

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

MARK 7:1-13

Dan Kuhlwein ■ Grace Bible Church ■ February 1, 2026

I. Unclean _____ (7:1-5)

II. Unclean _____ (7:6-13)

Mark 7:1-13

¹ Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, ² they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders, ⁴ and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) ⁵ And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶ And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ ⁸ You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.” ⁹ And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ ¹¹ But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, “Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban”’(that is, given to God)— ¹² then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father and mother, ¹³ thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are for further study and application of today's text of Scripture. Thoughtfully writing out the answers to these questions will help to drive home the point of today's study. One of the best ways to grow as a disciple is by discussing these types of questions in a small group. Find a small group here: gracebiblecw.com/lifegroup or ask someone next to you if you can join their group!

1. What does the determination and devotion of the Pharisees to destroy Jesus show us about the true nature of their heart? How does the darkness attempt to extinguish the light?
2. What does the intense focus of the Pharisees on eating and drinking say about the priorities of their heart? (Mark 2:16, Mark 2:23, 7:1)
3. Discuss how to determine when traditions and practices become a distraction from focusing on what matters most and when they can be helpful. What makes a tradition good and what makes it a distraction?
4. Can you identify ways in which you have in the past or currently struggle with self-righteousness? How have you been guilty of casting judgement on others based on this?
5. How do you know if your worship of God is vain in light of this passage? How can you tell if what comes out of your mouth doesn't match what's in your heart?
6. Can you personally identify ways in which people within the church in general elevate traditions over God's commandments?
7. How are you currently obeying the commandment to honor your father and mother?