

Mark: Chapter 7

- I. Tradition of Man Versus the Commandment of God (v.1-13)
 - A. Prelude to the confrontation (v.1-4)
 1. Prior confrontations (c.f. Mark 2:13-17, 18-22, 23-28; 3:1-6)
 2. Mark's explanation of defilement
 - a) Pharisees and Jews - all felt pressure to observe tradition
 - b) Elders from Jewish history and oral law
 - c) Ceremonious defilement after the busyness of the marketplace
 - d) Perhaps started as a right keeping of the law
 3. Traditions of the elders
 - a) Oral tradition encoded in the Mishnah
 - b) Over time, rabbinic commentary = Gemara; Mishnah + Gemara = Talmud
 - c) Example of Talmud chapters on Sabbath
 - (1) "regulations regarding transfer on Sabbath"
 - (2) "regulations concerning the prescribed quantities of victuals and beverages which must not be carried about on the Sabbath"
 - (3) "regulations concerning the tying and untying of knots on the Sabbath"
 - d) Washing of hands: "The Rabbis taught: It happened that when R. Aqiba was in prison R. Jehoshua of Garsi served him every day. Water was given R. Aqiba in a measure. One day the warden of the prison said to R. Jehoshua: "To-day thy measure of water is too large. Perhaps it is thy intention to undermine the prison." So he poured out half the water and returned the remainder. When R. Jehoshua came to R. Aqiba the latter said to him: "Dost thou not know, that I am an old man and that my life is dependent upon thee?" R. Jehoshua then related what had happened. Said R. Aqiba: "Give me the water and I will wash my hands prior to eating," and he answered: "There is hardly enough water to drink, and thou wouldst use it to wash thy hands?" Rejoined R. Aqiba: "What can I do? I must follow the rabbinical commandment, which if violated would involve capital punishment. It were better for me that I die of hunger, than to act contrary to the opinion of my colleagues." And it was said that R. Aqiba would not taste anything until water was brought to him to wash his hands. When the sages heard of this, they said: If he was so careful in his old age how was he in his

youth, and if he was so particular in prison how was he when at liberty!”

B. Pointed rebuke from Jesus Christ (v.5-8)

1. Hypocrites (c.f. Matthew 23:2-7)
2. Fulfillment of Isaiah 29:13
3. Traditions alienated from the commandments of God (c.f. 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 51:16-17; Hosea 6:6; Malachi 1:6-10)

C. Picturesque example of the Pharisees’ folly (v.9-13)

1. One clear example of rejection, not merely forgetting
2. Quotations of Moses from Exodus 20:12; 21:17
 - a) Hiding behind religiosity while rejecting God’s commandment (c.f. 1 Timothy 5:4, 8)
3. Many such things - have we lost sight of the true Gospel? (Proverbs 14:12)

II. The Source of True Defilement (v.14-23)

A. Overview - false defilement

1. Defiled by unwholesome environments
2. Defiled by immoral education (blank slate)
3. Defiled by evil acts

B. Jesus states the parable (v.14-15)

1. Parables were a form of light judgment (Mark 4:10-12)
2. But, despite rejection, Jesus still wanted all to hear and understand
3. Comprehensive exposure to bodily functions to illustrate spiritual truth

C. Jesus explains whatever goes into a person (v.17-19)

1. Private lesson (c.f. Mark 4:11, 25)
2. Disciples’ faith had to be grown (Mark 6:52)
3. Do we take our Bible for granted? (Matthew 13:17)
4. Jewish understanding of the heart
 - a) Symbolic emotional-intellectual-moral part of our very being
 - b) 1 Samuel 28:5 - heart and emotions of fear
 - c) Genesis 6:5 - heart and thoughts as well as evil intentions
 - d) Deuteronomy 8:2 - heart to keep the commandments of God or not
 - e) James 1:13-15
5. All foods clean - Jesus fulfilled the Law (Matthew 5:17)
 - a) Ceremonial laws to remind the Israelites about their Holy God (Leviticus 11:44-45)
 - b) Need to be “clean” (Leviticus 15:31)
 - c) Made clean in Christ (Romans 3:21-26; Hebrews 9:22-28; 10:12-14, 19-22)

- d) Clean in Christ means nothing external can make us unclean (c.f. 1 Timothy 4:1-5; Acts 10:9-16; Romans 14:14)

