

Mark 7

Lesson for Sunday, July 16, 2023

CHAPTER SUMMARY: Jesus teaches about inner purity and rewards the faith of a Gentile woman by healing her demon-possessed daughter. He also heals a deaf-mute, to the amazement of the onlookers.

1. The Holiness Message Preached by Jesus (vs. 1-23)
 - a. The reason for the message (vs. 1-5)
 - b. The rebuke in the message (vs. 6-23)
 - i. The prophecy (vs. 6-7)
 - ii. The parental example (vs. 8-13)
 - iii. The preaching (vs. 14-23)
2. The Healing Miracles Performed by Jesus (vs. 24-37)
 - a. The healing of a demon-possessed daughter (vs. 24-30)
 - i. The brokenhearted mother (vs. 24-26)
 - ii. The kindhearted Messiah (vs. 27-30)
 - b. The healing of a deaf and dumb man (vs. 31-37)
 - i. The desperation of the man (vs. 31-32)
 - ii. The declaration of the Messiah (vs. 33-37)

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ What would you say are the biggest problems that we are facing? *Important: Do not allow this to get into a political discussion that drags out...you are asking for topics, not explanations.*
- ⇒ The natural tendency for answering a question like this is to look outward at the world. But when we read our Bibles we get a different perspective.
- ⇒ Read Jeremiah 17:9. According to this verse, our biggest problems are not “out there.” They are “in here.” (Point to your heart.)
- ⇒ As has often been said: *the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart.*
- ⇒ In Mark 7, Jesus takes this important principle and expounds on it for us. We would do well to listen, understand, and apply.
- ⇒ Read the text: Mark 7:14-23

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The Principle Prioritized
 - a. It is obvious from a cursory reading of this text that Jesus thinks this specific teaching is important.
 - b. Ask: *What does Jesus say in these verses that indicates it ought to be a priority for us?*
 - i. Verse 14: “Hearken unto me!” Jesus wants their attention. He is calling them to listen intently.
 - ii. Verse 14: “Every one of you...” His call for attention is intensified – He wants everyone’s attention!
 - iii. Verse 14: “Understand!” Jesus wants more than their eyeballs! He wants them to listen with their minds and seek to grasp the meaning.
 - iv. Verse 15: “There is nothing...” Jesus chooses an absolute word. “Nothing” is all-encompassing in its meaning and immediately eliminates any argument.
 - v. Verse 16: “If anyone has ears, let him hear!” Again, Jesus is urging His audience to pay attention. It would be like the teacher saying, “Sit up straight and pay attention!”
 - vi. Verse 18: Point out the tone of Jesus’s words to His immediate disciples. Jesus is getting on them for their lack of understanding or lack of attention to His teaching.

- vii. Verse 23: “*All these things!*” Jesus is using words that emphasizes what He is teaching. “All” means all!
 - c. ILLUSTRATION: Bring a ball to class. Call on a class member in the back and tell them to get ready because you are going to throw them the ball. Then point out what they do to prepare themselves. Did they empty their lap? Did they stand up? What are they looking at? This is what Jesus is doing. He wants His audience to “catch” the lesson He is about to throw their way. What are we doing now to prepare for His lesson?
- 2. The Principle Revealed
 - a. Jesus is the Master Teacher. He states the main point of His lesson three times in this text.
 - b. Read verses 15, 18 & 23. Then as a class exercise, have the class come up with a summary statement that clearly defines this important principle. Here are some ideas:
 - i. The heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart.
 - ii. Taken from the larger context of chapter 7: Our greatest need is not cleaner hands but a transformed heart.
 - c. Jesus is teaching that our biggest problems come from within. How does this challenge the typical narrative? Most of the times we blame others for our problems and difficulties, but Jesus is teaching that our biggest issues are a result of our own sinful heart.
 - d. What difference should this make if we really grasped what Jesus is teaching?
- 3. The Principle Applied
 - a. Being the Master Teacher, Jesus wanted to make sure His audience (and us) grasped the depth of this principle.
 - b. Jesus first explains the principle thoroughly in verses 18-19. We understand the biological process of digestion.
 - i. Jesus points out that food can make us sick to the stomach for a period of time, but it doesn’t enter into the heart of man.
 - ii. Jesus is not denying the biological impact of one’s diet on their human heart.
 - iii. Jesus uses the heart as the description of who a man really is. The heart is the sum of man’s thinking, personality, and will.
 - c. Jesus then elaborates the principle thoroughly in verses 21-22. Notice this list hits everyone at some point. Jesus wanted to make sure we understand. Jesus’s teaching is clear and complete. There are no exceptions.

CONCLUSION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ It is difficult to overstate the importance of this biblical principle. We are quick to blame others for our problems. We are even quicker to justify our own behaviors. The issue becomes whether or not we will take responsibility for our own heart.
- ⇒ Read Proverbs 4:23 and discuss how we can work at “keeping our heart.” Here are some thoughts to consider:
 - Make keeping your heart your priority. The word keep has the idea of setting up a blockade.
 - The verse says to exercise diligence. Work at it! Be intentional. Don’t assume that this isn’t a problem for you! We all tend to let our guard down.
 - It begins with a steady diet of God’s Word and a willingness to obey what it says.
 - One definite application is what we allow to influence our thinking through the various entertainment mediums. Are we guarding our hearts in these areas?