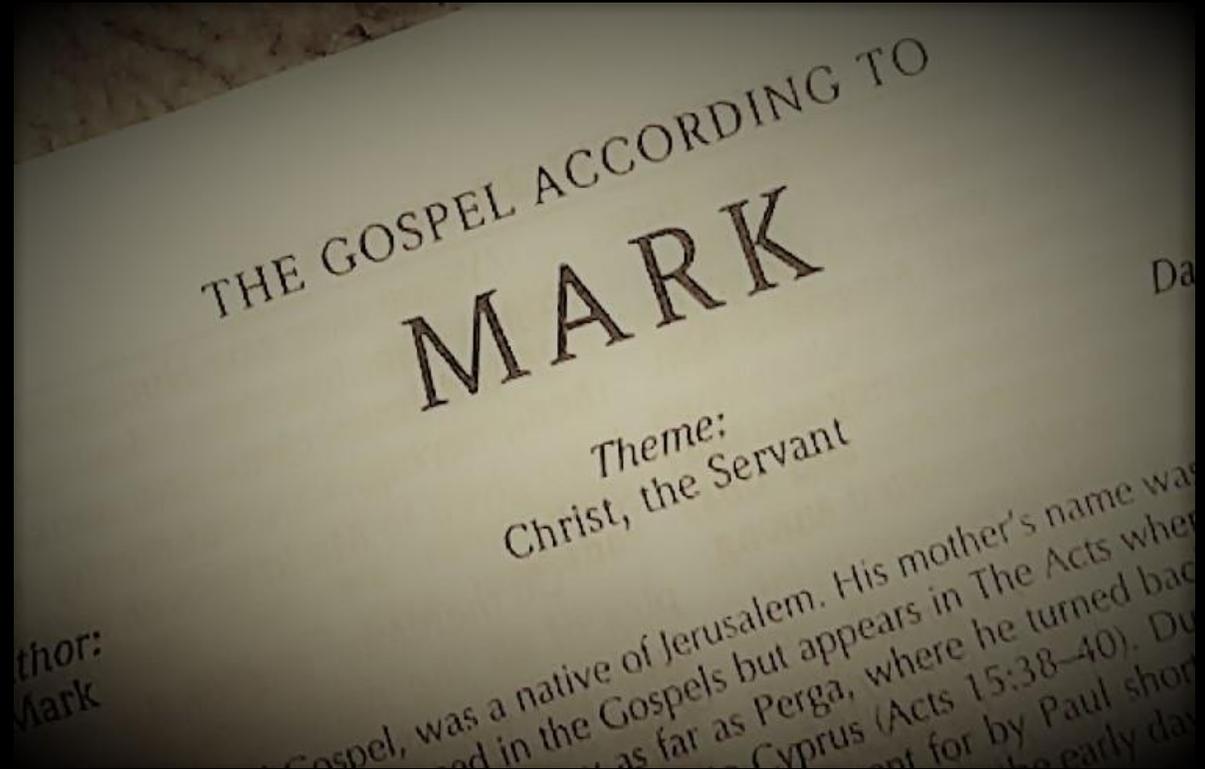


# Verse by Verse

## Mark 7



# Mark 7 Introduction

# Mark 7 Introduction

- As we get near the middle of Mark's Gospel, we see Jesus preparing us for a church made up of both Jew and Gentile.
- He will address issues of tradition and ceremonial uncleanness, which were very important to Jewish life.

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- He will also go out to Gentile areas and begin a ministry to people there.
- These are themes that become very important from the book of Acts on through the rest of the New Testament.

# Mark 7 Key Verses

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- Mark 7:20-23 (ESV)

<sup>20</sup> And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup> coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

# Mark 7 Outline

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1. Jesus on Tradition 7:1-13
2. True Defilement 7:14-23
3. A Mother's Faith 7:24-30
4. Healing a Deaf Man 7:31-37

# 1. Jesus on Tradition 7:1-13

# 1. Jesus on Tradition 7:1-13

- As we have already seen going through the Gospels, the scribes and Pharisees had built up a large body of tradition.
- These were practices that were not specifically stated in Scripture, but were important to them and widely practiced.

# 1. Jesus on Tradition 7:1-13

- Their handwashing, for example, had little to do with personal hygiene and was no part of the law.
- A person with perfectly clean hands was still supposed to wash their hands in a certain way.
- Using a little squeeze of sanitizer, had it existed, would not have passed the ceremonial test.

# 1. Jesus on Tradition 7:1-13

- It's a sad thing, of course, when Scripture is forced into the background in order to keep a certain tradition.
- A church today might always use a certain type of music or have an unwritten dress code which becomes almost law.
- We need to be reminded of what Jesus teaches in the following section.

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

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- Jesus sees a difference between ceremonial and moral defilement.
- The point of Christ's teaching here is that it is our corrupt hearts that defile us before God.
- Outward forms are less important than inward motives.

