

Who Do You Say I Am? – Mark Scene 17 & 18

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Mark 7:1-30

November 17, 2019

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Sometimes we love tradition MORE than what the tradition was created FOR

We can lose sight of the reason behind the tradition.

*What are some of your favorite church or family traditions?

*Are there any you think of that have become beloved but the reason behind it has been forgotten?

Read and discuss Mark 7:1-8 (Nicolas Zola translation)

And the Pharisees and some of the scholars who came from Jerusalem gathered to him. And seeing that some of his students eat bread with unclean (that is, unwashed) hands—for the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash their hands with the fist, holding to the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat from the market place unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things that they received and hold: the washing of cups and pitchers and kettles—and the Pharisees and scholars ask him, “Why do your students not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unclean hands?” But he said to them, “How well Isaiah prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written, ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart keeps far from me. And they worship me in vain, teaching human commands as doctrine.’ You give up God’s commandment and hold to human tradition.”

*What does this passage show us about God? About people?

*What is this passage saying to you? Is there something here to share with someone else?

Jesus didn’t seem to hold to the tradition of the elders

He broke the traditions when things were handed down from humans, not God.

*What traditions keep people from truly knowing and following God?

*How can some traditions help us?

He broke traditions concerned with purity

Our purity problem is inside our own hearts.

*What purity traditions are there today?

*What is it like to wrestle with the problem being inside of our hearts instead?

Read and discuss Mark 7:14-23 (Nicolas Zola translation)

And calling the crowd again, he says to them, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand: Nothing outside of a person that goes into the person is what makes the person unclean, but the things that come out of the person are what make the person unclean.”

And when he entered a house, away from the people, his students asked him about the comparison. And he says to them, “So you too are without understanding? Do you not grasp that everything that goes into a person from outside cannot make the person unclean? Because it does not go into the person’s heart, but into the stomach, and goes out into the toilet.” (Thus he made all foods clean.) And he continued speaking, “What comes out of a person, that makes the person unclean. For from within, out of people’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual transgressions, thefts, murders,

adulteries, acts of greed, acts of wickedness, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, stupidity. All these evil things come out from within, and they make a person unclean."

*What does this passage show us about God? About people?

*What is this passage saying to you? Is there something here to share with someone else?

We can have the Ethic of Avoidance or an Ethic of Involvement

Jesus was not afraid to get his hands dirty to reach hearts.

*What does the contrast between these two look like in your life?

*Is there somewhere God is calling you to get your hands dirty? Is there somewhere you've been avoiding?

*What steps do you need to take in obedience to Jesus' call to involvement?