

Daily Bible Study

“Disinfected Hands & Defiled Hearts”~Part-1

Mark 7:1-23

July 18 - 24, 2010

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY – As we continue to move along in our study of the Gospel of Mark, we enter a new chapter and take for our text, **Mark 7:1-23**. We will take a couple weeks on this particular passage and we have entitled the lesson; “*Disinfected Hands & Defiled Hearts*”. In this passage of Scripture we come to yet another “confrontation” between Jesus and the religious leaders of His day; namely *the Pharisees and some of the scribes*. If you remember back through Mark’s record we have seen the religious leaders accuse Jesus and the disciples of several things so far. They include, claiming Divine ability by forgiving sins (**Mark 2:7**), eating and drinking with sinners (**Mark 2:16**), letting the disciples and Himself break the Sabbath (**Mark 2:24-3:5**), and casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub (**Mark 3:22**). This current issue which we will study has to do with whether or not *the commandment of God* or *the tradition of men* is to be the supreme rule for governing life. The point of contention was that the disciples were not washing their hands before they ate and Jesus goes on to illustrate the hypocrisy of the Pharisees by showing them that they taught and accepted a practice that actually violated the 5th commandment. Jesus then makes clear that real defilement comes from within mans evil heart and not from the outside. Read the text: **Mark 7:1-23** “*Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?” He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. ‘For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.’” He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God), then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.” When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand: There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!” When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. So He said to them, “Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever*

enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?” And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father God, Please teach and feed me from Your Word this week.

TUESDAY – Mark 7:1-4 *“Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches. As we mentioned yesterday in the beginning of this study, the Pharisees are always looking to confront Jesus in order to discredit Him and they are seriously desirous of having Him killed (destroy Him-Mark 3:6). They eventually get their wish as Jesus crucifixion is roughly a year from this point as what is known as His “Galilean ministry” seems to come to an end here in **verses 23-24**. We have learned already that Jesus was not a hard man to locate as one would just look for the massive crowds that surrounded Him. Here Jesus is located by the *Pharisees and some of the scribes* who came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. These *Pharisees* were outwardly very religious men who enjoyed being seen as separatists while for the most part, they were self righteous hypocrites who were trusting in their own assumed righteousness to save them and give them favor with God. The *scribes* (Greek Grammateus - taken from Gramma which means “letter, sacred writing) were men whose life revolved around studying the law; the Mosaic Law, the Old Testament Scriptures, and man made additions of rabbinical law. They were “law specialists” who would offer guidance in various affairs. It is no surprise that when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. The “spies”, hated Jesus and were always looking to find fault with others. They finally “find some dirt” to harm Jesus.*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me examine my heart for my own sin; not look to find others.

WEDNESDAY – **Mark 7:5-8** “Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?” He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. ‘For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.” These self righteous men see that some of Jesus disciples had eaten without going through the ceremonial hand washing routine and they now confront Jesus about it. This coming to Jesus to ask about the disciples conduct was actually their way of accusing Jesus as He was their teacher and leader. Christ goes right after them with the sword of Gods word. Jesus uses two Old Testament texts (**Exodus 20:12**-The Law & **Isaiah 29:13**-The Prophets) in His answer (**Mark 7: 6-7, 10**). In Jesus response we also learn that phony hypocrisy has always been the same. In Isaiah’s day, there in Jesus day, and now in our day, hypocrisy of keeping man made laws for the sake of looking good to others without having any heart desire to keep them to obey and please God was and is a horrible sin. According to Jesus these men were *hypocrites*; Hupokrites “actor, stage player, pretender”. Lip service honor only is not honor at all. Jesus says that if all you have is lip service without any heart sincerity you *worship God in vain* (“fruitless”). What is worse Jesus explains how it is they have *vain worship*, they *lay aside the commandment of God* and then substitute their own standards for God’s and all the while, tenaciously *hold* to them. Both their heart attitude and the emphasis of why they do what they do were wrong. Jesus told them elsewhere that they were so concerned about the minor that they neglected the weightier matters (**Matthew 23:23**).

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Ask God to reveal and to forgive hypocrisy in your life that dishonors Him.

THURSDAY – **Mark 7:9** “He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.” Jesus here almost repeats the prior verse but this time He exposes even more deeply their twisted sinful hearts. He says, *All too well...* Kalos “beautifully, finely, excellently, well”. Although scholars have seen this verse capable of being interpreted a few different ways from a possible question; such as: “Do you do *well* in rejecting?” I believe it seems to appear obvious that Jesus is not asking rather He is being somewhat sarcastic. My paraphrase: “Oh wow, you guys are excellent in how you so beautifully and skillfully toss aside God’s laws in order to preserve yours, save face, and look good and pious; how noble of you.” A.T. Robertson states, “One can almost see the scribes withering under this terrible arraignment. It was biting sarcasm that cut to the bone. The evident irony should prevent literal interpretation as commendation of the Pharisaic pervasion of God's word.” Sad is the fact that it is so easy for fallen men to discard God’s law and in place slide their own standard. Sadder is how often we participate in this very type of idolatry ourselves, even as true believers. Read **Romans 3:31**.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, forgive me for often attempting to change Your perfect law to suit my own sinful thinking and justify my sinful behavior. Thank You Jesus for keeping the Law for me.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 7:10-13 “For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God), then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do”. In the parallel passage of **Matthew 15:4** we read, “For God commanded, saying...” while here in Mark we read, “For Moses said...” It is interesting to notice that Jesus regards what Moses said as being the very words of God. Jesus then goes on to quote the 5th commandment. This commandment shows both an outward obedience as well as an inward heart honor from children to their parents. Jesus said God clearly stated how this relationship is to be and then He says the horrifying and indicting words, “But you say”. God says____, but you say____. Without now going into full elaboration of the text let me attempt to briefly explain the particular illustration Jesus uses to show these men their hypocrisy and how they were *making the word of God of no effect*. Jesus states God said men are to *honor their parents* and that would include all of their lives; to respect, value, reverence, care for, and meet their needs. However, Jesus gives an example of how the *Pharisees* were teaching men that they could declare *to father or mother*, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God)... In other words the *Pharisees* taught that children could tell their parents who were in need, here a financial need, “We can’t help you because we devoted to God this gift of our finances and you know that vows to God can’t be broken, so sorry dad, so sorry mom, we can’t help you.” What is more horrible is that this *Corban* is a differed gift. Meaning, the money is still in the possession of the children while their parents are in need but they are keeping hold of it to do as they please in the future under the false and sinful excuse that it has been pledged to God as a gift. Jesus is making the point that what God’s law taught was to take care of ones parents, honor them and meet their needs as God intended but these hypocritical phonies are twisting Scripture and using it in a perverted way as “cover” or a way to justify their sinful behaviors. Jesus used the 5th commandment by way of illustration but the sin of religious hypocrisy can be found violating and twisting all of God’s law. Read **Psalms 119:89**.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for the permanence of Your Word. Help me to love, obey, and humble myself under it. Protect me from twisting Scripture & looking for “loopholes”.