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- Dexter Maben, a Bible teacher in India, distinguishes between Christian **religiosity** and **spirituality**.

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23



*Religiosity ... focuses on the rituals we carry out in our homes, churches or shrines. Spirituality, on the other hand, inspires faith and longs for fellowship with God ... True spirituality is all about listening to God, following him and acting in obedience to him by being loving and just to those around us.<sup>1</sup>*

*– Dexter Maben,  
United Theological College, India*

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- Let's read those key verses one more.
- **Mark 7:20-23** (ESV)

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## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- Another way to apply these first two sections of this chapter are to think of **Tradition Type 1** and **Type 2**.
- They are similar to diabetes, except that in this case one of them is actually good.

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- Tradition Type 1
- This is the “traditional” way that God’s people have looked at the Bible.
- It leads to “traditional” or historically consistent interpretations and practice.
- The authority of Scripture is backed up by the weight of tradition.

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- Tradition Type 1
- Because of this “tradition,” we do not have to rethink and relearn basic doctrines or understandings of the faith.
- We learn from earlier teachers who explained the Trinity, the atonement and how to engage with the culture around us.
- Scripture is not interpreted in random ways.
- New forms of morality are not going to be discovered.

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- Tradition Type 2
- This is when the church adds its own ideas to the Bible from the outside – but then they harden like stone.
- This can be at a **high level** as we find in some Catholic dogma dealing with Mary or the hierarchy of the church.
- It can also be at a **very low level** – how we talk, dress or act in our own church not related to simple manners or morals.

## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- **Tradition Type 1:** A traditional understanding of Christian doctrine and practice.
- There are fairly strict limits as to how much can change from one place or time to another.

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- **Tradition Type 1:** A traditional understanding of Christian doctrine and practice.
- There are fairly strict limits as to how much can change from one place or time to another.
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## 2. True Defilement 7:14-23

- We might also consider Tradition Type 0 = No Tradition
- This is where all traditional understanding is thrown out the window and the church gets creative.
- Obscure minority opinions are attractive to some almost because they are obscure and minority.
- This may be a bigger danger now than Type 2 as the church is looking for innovative ways to conform to the culture.

### 3. A Mother's Faith 7:24-30

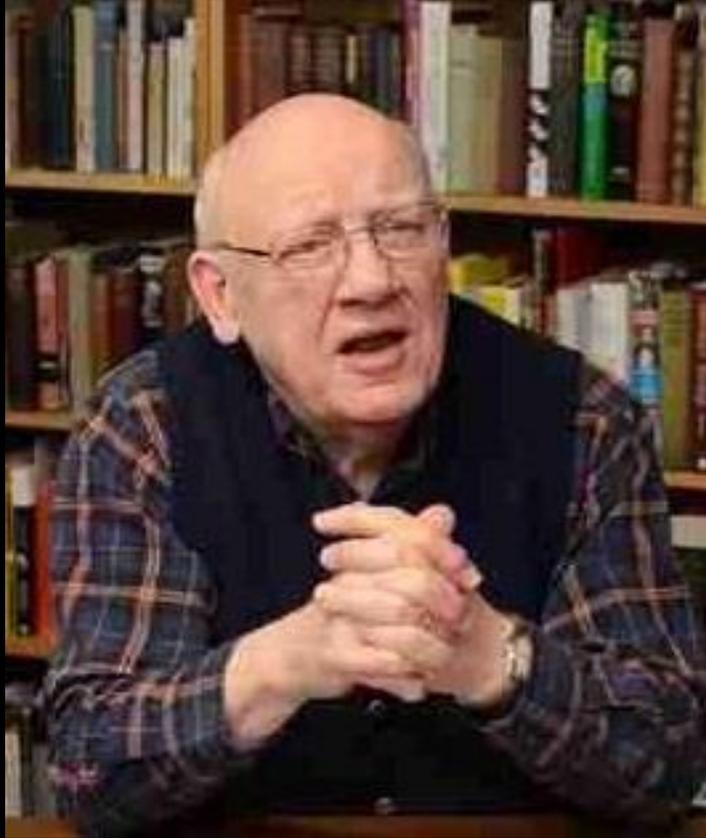
### 3. A Mother's Faith 7:24-30

- This woman had a lot going against her.
- She was a Gentile, so outside of the biblical culture and embedded in a pagan society.
- She was a woman in a culture dominated by men.
- A demon now had control of her daughter – which may be why the daughter is not there.

### 3. A Mother's Faith 7:24-30

- When Jesus seems to hesitate to help her, she sees it as an opportunity.
- She is not going to be turned away and humbles herself to the Messiah of Israel.

