

Ritual, Rules and Missing the Point
Upside Down Kingdom: The Gospel According to Mark
July 20, 2025

Notes

Questions for Personal Reflection and Group Discussion

1. Read Mark 7:1-23.

For what purpose did the Pharisees and teachers of religious law come to see Jesus? (See verse 1.) What 'issue' did they confront Jesus about?

How did Jesus respond to their complaint? What example did He give to highlight their hypocrisy and lack of understanding?

In what way had the Pharisees missed the point?

Are there any habits, routines or traditions that you engage in as a follower of Jesus that are about looking good on the outside, rather than transforming you on the inside? What are they?

How could you adjust or even change your spiritual rhythm to more deeply engage your heart and open yourself up to greater transformation by the Holy Spirit?

What is it that Jesus says defiles a person?

What things in the list that Jesus gave in verses 21-23 hit close to home for you? Where is your heart in need of cleansing? What step of obedience do you need to take in response?

2. Read Mark 7:24-30.

Where does this story take place? Why do you think Jesus went there and what might His purpose have been in doing so?

What do you think about the way Jesus interacted with the woman?

How does the woman respond to Jesus? What does her response to Jesus tell you about her character and her faith?

3. Read Mark 7:31-37.

Imagine being unable to hear or talk. What kind of limitations would that put on your life?

In what ways did Jesus show compassion for the man?

How has Jesus demonstrated compassion for you? In what areas of your life has Jesus brought healing? What has been your response to His work in your life? Is there someone who needs to hear your story?