

Mark Chapter 7

1. Tradition vs. God's Command (Mark 7:1–13)

1. Why do the religious leaders criticize Jesus' disciples for not following the tradition of handwashing?
2. What is the difference between God's commandments and human traditions in this passage?
3. Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah saying, "*These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.*"

What does it mean to worship God with the heart rather than just outward behavior?

4. Jesus confronts the practice of Corban (dedicating something to God to avoid helping parents).

Why does Jesus say this nullifies God's Word?

5. What are examples today where religious traditions might overshadow true obedience to God?

Reflection:

How can we guard against replacing a living relationship with God with mere religious habits?

2. What Truly Defiles a Person (Mark 7:14–23)

6. Jesus says it is not what goes into a person that defiles them, but what comes out.

Why would this teaching have shocked the Jewish audience?

7. In this teaching, Jesus challenges traditional ideas of ritual purity found in the Law of Moses.

What deeper principle is Jesus emphasizing?

8. Jesus lists sins that come from the heart (evil thoughts, pride, deceit, etc.).

Why does Jesus locate sin primarily in the heart rather than in external things?

9. How does this teaching change the way we think about holiness and spiritual purity?

Reflection:

- What are some ways the heart can become polluted, even if outward behavior appears religious?

3. The Faith of the Syrophenician Woman (Mark 7:24–30)

10. Why might Jesus initially respond in a way that seems harsh to the Gentile woman?

11. The woman persists and responds with humility and faith.

What does her response reveal about her understanding of Jesus?

12. What does this story teach us about faith, persistence, and humility?

13. How does this event show that the mission of Jesus extends beyond Israel?

Reflection:

What does genuine faith look like when we face silence or resistance from God?

4. The Healing of the Deaf Man (Mark 7:31–37)

14. Why do you think Jesus heals this man in a very personal and physical way (touching ears, touching the tongue)?

15. Jesus says the Aramaic word "Ephphatha" meaning "*Be opened.*"

Why might Mark preserve the original word?

16. The crowd responds saying, "He has done everything well."

What does this echo from creation remind us of?

17. Why does Jesus often tell people not to tell others about the miracle?

Reflection:

In what ways might we need Jesus to say "Be opened" in our own lives?

18. What do these four sections together teach us about the heart, faith, and the kingdom of God?

19. What does this chapter reveal about who Jesus truly is?

20. What is one change in thinking or behavior this chapter challenges us to make?