

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching out to leaders who can change the world.

21-25 Nov 2011

LESSON 8 - GOD'S SERVANT EXPOSES HYPOCRISY

INTRODUCTION:

How do you measure your own and others' spirituality (right standing before God)?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION:

Note: *"The crowd Jesus fed in the previous chapter could obviously not have complied with this ceremonial washing in a desert place, so this may well have been the 'inspiration' for the Pharisaic attack. If so the irony is intense; a prophet Who had proved as no other had that He is a prophet like Moses, was being criticized by a Mishnah tractate which itself is a manmade attempt to keep the law of Moses. ¹"* The traditions were so-called inspired commentaries concerning the first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch). *"When tradition and Scripture conflicted, then tradition would hold precedence. ²"* The legal experts (Scribes) tried to devise a rule for every living situation rather than general moral principles. For example, ceremonial hand washing was more than just cleaning. Four ounces of ceremonial water (kept in special stone jars) was poured over the hands, which were held fingers up so the water ran toward the wrists. While still wet the hands were cleaned by rubbing the fists of each hand. Then a minimum of four ounces of special water was poured from the wrist toward the fingers, which were now held downward. Other traditions such as something declared "Corban" meant that it was considered dedicated to God. This relieved the person of using it for someone else. He could, however, use it for himself and it could be kept in his possession until death.

Read Mark 7:1-13

1. What were the disciples doing that upset the Pharisees?
2. What was the original purpose of the traditions?
3. What could Jesus have done to do to be "religious" enough to be the Messiah in the eyes of the Pharisees?
4. What was Jesus' reaction? Gal 3: 24 How was this reaction foretold? Pro 30: 6; Isa 29:13
5. What example did Jesus use to show that people were more concerned about carrying out tradition than pleasing God?

Read Mark 7:14- 23

6. How is Jesus definition of unclean different from that of the Pharisees?
7. Why is the heart the source of all defilement? Jer 17:9 What can be done with such a heart? Ps 51:10
8. What religious traditions should be accepted? Col 2:8; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Tim 2:2
9. What are the dangers of using religious observance of laws as a measure of spirituality?

APPLICATION

- How can you avoid hypocrisy in your life?
- What changes do you need to make to fully embrace the commands of God? Ps 51:10

Work from the heart for your real Master, for God. Col 3:23 (MSG)

^{1 2} Mills, M. (1999). *The Life of Christ: A Study Guide to the Gospel Record* (Mt 15:1–Mk 7:5). Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries.

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