

6. Why do you think Jesus took the deaf man away from the crowd before He healed him?

7. How does the crowd respond to the man's healing?

Chapter Seven

IS THERE GRACE AND MERCY EVEN FOR SOMEONE LIKE ME?



WHERE IS JESUS?

1. West shore of Sea of Galilee.
2. Tyre and Sidon.
3. Ten cities of the Decalogue.
4. East shore of Sea of Galilee.

OVERVIEW: The Pharisees and scribes challenged Jesus' disciples because they ate without first washing their hands. The issue here was not

personal hygiene, but a disregard for their religious ritual. The Pharisees had developed elaborate cleansing procedures (outlined in their law book *The Talmud*) that they believed were a part of God's will. The truth is, God had never commanded this type of ritual washing. They originated with the doctrines and traditions of men. Jesus answered the religious leaders by pointing out the difference between God-given commandments and human traditions. He quoted from Isaiah to show that their insistence on following rules established by men caused them to actually break God's law. Their obedience to men's doctrines actually led them to disregard God's law.

The Pharisees focused primarily on the things that were outside the heart. But Jesus showed that what actually defiles a person are the things inside his heart. In the Bible, the heart refers to the mind or spirit of man. Every sin ultimately takes root and grows within a person's heart and is then expressed in outward actions. Jesus showed just how foolish it was for the Pharisees to be frantically seeking external purity by ritual hand washing, all the while neglecting to embrace God's Law with their hearts.

Jesus left the Sea of Galilee and traveled up north to the largely Gentile area surrounding Tyre. Before this, almost all of His work had been done with Jews. He had healed Jews. All of the disciples were Jews; and He preached primarily to Jews. Jesus wanted to have some time alone with the twelve, so He led them way up north to Tyre. He had hoped to stay there undetected, but a Syrophenician woman found out He was there

3. What are some religious traditions that we practice today that may actually get in the way of obediently following God?

4. Describe a time when you were in desperate need of help. What did you do and how did it turn out?

5. How can the Syrophenician woman be a faith model for believers today?

9. How do you respond to this encounter? Why does Jesus respond in such a seemingly harsh way?

10. The healing of the deaf man takes place in the same place as the casting out of the demons from the man in Mark 5:1-20. What do you see here that demonstrates a change in the attitude of the people of this region?

FOR YOUR GROUP STUDY:

1. What observations have you made in your study of Mark this week?

2. When do religious practices become a substitute for genuinely worshipping God?

and came requesting that He heal her demon-possessed daughter. At first, Jesus refused. He said that it was not good to take bread from the children and feed it to the dogs. What He meant was that according to God's plan it wasn't time yet to heal and teach the Gentiles; the Jews (the children) were the ones God intended to be the recipients of the bread (healings and blessings in general) first. The woman showed very strong, simple faith, humility and insight because she responded: "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." She seemed to understand that even the tiniest dose of Jesus' miraculous power would be enough to heal her daughter. As a result, Jesus healed her daughter.

Read Mark 7:6.

? "*hypocrites*" The Greek word here is *hupokriton* which means "play actors."

Read Mark 7:10-11.

? "*Corban*" To declare something "corban" was to legally dedicate it as a gift to God. Interestingly, the one who declared something "corban" did not even have to actually give it to the temple!

Read Mark 7:13.

? "*Nullify*" The Greek word here is *akyroo*, which means "to make void, or to legally cancel."

Read Mark 7:28.

? "*Lord*" This is the only time in the Gospel of Mark that Jesus is called "Lord" and it is by a Gentile woman!

FOR YOUR PERSONAL STUDY:

1. What criticism did the Pharisees and teachers of the Law raise against Jesus' disciples?
2. How does Jesus' definition of becoming "unclean" differ from the view of the Pharisees?
3. Why does Jesus call the Pharisees and teachers of the law hypocrites?
4. Jesus indicates that true worship is a matter of the mind and heart. When your mind starts to wander and you become distracted in worship, how do you get your heart-focus back?
5. Read 7:14-23 from two different translations. What was Jesus' main point in this section?
6. Why did Jesus take the disciples and travel up to Tyre?
7. What is Jesus actually saying in His response to the Syrophenician woman?
8. What does Jesus' reference to dogs and children refer to?