



Following Jesus

Through the Gospel of Mark

Theme verse of Mark:

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:45

Week #11

Background of Mark:

The Gospel of Mark portrays the person of Jesus more by what He does than by what He says. Although Mark is the shortest of the four gospels, it pays close attention to matters of human interest. Matthew and Luke walk us through the genealogy of Christ. John's theme was to prove that Jesus is the Savior of the world. The Gospel of Mark was written to the Romans and his theme is ***Jesus Christ the Servant***. The Gospel of Mark wastes no time, and jumps right in to the ministry of Jesus. Mark does not record many of Jesus' sermons because his emphasis is on what Jesus did rather than what Jesus said.

What is the gospel?

- The long-awaited Messiah had come to break the power of sin and begin God's personal reign on earth.
- The gospel (Good News) of God was present in His life, teaching and atoning death.
- The gospel is both a historical event, and a personal relationship.
- Faith is trust placed in a living person, Jesus Christ.
- There is only one gospel (Gal. 1:1-9).

Crucial questions:

- What does this text teach us about God?
- What does this text teach me about sinful humanity?
- What does this text teach me about Jesus Christ?
- What does God want me to know?
- What does God want me to do?

Know: Few things are more destructive, seductive, and deceptive to a true and vital relationship with God than the deadly poison of legalism. The hidden purpose behind legalism is earned faith, being right with God, and my to others appearance.

Remember: Jesus calls us to trust not in our own external righteousness (legalism) but in His perfect work on our behalf.

Why does Jesus value down time?

- Less noise helps us hear better
- Rest
- Recovery
- Instruction
- Preparation

Spiritual growth does not happen by running faster. What keeps many of us from growing is not sin but speed.

Michael Yaconelli

Getting started: This chapter focuses on some important teachings of Jesus.

Traditions: a long-established custom or belief that has been passed on from one generation to another.

Question:

- What's your favorite tradition?
- What are healthy traditions?
- What are unhealthy traditions?

Scripture: Mark 7:1-37

Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, ² they **saw** that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, **holding** to the tradition of the elders, ⁴ and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are **many other traditions** that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) ⁵ And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the **tradition of the elders**, but eat with defiled hands?”

Know:

- Cleanliness laws are like getting ready for a first date or a job interview or; you can't come before God with stains and dirt.
- Many traditions can be great and meaningful. But, when a tradition becomes an absolute is when they become unhealthy, dangerous, and self-serving.
- Most traditions can be traced back to comfort and familiar.
- **Note:** Religious washings had a good intent, namely to remind Jews that they were unclean before God. The religious leaders were completely off base on the source of their impurity. Their problem was not the outside but the inside.

Don't ever stop running to grace until Jesus has taken you home to a place where you need to run no more.

Paul Tripp

6 And he 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; 7 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**” **8** You **leave** the commandment of God and **hold** to the tradition of men.” **9** And he said to them, “**You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!** **10** For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ **11** But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, “Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban (loophole)”’ (that is, given to God)—**12** then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, **13** thus making void the word of God by **your tradition** that you have **handed down**. And many such things you do.”

Understanding Corban: Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16 (Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9)

- Corban: A Hebrew term that means “a gift to God.” This allowed them to dishonor their parents by neglecting their needs, but still feel good about it because it was done in service to God. **Know: They both can't be true!**

The traps of Legalism:

- We can have passion for God, and yet not know God personally.
- Those who have been raised in the church are the most susceptible. Why?
- Pride in religious rituals, church practices, and cultural traditions blind us to our great sinfulness, and the great Savior who alone can rescue us from our sin.
- Enslavement to comparison (v.1-5).
- Traditions often get used to establish spiritual superiority, and as a measuring stick for righteousness.
- The “**Bible + _____**” nullifies the truth and power of God’s Word in your life. How?

For I bear them witness that they have a **zeal** for God, **but** not according to **knowledge**. For, being **ignorant** of the **righteousness** of God, and **seeking** to **establish** their **own**, they did not **submit** to God's **righteousness**.

Romans 10:2-3

Pride leads to every other vice: it is complete anti-God state of mind.

C.S. Lewis

14 And he called the people to him again and said to them, “**Hear** me, **all** of you, and **understand**: **15** There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile

him, but the things that come **out** of a person are what **defile him.**” ¹⁷ And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸ And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹ since it enters not **his heart** but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) ²⁰ And he said, “**What comes out of a person is what defiles him.** ²¹ For from within, **out of the heart of man**, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³ **All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.**”

Heart:

- The most deadly contamination is not what I touch. The most deadly contamination is what is in my heart.
- The heart is where our words and actions come from.
- Sin always leads us to be lovers of ourselves.
- Sin’s roots will produce sin’s fruit.
- What we allow into our hearts matters.
- Our hearts are prone to wander.

You can’t run from sin because you cannot run from you.

Paul Tripp

²⁴ And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. ²⁵ But immediately a **woman** whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and **fell down at his feet.** ²⁶ Now the **woman** was a **Gentile**, a Syrophoenician by birth. And she **begged** him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ And he said to her, “Let the **children** (Jews) **be fed first**, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁸ But she answered him, “Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs (Gentile, puppies) under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” ²⁹ And he said to her, “For this statement **you may go your way**; the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰ And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth

Acts 1:8

What’ the “first” mean?

- Jesus uses a parable style test her faith.
- If your child is in jeopardy, you simply do what ever it takes.

- The Gentile women did not deny the special place of the “children” (Jews) in God’s plan, nor did she want to usurp it. All she wanted were a few crumbs of blessing from the table. She accepted her place, she believed His Word, and she persisted in her plea; and Jesus not only met her need, but commended her for her faith (ref: Matt. 8:5-13)!
- She is longer under the table hoping for crumbs, she is now seated at the banquet table, a member of the family!

There are two ways miss Jesus has your Savior:

- Too proud
- I’m too bad

31 Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. **32** And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment and they **begged him** to lay his hand on him. **33** And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. **34** And looking up to heaven, **he sighed** and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” **35** And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. **36** And Jesus charged them to **tell no one**. But the more he charged them, the more **zealously** they **proclaimed** it. **37** And they were **astonished beyond measure**, saying, “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Jesus sees:

- He’s always been a spectacle.
- Jesus’ refuses to make a spectacle of him now (privately).
- Jesus’ identifies with him emotionally.

Question: Why do you think Jesus’ sighs (moans)?

Sigh: Jesus’ response to the pain and sorrow sin has brought into the world.

Don’t be too isolated to think you are beyond healing.

Don’t be too proud to accept what the gospel says about your unworthiness.

Don’t be too despondent to accept what the gospel says about how loved you are.

Timothy Keller