



THE GOSPEL OF

MARK



Sermon Series Notes

“A Heart Problem” (Mark 6:53-7:23)

Danny Hodges - NT3682 Topic: Sin, Legalism

6:53-56 Many who were touched physically by Jesus never put their faith in Him as Messiah, and so were not saved. That is truly amazing, and very sad. Part of my devotions Saturday morning was John 10:38...even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles.

vv.1-4 Jewish scribes wrote religious practices intended to guard the strict regulations of the OT Law. Over time, these practices became traditions that, if not kept, would deem would unclean. Over 65 pages ended up being written on ceremonial washing alone!

The Pharisees were a religious group of Jews formed between the Old & New Testaments. Their title meant “separated ones,” because they were intent on separating themselves to keep the law, which of course meant keeping all the religious traditions that had been formed over the years, and handed down from generation to generation. What happened was that they became more committed to the religious tradition than the truth the tradition was born out of. A rabbi Eliezer said, “He who expounds the Scripture in opposition to the tradition of the elders will have no part in the world to come.”

v.5 When you ask Jesus a question, I pray you are looking for the truth, even if the truth goes against your way of thinking, religious heritage, or tradition.

vv.6-8 Whoa! That’s a pretty straightforward and cutting answer!

vv.9-13 Wow, they actually used religious tradition to get out of helping their own mother and father! This was of course to stuff their temple coffers with more money, because they loved money (Luke 16:14).

vv.14-15 In earlier manuscripts there is a verse 16 here: “If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” But the truth that Jesus proclaims is very difficult for them to hear, because they are so caught up in their religious traditions. What Jesus says at this point is the heart of the matter of this particular confrontation. The Pharisees and Teachers of the Law held that, to not keep the religious tradition amounted to sin. Jesus comes along and says, keeping the tradition of ceremonial washing does nothing to cleanse a person, because the problem is not outward, but inward.

Now, to show you how hard it was for the people in this day to accept the truth that Jesus proclaims here...

vv.17-19a Even the disciples didn’t get what Jesus was saying here. This was hard for them to grasp because, though they had been with Jesus for some time now, the traditions that the Pharisees and all the Jews practiced had been engrained in them from childhood.

v.19b Can I get anybody that loves pork chops, or bacon, or lobster, or any food that was not kosher under the OT Law to join me with a hearty “Hallelujah” here?

This crowd had known nothing but Pharisaical religion all their lives. They had been led into traditions that had no truth in them. So Jesus makes a tremendously shocking declaration here. It flew not only in the face of their traditional mindset, but it also violated the dietary laws clearly given to them in the Law of Moses. Jesus is stating a revolutionary truth here. Even the special diet that God had ordained for the Jew did nothing to make him “clean.” Certain foods may make one more healthy, but not more holy.

I’m not sure how long it took for the disciples to shake off the unfounded religious traditions they had grown up with, but I know that Peter had a very hard time accepting the truth that he could eat food that was not kosher and yet be undefiled by it. See Acts 10:9ff; Gal.2:11-16.

Colossians 2:13-14,16-17 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross...therefore don’t let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Romans 3:20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

vv.20-23 In declaring all foods clean, Jesus declares all men unclean. The religious, extremely pious Pharisee with all his religious tradition, ceremony, & ritual cleansings is just as unclean afterwards as he was before!

Illus: Someone here right now may have the cleanest body, the finest clothes, the smelliest perfume, and yet be as unclean as the prostitute on the street. And someone else may be the worst smelling, worst dressed person here, yet clean in God’s sight. How can that be? Some might be thinking, “My mother taught me that cleanliness is next to godliness!” If that’s what your mother taught you, she was WRONG. This does not mean that it’s ok to be a slob, or not care about proper hygiene, etc. It only means that our outward physical cleanliness has absolutely nothing to do with our inward condition. And because the problem is inward, nothing outward will do us any good – not a physical bath, clean clothes, etc. And don’t miss the main point of our text. No religious ceremony, no religious tradition, will do us any good either. Tradition = Custom, ritual, practice, habit.

All of us are doing something religious right now – attending church. But attending church will do us no good unless the Spirit of God & the Word of God are allowed to do a work in our hearts. If the Word does not go into your heart but only into your ear, then you leave no different than when you came. Do something religious, develop a religious routine, but if the heart is not changed, it does one no good at all.

Ephesians 3:19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.

Are you aware that the Lord wants to speak to you before I stand and deliver the Word of God to you? Sometimes the most needed work in our heart is during the worship/song service. If our hearts are not open during the worship part of the service, will they be open when we hear the Word of God taught?

James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Evil thoughts; Evil = wrong, wicked, injurious, destructive; Thoughts = The thinking of a person deliberating with himself, a questioning about what is true; See Matthew 9:1-4; They had a preconceived animosity toward Jesus, and that prevented them from believing in him. Their unbelief was a heart problem, not a head problem.

Sexual immorality = porneia; illicit (unlawful) sexual intercourse; Lev.20:13 If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable...their blood will be on their own heads. Theft; Acts 4:4...Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and kept back part of the money you received for the land?

Murder

Adultery; Matthew 5:27-28 You have heard that it was said, "Do not commit adultery." But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Greed = A covetous desire to have more.

Malice = A disposition to injure others without cause, from mere personal gratification, or from a spirit of revenge; To regard with extreme ill will (Donald Trump?).

Deceit = The misleading of a person; Tending to mislead; John 13:2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot...to betray him.

Lewdness = Looseness; irregular indulgence of animal desires.

Envy = An evil eye; Pain, uneasiness, mortification or discontent excited by the sight of another's superiority or success, accompanied with some degree of hatred or malignity, and often or usually with a desire or an effort to depreciate the person, and with pleasure in seeing them depressed; Feeling uneasiness at the superior condition and happiness of another; See Prov.24:17-20.

Slander (blasphemy) = A false tale or report maliciously uttered, and tending to injure the reputation of another by lessening him in the esteem of his fellow citizens; One who injures another by maliciously reporting something to his prejudice.

Arrogance = Pride, haughtiness; Giving oneself an undue degree of importance; "Who's da man!" See Romans 12:3.

Folly = Senselessness, recklessness; Balaam; Depravity of mind. "What were you thinking?" Prov.14:1 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no god."

"If one were to prove this God of the Christians to us, we should be even less able to believe in him...it is our preference that decides against Christianity, not arguments." (Fredrick Nietzsche)

If we want to gain victory over evil thoughts, it does not begin with self-discipline, but rather with change from deep within. If we want victory over sexual sin, there must be first a work of God in our hearts. To change a thief into an honest person requires a change of heart. Murder begins in the heart. Adultery, greed, etc.

Jeremiah 17:9-10

Hebrews 4:12 For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

The heart and the head are connected, but the heart is the key to someone's head.

Prov.23:7 As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

Once the heart has been changed, we must then guard our hearts...well spring of life...

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

See booklet – "The Changed Life"

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Colossians 3:1-2 Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your **hearts** on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your **minds** on things above, not on earthly things.

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

INVITATION

Joel 2:12-13 Even now, declares the Lord, Return to me with all your heart. Rend your heart and not your garments.

See John 3:19-21; I Cor.2:4-5

Stuck in a religious routine? Hidden sin? Trying to be spiritual without a change of heart? Need to make a commitment to regularly renew your mind, develop spiritual disciplines that will guard your heart & mind?