

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Mark: Jesus The Perfect Servant Of God

#### Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

##### X. Christ's Work To Correct Errant Traditionalism

##### 1. Christ's Work To Correct An Errant Authority For Faith And Practice (Mark 7:1-13)

###### I. Introduction

- A. We learned in our first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright service from personal failure.
- B. At times, such failure arises from an artificial spirituality caused by adopting a teaching that actually violates Scripture, which false spirituality in time leads to a distorted, unedifying lifestyle.
- C. John Mark may have left Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13:13 due to their emphasis on discipling Gentiles, a hard focus for a Palestinian Jew like John Mark who was steeped in Jewish traditionalism, B. K. C., N. T., p. 388.
- D. Jesus countered false traditionalism in Mark 7:1-13 by correcting its errant authority, so we view it for insight:

###### II. Christ's Work To Correct An Errant Authority For Faith And Practice, Mark 7:1-13:

- A. Having heard of Jesus' growing influence, Jerusalem's national religious leaders sent a group of theologically conservative Pharisees and scribes, experts in the Law, to evaluate Christ's ministry, Mark 7:1; Ibid., p. 132.
- B. They found Jesus' disciples eating bread with "unclean" hands, or with ceremonially unwashed hands, Mark 7:2a. The term "unclean" (*koinais*, "common") was "a technical term among Jews denoting whatever was contaminated according to their religious rituals and thus was unfit to be called holy or devoted to God," Ibid.
- C. The Jerusalem leaders found fault with Jesus for tolerating this practice (Mark 7:2b), for Jewish traditions were "considered as binding as the written Law," Ibid., p. 133. Jesus was thus guilty of sin in their eyes, Ibid.
- D. Mark's Gospel was written for Gentiles who were often ignorant of Jewish beliefs and practices, so Mark 7:3-4 explains the extensive body of rules the Jews had developed regarding all sorts of ceremonial washings not only of hands before meals, but in coming from the marketplace where they had been in touch with Gentile merchandise, together with the washings of utensils and even of tables, Ibid.
- E. Accordingly, the Jerusalem leaders asked Jesus why He let His disciples not live in accord with the traditions of the elders, specifically relative to the rule on washing one's hands before the eating of meals, Mark 7:5.
- F. Jesus' reply immediately appealed to the very authority that the religious leaders were countering, the authority of God's Word: He alluded to Isaiah 29:13, recalling Isaiah's complaint of Judah's people who honored God with their lips while their hearts were far from Him in hypocritically teaching as authoritative all sorts of man-made rules that undermined Scripture commands, Mark 7:6-8.
- G. To illustrate, Jesus referred to one practice, that of "Corban" in Mark 7:9-13a (as follows):
  - 1. Jesus referred to Scripture at Ex. 20:12 and Deut. 5:16 (with Ex. 21:17 and Lev. 20:9) that called Israel to honor their parents, including supporting them in their old, financially vulnerable age, Mark 7:9-10.
  - 2. However, authoritative Jewish tradition let one tell his parents the money he had set aside for their care was given to God as a "gift," as "Corban" to a Hebrew, so they could avoid giving that money to their parents while likely not having to give it to the temple, Mk. 7:11-12; Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, fn. to Mk. 7:11.
  - 3. Jesus claimed that this tradition made Scripture's command from God of honoring one's parents ineffective, essentially countering the authority and teaching of God's Word, Mark 7:13a.
- H. Christ said that this was just one illustration of many in which authoritative Jewish traditions of the elders actually nullified the effectiveness of and hence countered God's Word in the Scriptures, Mark 7:13b.

**Lesson:** *Jesus countered human traditions even if they were upheld by theological conservative national leaders when they undermined God's authority and His teaching in Scripture.*

**Application:** *(1) May we correct known violations of Scripture created by our religious traditions, regardless if they are upheld by nationally known, theologically conservative (Pharisees) men and experts in Bible exposition (scribes). (2) May we like Jesus not be afraid to examine and so critique and reject long-held beliefs and practices of even NATIONALLY established conservative, Evangelical leaders and expositors if they VIOLATE the intent and teaching of Scripture! (3) May we also periodically evaluate our practices to see if they reflect the will of God as revealed in Scripture, and make necessary corrections. (4) May we not fear criticism even of NATIONAL conservative religious leaders and expositors if that criticism does not agree with Scripture truth.*