# THE GOSPEL OF MARK

## THE SERVANT OF GOD CLEANSES CORRUPTION - Mark 7

A. We must always keep in mind that the Servant of God presented in Mark’s gospel is the Son of God.

1. He is God. Therefore, He possesses the attributes of God.

2. One of these attributes is absolute purity.

B. When the Servant of God came to earth, what He found was a world full of corruption.

C. In Mark 7, we see the Servant of God in action. His efforts involve the cleansing of corruption. We have entitled this chapter: “The Servant of God Cleanses Corruption.”

### CLEANSING OF GOD’S WORD (Mark 7:1-13)

A. The chapter begins with Jesus coming in contact with the Pharisees and certain of the scribes (Mark 7:1).

1. They criticize (Mark 7:2).

And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

a. According Mark 7:3, this was part of “the tradition of the elders.”

b. This was one of many traditions connected with washings (Mark 7:40).

2. They confront Christ (Mark 7:5).

Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

B. The question opened the door for Jesus to confront the traditions of the elders.

1. Jesus began by charging them with hypocrisy (Mark 7:6).

a. A hypocrite is a “stage player.” He pretends to be one thing when he is actually another.

b. These men were supposed to be the scholars of the Law.

1) Here, they show affinity for the traditions of the elders.

2) Yet, they cared not that their traditions brought harm to the Word of God.

2. Jesus noted that the traditions of the elders did three negative things to God’s Word.

a. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the traditions of men (Mark 7:8).

b. Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your

tradition (Mark 7:9).

c. Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition (Mark 7:13).

3. He also gave them an illustration of how their traditions violated God’s Word (Mark 7:10-12).

C. We see that Jesus was deeply concerned about the purity of the Word of God.

1. The doctrines and commandments of men can corrupt and pervert the pure Word of God.

a. “Faith only” causes men to reject the command of God to be baptized to be saved (Mark 16:16).

b. Binding the use of “thee” and “thou” in prayer as the only way to show reverence to God adds to God’s Word.

c. Condemning churches for changing the times of worship service to

accommodate schedules perverts the fact that God has given us a “day” upon which to worship Him (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2).

2. Let’s do as Jesus did and protect the pure Word of God.

a. II Timothy 1:13

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

b. Titus 2:7-8a

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned…

### CLEANSING THE HEART (Mark 7:14-23)

A. One of the problems of the Pharisees was that they were concerned about outer cleansing, but not about inner cleansing. This is reflected in Jesus’ rebuke of the religious leaders of His day (Matt. 23:25, 27-28).

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

B. Jesus now confronts this way of living with a parable (Mark 7:14-16).

1. The call: Hearken and understand (Mark 7:14).

2. The content (Mark 7:15)

There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, these are they that defile the man.

3. The cry (Mark 7:16)

If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

C. The disciples did not understand His words and asked him concerning the parable (Mark 7:17).

D. Jesus explained the parable with a contrast:

1. Physical intake into our bodies does not corrupt the man. It enters into the belly, and goes out into the draught (Mark 7:19).

2. The things that come out of the heart are different (Mark 7:20-23).

a. All actions originate from the heart (Prov. 4:23; 23:7).

b. When evil actions are performed, they originate first in the heart. Such thoughts and actions defile the man (Mark 7:21-22).

For from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

E. The Pharisees and scribes, those of Jesus’ day, and, we ourselves, need to cleanse our hearts.

1. James 4:8b

Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; purify your hearts, ye double minded.

2. Only the pure in heart will see God (Matt. 5:8).

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

### CLEANSING OF HEALTH (Mark 7:24-37)

A. When the first man sinned, the earth was cursed. Sickness and disease began to plague the earth.

B. God is concerned about this. One day, he will reward the righteous by freeing them from all of these things.

1. Our bodies will be changed and corruption will put on incorruption (I Cor. 15:53).

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

2. Our earthly tabernacle that now groans will be cast off, and we will be clothed with a building of God wherein will be no more groaning (II Cor. 5:1-2).

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.

3. Our inheritance will be incorruptible, undefiled, and one that fades not away (I Pet. 1:4).

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away,

reserved in heaven for you.

4. Revelation 21:4

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

C. While on earth, Jesus showed His concern for the sick and afflicted. He often miraculously cleansed them of their health problems.

1. A Syrophenician woman besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter (Mark 7:24-30).

2. When He came into the land of Galilee, He healed one who was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech (Mark 7:31-37).

D. Jesus showed His compassion on the afflicted and gave us a brief glimpse into the eternal realm where all afflictions will be put away from the righteous.

## CONCLUSION

A. We have seen this evening that Jesus is deeply concerned about purity: purity of doctrine, purity of heart, and even purity of health.

B. We need to be concerned about purity also. Sadly, many are living in an impure, corrupt state.

1. The alien sinner needs to purify his soul in obeying the truth through the Spirit (I Pet. 1:22), ultimately being baptized in order to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16).

2. A child of God who has returned to sin needs to be cleansed with Jesus’ blood. A “second law of pardon” has been provided for that cleansing (I John 1:9).

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.