



# THE GOSPEL OF MARK

## Seeing Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God



Part 18

*"Defilement & Cleansing"*

6-27-21

### Introduction

The miracles of Jesus, particularly the feeding of the five thousand and walking on water, have demonstrated that Jesus is to be understood as the embodiment of Israel's God. In His teaching, He therefore possesses the authority to both correct the traditions of His people and to explain the true nature of reality to them in order that they might fully understand their need for Him.

**Key Point:** As Messiah, Jesus upholds the Word of the Lord and brings it to bear in the lives of His people in order that they might recognize both their \_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_ for them.

### Healings in Gennesaret—Mark 6:53-56

- Having been blown off course by the storm, Jesus and the apostles traveled back towards Capernaum and ministered to the people along the way.

*Mark 6:56—And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.*

**Key Point:** The healings in this region emphasized the \_\_\_\_\_ realities of life in a fallen world and Jesus' power to overcome them by His power and authority.

### The Traditions of the Pharisees and the Word of God—Mark 7:1-13

- At some point the Pharisees and the scribes from Jerusalem met them along the way and began to question Jesus about traditional washings. (7:1-5)

*Mark 7:1-2—<sup>1</sup>Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed.*

*"defiled"—κοινός (koinos)—"common" i.e. ordinary, belonging to generality; by Jews, unhallowed, profane, Levitically unclean.*

⇒ The practice of washing hands was derived from the OT instructions to the \_\_\_\_\_ (Exod. 30:19-21) which Pharisaic tradition came to apply to everyone within the land in order to avoid the spread of defilement. In spite of their differences, the two chief rabbinic traditions (Hillel & Shammai) agreed on the importance of handwashing.

*Mark 7:5—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?"*

⇒ This question also served as an \_\_\_\_\_ that would further highlight Jesus as someone who should be opposed.

- Jesus did not respond to their question about handwashing but instead quoted Scripture to them. (7:6-8)

*Mark 7:6-8—<sup>6</sup>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; <sup>7</sup>IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN.'*

*<sup>8</sup>You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."*

⇒ Isaiah 29 describes the coming siege of Jerusalem (Ariel) as God's judgment upon them for their false worship and hypocrisy (29:11). Just as the people of Isaiah's day were more concerned with the appearance of godliness, so too were the Pharisees and scribes.

- Jesus then presented to them a specific example of how their tradition undermined the clear teaching of Scripture. (7:9-13)

*Mark 7:9—<sup>9</sup>And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!"*

⇒ In following the rabbinic and scribal traditions associated with dedicating things to God, there existed the possibility that someone could break the most clear of the commandments of God (Exod. 20:12; 21:17).

*"...the Corban example...represents a whole system in which their tradition ultimately cancels out the direct commands of God. It is not just one exceptional misuse of their tradition; it reflects a pattern of abuse."* —David Garland, *A Theology of Mark's Gospel*

**Key Point:** Jesus' words to the religious leaders were intended to reveal to them the \_\_\_\_\_ of their traditions and to point them back to the authority of God's Word.

## That Which Truly Defiles—Mark 7:14-23

- Jesus then called together those who were around them and spoke to them further concerning purity and defilement.

Mark 7:14-15—<sup>14</sup> And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: <sup>15</sup> 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.”

- Upon returning home, the disciples asked the Lord to clarify His prior teaching. (7:18-23)

⇒ The Lord clarified for them a proper understanding of the moral/spiritual condition of defilement:

(1) Under the Law, ‘defilement’ resulted from eating ‘unclean’ foods because one had \_\_\_\_\_ the Word of God, not because that food itself was inherently defiled.

(2) Being ‘common’ or in a state of defilement rather than being holy was a \_\_\_\_\_ rather than a physical condition and therefore it had no physical remedy.

(3) The things that truly defile people are the “evil thoughts” which arise from their \_\_\_\_\_, demonstrating that humans are by nature ‘common’ rather than ‘holy.’

- \* The first six vices (*sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness*) are all in the plural since they are specific, repeatable actions. There is also a strong link here to 2nd Table of the Law (Exod. 20:13-17).

*“sexual immorality”*

- \* The next six are in the singular (*deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness*) in order to refer to evil in the abstract. Many of these vices are found in other lists throughout the NT (Rom. 1:29-31; Gal. 5:19-21).

*“sensuality”*

*“envy”*

*“It is such moral qualities and their practical outworking which destroy a person’s relationship with God, not the ‘external’ matter of [what] is eaten. ‘Defilement’, then, is seen exclusively in moral terms.” —R.T. France*

**Key Point:** The teaching of Jesus about the true source of defilement illustrated the \_\_\_\_\_ realities of life in a fallen world and hinted at His ability to overcome them.

## Seeing Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God

1. Mark wants his audience to understand that Jesus uses the authority of the Word of God to identify the depth of the problem of human sin.
2. Mark wants his audience to recognize that Jesus has the authority to declare the ‘common’ to be ‘clean.’

*“declared...clean”—καθαρίζω (katharizō)*

## Concluding Thought

- It was on the cross that Jesus accomplished the \_\_\_\_\_ that could make the ‘common’ to be ‘clean.’

Titus 2:13b-14—Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify (katharizō) for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

- Faith in Him and in His work for us produces internal change that leads to external \_\_\_\_\_.

Acts 15:8-9—<sup>8</sup> And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, <sup>9</sup> and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed (katharizō) their hearts by faith.

Gal. 6:22-24—<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.