciples About Discipleship.

Just as Jesus tells us that we are to receive the Kingdom of God as "little children."

She has no ^{Problems} ~~qualms~~ about receiving the kingdom as a little dog.

Like a little dog, she will gobble down whatever is Jesus gives her.

Picture Jesus laughing here—^{After this ONE Limer v. 28} Jesus loves this woman!

Mark 7:29— Then he told her, "Because of this reply, you may go."

And then Jesus gets serious and gives her good news...

The demon has left your daughter."

Matthew tells us that He said, "**Woman, your faith is great!**" (15:28).

Jesus had not found faith like hers among the Pharisees, the rabbis, or the people of Israel.

The Lord never refused anyone, Jew or Gentile, who approached Him in sincere faith and humility. (John 6:37; cf. Luke 7:9; John 4:39).

Mark 7:30— When she went back to her home, she found her child lying on the bed, and the demon was gone.

Can you imagine what she was going through her mind as she was walking—probably running home?

Her daughter is probably resting in her bed from sheer exhaustion from being demon possessed.

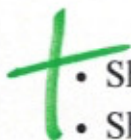
Today's Scripture passage is not just about this woman's faith or her daughter's healing...but about a lesson for the Twelve Disciples.

the twelve meet An Unlovely Disciple!

They learned from this pagan woman what saving faith looks like.

She turned from her idols, abandoned her pride, and begged for mercy.

She displayed Biblical characteristics of genuine repentance.



- She changed her mind—she left her worthless idols.
- She turned away from her sin—and she came to Jesus.
- We see a sorrow for sin—she fell at Jesus feet and worshiped Him and begged for mercy.
- We see a deepening conviction of her faith—she would fight for what she knew to be true—that Jesus would heal her daughter.

How about you?

Are you seeing these Biblical characteristics in your own life?

Ask it this way...

Do you love what God loves?

Do you hate what He hates?

*→ Do you hate your own sin - or are you still playing around w/ it?
↳ try to manage*

If you don't, dear friend you have a problem.

The Word of God says that you are to work out your salvation w/ fear & trembling. - Are you saved?

It's impossible for you to be a disciple of Jesus, and not resemble Him.

- Don't fool yourself in thinking you have a relationship w/ Jesus by praying a rote prayer w/ no repentance. It's being radically transformed.

If you have questions...

PRAYER:

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