D. Jesus explains what comes out of a person (v.20-23)

1. Original sin - nature of sin (Ephesians 2:1-3; Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9)
2. Romans 3:23
 - a) “evil thoughts” - not just what we do, but our thoughts
 - b) “sexual immorality” - πορνεία, any sexual sin that rejects God’s intention for the institution of marriage
 - c) “theft” - overt or subtle
 - d) “murder” - Matthew 5:21-22
 - e) “adultery” - Matthew 5:27-28
 - f) “coveting” - sense of selfish greediness
 - g) etc. - Romans 6:23
3. Forgotten Moses’s words - Deuteronomy 10:12-13

III. The True Sacrifices of God (v.24-30)

A. Jew versus Gentile

1. Jews - God’s chosen people
 - a) Currently in disobedience and rebellion (Isaiah 10:20-21; 2 Kings 19:30-31; Micah 2:12)
 - b) World history and how God has uniquely preserved this people
2. Gentiles - received God’s mercy
 - a) Romans 11:11-13, Romans 1:16
3. Distinctions go away in Christ (Romans 10:12; Galatians 3:28)

B. Withdrawal from Galilee (v.24)

1. Tyre and Sidon - Phoenicia (Acts 21:2-3)
 - a) Politically part of Syria during Roman general Pompey; though annexed to Syria, remained geographically and culturally distinct
 - b) Hiram king of Tyre + Solomon (1 Kings 5:1; 9:11)
 - c) Ethbaal king of Sidon, Jezebel + Ahab (1 Kings 16:31)
2. Gentile territory, foreshadowing future ministry (c.f. Mark 3:7-8a)

C. Woman’s introduction (v.25-26)

1. Window into her heart - came to Jesus in care and love, not in hatred and plotting
2. Gentile, Syrophoenician, Canaanite (Matthew 15:22)
 - a) Canaanites’ idolatry & judgment (Joshua 3:9-10)
3. She kept asking (c.f. Matthew 15:23)

D. Wise conversation (v.27-30)

1. Jews were meant to receive the Gospel first (Romans 1:16; c.f. 11:18)

2. Dog might seem derogatory, but didn't matter to the woman (also diminutive in the greek - "little dog")
3. The woman does not get offended, but in humility responds in faith (c.f. Matthew 15:28a)

IV. A Personal Touch of Healing (v.31-37)

A. Pattern might seem familiar - someone comes to Jesus, either on his or her own or through the help of friends and Jesus shows compassion on the person and heals him or her. Yet, while the pattern may seem the same, we must remember that each healing, each encounter, each personal touch of Jesus is a miracle, not to be taken for granted, and is remarkably unique.

B. Request for healing (v.31-32)

1. Decapolis - ten Greek cities east and south of the Sea of Galilee, Gentile territory; trip likely would have taken several months
2. Deaf man - probably can only crudely imitate speech
3. Deep desire for the man to be healed and their understanding of Jesus's ability

C. Restoration of hearing and speech (v.33-35)

1. Recap of healing methods
 - a) Stretches out hands to heal leper (Mark 1:40-42)
 - b) Commands paralytic to rise (Mark 2:5-12)
 - c) Requests man with withered hand to extend his hand (Mark 3:1-6)
 - d) Calls woman into crowd after she is healed (Mark 5:28-34)
 - e) Tenderly holds little girl's hand and speaks to her to revive her (Mark 5:41-43)
 - f) No magic incantation or expressive ritual, just perfect wisdom in meeting the different needs of each individual hurting person
 - g) Jesus could heal any way he wanted
2. Physical touch like sign language likely stirred up faith of the deaf man
3. Not only open the man's ears, but also heal his speech impediment
4. Looked up to heaven - visual indicator of the source of healing
5. Jesus sighed - compassion and emotional care

D. Response of the crowd (v.36-37)

1. Reminiscent of Israel and the prophets (Ezekiel 33:32)
2. Ezra Gould - "The conduct of the multitude is a good example of the way in which men treat Jesus, yielding him all homage, except obedience"
3. Gentiles "glorified the God of Israel" (Matthew 15:31) in contrast
4. If we love God, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15, 23-24)

V. Homework - Imagine you are a parent and write one paragraph describing traditions you would like for your family to point them towards Christ and one paragraph describing how you would keep those traditions from superseding the commands of God.

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