

Mark Chapter 7

V: 1 Pharisees, scribes: Conservatives, legalistic – hypocrites according to Jesus; and the attorneys, experts in the Law.

- Sanhedrin; spiritual oversight – Pharisees (“separated ones”)
- They came from Jerusalem, quite a distance to Capernaum.
- Definitely not a social visit, they had a purpose.
- They were on a “fault finding” mission.

John 1:19 “And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who art thou?”

V: 2-5 The Pharisees were giving greater weight to the traditions of the fathers than to the Law; they saw the traditions as somehow binding.

- In those days they didn’t use serving and eating utensils, napkins and so on. When they ate it was with their hands tearing the bread apart, tearing meat off the roasted lamb with their hands, dipping in the sauces and so on. It was a messy affair; they used bread as a napkin, wiping the bread on their hands and tossing it under the table or off to the side for the little dogs or for the beggars.
- We’re not talking about hygiene here; we’re talking about “ceremonial” cleanliness.

“Traditional” hand washing process:

1. A servant would pour 1-½ eggshells worth of water on priests’ hands (or whoever) with the hands pointed upward.
2. The water would not be allowed to flow past the elbows, as this would merely transfer the un-cleanness down the arm.
3. A second 1 ½ egg shells worth of water would then be poured on the hands as they faced downward, rubbing the right palm over the left fist, then the left palm over the right fist.

- The Pharisee’s real question here is “what are you teaching these guys?”
- Pots & pans.... 3 second rule?

“... *they found fault.*” – Of course they did! If you come looking for fault, that is always what you will find.

- Torah: the Law, Pentateuch, 1st 5 books of Moses. Sometimes it is used to include the entire Jewish scriptures, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.
- Mishnah: Codification of the oral law, the writing down of what had previously been the oral laws.

- **Talmud:** Jewish commentaries on the Mishnah, the law, leading to rabbinic Judaism and later rabbinical Pharisaism where the rabbi hears directly from God and as he speaks, it is with the authority of God.
- The Jews developed this into 648 laws broken down to major and minor laws all of which was difficult if not impossible to keep.

Deuteronomy 5:22 “These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and He added no more. And He wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.”

- Why do they eat with un-washed hands – ceremonially unclean according to the traditions of the fathers. (Separate, distinct from Gentiles, other cultures, national identity.).

V: 6 Quoting from **Isaiah 29:13**; Jesus starts off slowly... calling them hypocrites.

- Hypocrites say one thing and do something else.

Matthew 23:2-5 “²... the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: ³All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not. ⁴For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. ⁵But all their works they do for to be seen of men:...”

- Giving God “lip service” – they say nice things, but they don’t mean it, their hearts are distant from God.
- All talk, all show and no go.

V: 7 Their worship is vain – worthless, because it’s not real worship.

John 4:23-24 “²³But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. ²⁴God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

“... *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,...*”

- In place of doctrine, teaching the commandments of men.

Colossians 2:8 “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments / principals of the world, and not after Christ.”

- We need to be aware, wary of this in our time and culture:

2 Timothy 4:2-4 “²Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. ³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

V: 8 Setting aside God's commandments – holding to the traditions of man.

- Washing of pots, cups, etc.
- Along with the ceremonial hand washing, they washed all their stuff in between courses for their meals.
- They still have one set of silver ware, plates, cups etc for when cheese or dairy products are served, and another complete set of the same for when they eat their meat or other dishes.
- Heaven forbid if while washing the knife used to serve cheese if it weren't absolutely clean and were to get on some of the beef the next day.

Quoting from the Talmud:

- Rabbi Eleazer said, “He who expounds the Scriptures in opposition to the tradition has no share in the world to come.”
- “It is a greater offense to teach anything contrary to the voice of the Rabbis than to contradict Scripture itself.”

V: 9 There are many churches that are like this today:

- 2nd commandment: make no graven images and don't bow down to them – yet there are churches with statues of Jesus, Mary, and a host of others – the toes of which are worn down from people bowing down and kissing the toes of these statues.
- Churches that in complete contradiction to the word of God condone homosexuality, adultery, and fornication – because our own cultural tradition says that it is acceptable.
- You might ask then, how do we determine our own practice as a fellowship? Isn't it just based on tradition as well?