### 3. A Mother's Faith 7:24-30



*Great faith is faith that takes God at His Word and will not let go until God meets the need. Great faith can lay hold of even the slightest encouragement and turn it into a fulfilled promise. “Lord, increase our faith.”<sup>2</sup>*

*– Warren Wiersbe (1929 – 2019), pastor, Bible teacher and Indiana native.*

### 3. A Mother's Faith 7:24-30

- We might look at our own circumstances, especially those ways in which it seems like we have a lot against us.
- Instead of blaming God, we should see these difficulties as additional motivation to grab ahold of him.

## 4. Healing a Deaf Man 7:31-37

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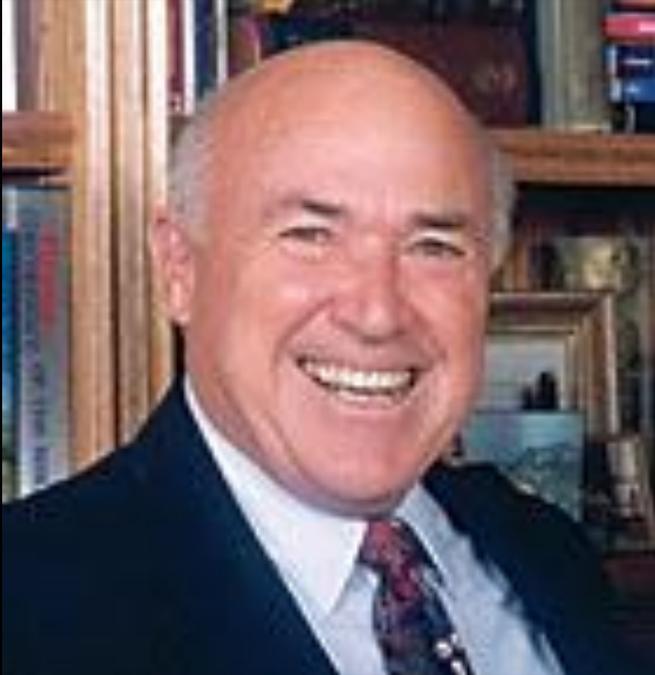
- In this passage, I'd like to focus on Jesus's method.

<sup>33</sup> And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup> And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

## 4. Healing a Deaf Man 7:31-37

- Jesus performed many miracles, but it seems like Christ hardly ever did things the same way twice.
- Chuck Smith saw this as an important point

## 4. Healing a Deaf Man 7:31-37



*Why did the Lord use such complicated and varied approaches? Because he didn't want to create a magic ritual and didn't want to start a new tradition for doing things. It should never be about a formula; it should be about the Lord and relying on Him. He is God, and he does whatever He wants, in whatever way He chooses.*

*– Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013),  
in his *Word for Today Bible**

## 4. Healing a Deaf Man 7:31-37

### Dave's Personal Experience:

- I had to learn this very early in my Christian experience.
- Coming to Christ as a Catholic, my mind was filled with lots of examples of “Tradition Type 2.”
- We had set methods, one of which was the *Novena* – special prayers repeated for nine consecutive days or weeks.

## 4. Healing a Deaf Man 7:31-37

- In your Christian walk, don't confuse the method with the God you are reaching out to through the method.
- As Chuck said, He does not respond to "magic rituals," traditions or formulas that we add to his word.
- It is not our method that unites us with him, it is our coming to him humbly by faith – whatever the method or form.

# Mark 7    What We Just Read

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- **Tradition Type 2:** This is really adding to the Word of God, and causes us to lose sight of Scripture – like the scribes.

# Mark 7    Key Points

- **Tradition Type 0:** This is where all traditional understanding is thrown out the window and the church gets creative.
- This is probably a bigger danger now as the church is looking for innovative ways to conform to the culture.

# Mark 7    Key Points

- As we press forward seeking to know God, let's be sure not to get trapped by formulas.
- Methods are necessary, but they can easily turn into rituals that stand in the way of our knowledge of God.
- At the same time, let's keep God's word in the center and as the foundation of both the teaching and practice of our faith.

# Mark 7    Key Points

- Finally, like the Syrophoenician mother, we need to come to Christ in all sincerity and humility.
- The challenges we experience in our faith may just be God's way of growing our faith and drawing it out.

# Mark 7    A Prayer

# Mark 7    A Prayer

- Dear heavenly Father,
- You are an all-powerful, all-loving, unchanging God. We, however, need to change because without change we will never experience growth.
- Help us to see where we have fallen into spiritual ruts. Help us not to get stuck in the patterns of religiosity, in human traditions. Instead, let us learn to draw near to you in all reality, sincerity and truth.

# Mark 7    A Prayer

- Jesus has taught us by both word and example that our lives need to be grounded in the Scriptures.
- Prevent us from either adding or taking away from your word, but rather establish us firmly in it.
- And from that foundation, bring us to the place where our faith truly grows.
- In Christ,
- Amen.

# Mark 7    References

1. South Asia Bible Commentary: A One-Volume Commentary on the Whole Bible (p. 1303). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.
2. Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). The Bible exposition commentary (Vol. 1, p. 136). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.