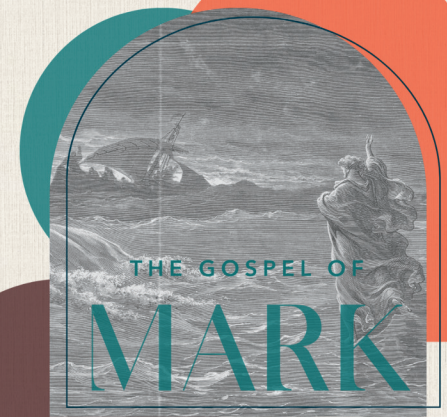


November 5, 2023

# RELATIONSHIP VERSUS RULES & RITUALS

Pastor Roger Poupart // Mark 7:1-23



## PREPARE YOUR HEART & MIND

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide you in your time.



The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, 2 and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. 3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; 4 and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.) 5 The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?" 6 And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. 7 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' 8 Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men." 9 He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, is to be put to death'; 11 but you say, 'If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, given to God),' 12 you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; 13 thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that." 14 After He called the crowd to Him again, He began saying to them, "Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: 15 there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man. 16 [If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.]" 17 When he had left the crowd and entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable. 18 And He said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, 19 because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.) 20 And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. 23 All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."



[info@waysidechapel.org](mailto:info@waysidechapel.org)



[@waysidechapelsa](https://www.instagram.com/waysidechapelsa)



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## REFLECT/CONNECT

Use these questions for a time of individual reflection or to connect with others in meaningful conversation.

- In what ways were you encouraged by last week's study?
  
- What traditions in your family do you enjoy or wish you could change?

These questions are designed as a guide for individual study and to foster spiritual conversation with a group of people.

## GROW IN THE WORD

- 01.** The religious leaders questioned Jesus because his disciples ate without first washing their hands, which was in disobedience to their religious traditions. Jesus responded by describing how the religious leaders had prioritized their tradition over God's commands. He used the example of the tradition of "corban", and how it allowed grown children to neglect their duty to support their parents (v. 1-13).
- What is Jesus' main point in his response to the religious leaders? Notice which words are used repeatedly (v. 3, 5, 8, 9, 13).

# GROW IN THE WORD

- What are ways in which we, or society at large, prioritize or elevate human traditions over God's Word?

- How can you avoid falling into the same trap as the religious leaders in this passage? Consider Colossians 2:8; 1 Peter 1:18.

- 02. Jesus taught the crowds that it's not what goes into a person from the outside that defiled them, but what comes from within. Jesus' disciples struggled to grasp his meaning. To clarify, Jesus explained that evil thoughts and immoral behaviors originate from the human heart. Therefore, things like food do not have the power to defile a person (v. 14-23).**
- How is this teaching about the condition of the heart (v. 14-23) related to Jesus' teaching in the previous passage (v. 1-13)?



# GROW IN THE WORD

- What do you learn about the condition of the heart and our need for spiritual transformation? See Ezekiel 36:26-27; Psalm 51:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17.

- In what ways do you want to grow to be more Christ-like in light of this passage?

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ECHO WEEKEND

November 17 - 19 | Volunteers Needed

Our in-town student discipleship weekend wouldn't be possible without all of the volunteers who join us from drivers, food providers, small group leaders, and more. Sign up online to be a part of this great, discipleship event!

### RIGHTNOW MEDIA

20,000+ Free Resources

We are excited to announce that as part of our commitment to supporting your faith journey, we are providing FREE access to RightNow Media! We believe that this resource can be a powerful tool to help you grow in your relationship with God. Learn more online!

# GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Pray to begin your group time. Remind the group why you are meeting: to connect in meaningful relationships, to grow spiritually, and to engage in the life and work of the church together. Reflect on the values you want to share as a group (i.e. confidentiality, authenticity, grace).

## CONNECT (30-40 MIN)

You can use these suggestions to foster connection and build community in your group. You can break your group into smaller parts if needed, pick a question to discuss, and let each member get to know one another.

- Spend a few minutes catching up with one another. Share a highlight and lowlight of your week.
- Ask the second question in the Connect section of the passage guide and give each person a chance to respond.

## GROW (30-40 MIN)

Gather back as a big group if you broke up earlier and have one person pray over your time discussing God's word. As you discuss, don't worry if there are questions left unanswered or unresolved. Reach out to ministry leaders or pastors for any needed clarification.

- Select 1 or 2 questions that resonate most with you or your group for each section. Save the application-oriented questions for later.
- Read each section of Scripture you are focusing on prior to discussion and before asking each question. Read cross-references together if the questions have them.

## ENGAGE (30-40 MIN)

Reflect on the biblical truth God revealed to you this week and discuss a plan of action to apply what you have learned. Gather in smaller groups of 2-4 again. Discuss your plan of action and pray for one another.

- Discuss the application-oriented questions of the passage guide. Give everyone time to gather their thoughts and allow for silence before moving on.
- Close group time by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.