Acts 2:42 “And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

- Did Jesus teach it? Did the church of Acts practice it? Is it described in the epistles?

V: 10-13 Jesus begins to offer His own examples:

- 5th Commandment: honor your father and your mother.
- There was no welfare system in place, God's intent was that families would take care of each other and part of that honoring their parents was taking care of them in their older years
- Their "tradition" / contradiction - "corban".
- "It's all dedicated to the Temple, sorry I can't do anything for you." ☹️

Progression:

V: 8 Laying aside the commandment of God.

V: 9 Rejecting the commandment of God.

V: 13 Making the Word of God of none effect.

V: 14-16 It isn't what goes into a man that defiles him, it is what comes out.

- A little dirt won't hurt: cookie falls on the floor, the "three second rule" – might not always be good for you – but it won't defile you.
- It's not what goes into our mouths that makes us unclean, it's what comes out:

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

Titus 3:2 "Speak evil of no man..."

Colossians 3:8 "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."

2 Timothy 2:16 "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

- He that has ears to hear, let him hear: familiar admonition to those with a willing heart for the word of God.

Psalm 51:10 "Created in me a clean heart, Oh God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

Psalm 19:14 "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

V: 17-23 The disciples weren't sure what Jesus was talking about – this was a complete contradiction to their entire life's education – it was a radical concept.

- It just goes to show what is in a man:

Jeremiah 17:9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

- 13 attributes are mentioned, 13 = number of rebellion. Taken from the hearts of the Pharisees & Scribes, and all of us.

Galatians 5:19-21 “¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- The real issue is that of the heart:

1. **Romans 10:9-10** *Believe* in our hearts.
2. **Matthew 22:37** *Love* with all our hearts.
3. **Romans 6:17** *Obey* in our hearts.
4. **Psalms 9:1** *Praise* Him from our hearts.
5. **2 Corinthians 9:17** *Give* from our hearts.

Romans 2:28-29 *Circumcised* in our hearts.

1 Samuel 16:7 “But the Lord said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”

- **Tradition is external, truth is internal**, God looks at the heart.

V: 24-26 Greek, Syro-Phoenician – woman. A woman of Canaan.

- Woman had a very poor standing in the culture of the time. Jewish men prayed “I thank you Lord that I was not born a Gentile, a woman, or a dog”.

Matthew 15:21-28 Parallel account. [Turn to / read](#)

- (Matthew) “*O Lord, thou Son of David*” – a messianic title; as a gentile she had no claim to this title.
- **Jesus only responds to her after she drops the pretense**, reference to the Messiah. She simply and humbly refers to Jesus as “Lord”.

V: 25 She fell at His feet: humility, worship. The place of true healing.

Psalm 51:17 “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

V: 27-28 **Deuteronomy 23:17-18** **Revelation 22:15** Refers to dogs in negative terms, in this verse “dog” is used to say “puppy”.

- Willing to bear His reproach she seizes on Jesus’ illustration; “but even the puppies eat the scraps thrown from the children’s table.”

V: 29-30 For this saying – this profession of faith. Jesus knew all along what He would do, He was simply drawing this expression of faith out for the edification of His disciples, and for us.

Matthew 15:28 “Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.”

V: 31-37 Heading back to the Decapolis – healing the deaf mute.

- Deca = Greek for 10, Polis = city the area of the 10 cities.
- Matthew records that there were multitudes that thronged Jesus looking for healing.
- This man in singled out:

V: 33 This chapter starts out dealing with “traditions” – here we see Jesus avoids set patterns, a “formula” for healing – keeping us from “traditions” as such.

- For others He simply spoke, or he touched, made mud and had them wash.
- Here we have the “wet-willie” cure.

V: 34 “Looking up to Heaven...” to the One who would be glorified, to the One from where every good and perfect gift comes from.

V: 37 Fulfilling prophecy.

Isaiah 35:5-6 “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.”