

Preparing for next week's sermon (Do this as a group!)

⇒ We are almost halfway through the Gospel of Mark, and you are probably noticing by now that certain ideas, themes or problems seem to crop up repeatedly. As you read Mark 7:24-37, look for the themes listed below. Then look back over Chapters 1-6 for previous appearances of that theme. Note each verse number and a few words of explanation. The number of blanks below each theme and the chapter numbers at the end of the blanks are hints about where to look but they aren't necessarily definitive or exhaustive!

Jesus performs a miracle and comments in some way on the recipient's faith:

--Read the parallel passage in Matthew 15 for a hint on this one--
 _____ (Ch. 7)
 _____ (Ch. 2)
 _____ (Ch. 4)
 _____ (Ch. 5)
 _____ (Ch. 5)

Jesus interacts with people or things that are unclean:

_____ (Ch. 7) _____ (Ch. 7)
 _____ (Ch. 1) _____ (Ch. 2)
 _____ (Ch. 3) _____ (Ch. 5)
 _____ (Ch. 5) _____ (Ch. 5)
 _____ (Ch. 5) _____ (Ch. 6)

The crowds get in the way or cause problems for Jesus:

_____ (Ch. 7) _____ (Ch. 1)
 _____ (Ch. 2) _____ (Ch. 3)
 _____ (Ch. 3) _____ (Ch. 3)
 _____ (Ch. 4) _____ (Ch. 5)
 _____ (Ch. 5) _____ (Ch. 6)

Time to PRAY (Or do this at the beginning of your group time)

Share prayer requests that relate to the people in your group & PRAY for them!



Worship Next Sunday: January 28, 2024

"Jesus Does All Things Well"

(Mark 7:24-37) Pastor Nate Faires

Answer Key: • traditions • profession • fence • loopholes • good boy • compare • impose • internal • active

Sermon Notes – January 21, 2024

Review

- ⇒ We have seen that Mark is leading us in a discovery of who Jesus is, characterized by the question of the disciples in **4:41** – *"Who then is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"*
- ⇒ The unfolding stories that Mark is telling are leading us toward Peter's monumental confession in **8:29** – *"You are the Christ."* In contrast to those in the text who are physically blind, at this grand moment, Peter truly sees!
- ⇒ Last week we saw a dramatic shift from the previous text. After several stories that demonstrated faith in chapter five, we were confronted with "willing unbelief" as chapter six opened. The stark contrast is breathtaking.

Today's Text: Mark 7:1-23

Conflict! Who really *loves* conflict? Jesus finds Himself embroiled in conflict with the Jewish religious leaders on a regular basis. They find Jesus and His teaching so threatening to their entire system that they can't seem to leave Him alone and, in fact, will travel great distances to "take Him on."

The Trap (And Attraction) Of External Righteousness (1-13)

- ⇒ Who's on first? Let's define the conflict: Who are the Pharisees and who are the scribes?
 - Pharisees: A legalistic sect of the Jews who hold tightly to human _____; they are the conservatives. The Apostle Paul was raised as a Pharisee (**Acts 26:5**).
 - Sadducees: Though not mentioned in this text, they reject human tradition and don't like legalism; they don't believe in the supernatural or the resurrection; they tend to be rich liberals.
 - Scribes: Also called "lawyers" because they are viewed as experts on the finer points of Jewish law. They are in a _____, not a religious sect.

- ⇒ What's the problem? Well, the disciples don't "wash their hands" before eating. The concern is not hygienic, but ritualistic.
- ⇒ Note that Mark explains the details of the problem for his Gentile audience who would not know the finer points of Jewish life (3-4).
- ⇒ The "tradition of the elders" is intended to be a "_____ around the law," making it more difficult to break God's law. The Pharisees view the oral law (the teaching of the rabbis) as equally authoritative to Scripture.
- ⇒ We are good at rationalizing, setting a low bar & finding "_____" (13).
- ⇒ Why are external rules for righteousness so attractive?
 - They're easier to define & easier to keep!
 - When I keep external rules, I can more easily know if I've "been a _____" and thus can feel better about myself (yes, pride!).
 - External rules allow me to more easily _____ myself to others in a favorable way – as in, if I keep the rules better than you do, then I must be a better Christian than you are (and I like that feeling!).
 - Let's be clear: Boundaries, properly viewed, CAN be helpful to us! But when I take MY boundaries and _____ them on you...well...

The True Source Of Defilement (And Our Great Need) (14-23)

- ⇒ Jesus is quite clear in verse 15 – Our core problem is _____, not external! You'll notice that Jesus gives this summary to "the people," then steps aside with His disciples to give more detail.
- ⇒ Jesus teaches that the "main issue" in the pursuit of holiness is not what you eat or drink (as in, externals), but what is taking place in your heart (as in, the "control center" of your life).
- ⇒ In the worldview of the Bible, our hearts are _____, not passive. Evil thoughts, for example, are not things that "happen to us"; they are things we do. Anger doesn't "happen to us," it comes from within!

Responding to God's Word (Do you see the Gospel here?)

- ⇒ We need cleansing on the inside, forgiveness for our actions and forgiveness for the hidden longings of the heart. We don't just need new "fences!"
- ⇒ We need daily grace to obey, to make wise & godly choices, to turn away from sin ("put off") and to turn again and again to Christ ("put on").

Community Group Notes

Getting Started

Have you ever been asked to disassociate yourself from a certain person or group of people for a period of time or even permanently either to force that person or group of people to "reform" or to protect your own reputation? How do you feel about such requests? Are the results typically positive? Or negative? What factors tend to determine the result?

Observing the text (Review)

⇒ Read Mark 7:1-23 together as a group and do the following as you read:

- Mark every reference to the **Pharisees** (or **scribes**), including pronouns
- Mark the word **defile** (or **defiles** or **defiled**) if you haven't already
- Decide who is the audience in each section and fill in the blanks below

Vv. 7:1-13 _____

Vv. 7:14-16 _____ Vv. 7:17-23 _____

⇒ On p. 46 of your workbook, make a list of Jesus' accusations against the scribes and Pharisees. There are a bunch! Here are a few to get you started:

7:6 You are hypocrites

7:6 You honor God with your lips but your heart is far from God

7:7 You worship God in vain

⇒ Look back at each occurrence of the word **defile** (there are 7) and answer the following questions with verse numbers and *exact phrases* from the text:

- According to the scribes and Pharisees, what causes a man to be defiled?

- According to Jesus, what causes a man to be defiled? _____
- According to Jesus, what cannot cause a man to be defiled? _____

⇒ Mark records a number of "conflict speeches." In each speech, the religious leaders confront Jesus about something, and He responds. Read Mark 7:1-23 one more time and give this newest conflict speech a title. Then look back over Chapters 1-6 and find all the previous conflict speeches. Note the verse numbers and briefly summarize the topic.

_____ (Ch 7)
 _____ (Ch 2)
 _____ (Ch 2)
 _____ (Ch 2)
 _____ (Ch 3)
 _____ (Ch 3)