

## WEEK 13: MARK 7 - JESUS RELATES TO THE JEWS & JESUS RELATES TO THE GENTILES

HIGH SCHOOL

### GOAL

To develop a better understanding of Mark 7:1-37

### LESSON

**Materials Needed:** Orthodox Study Bible

**Extended Learning Opportunities:**

*The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Mark* pages 58-63

*The Gospel of Mark the Suffering Servant* by Fr. Lawrence Farley pages 106-117

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## GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 7

### **Read verses 1-5 and then discuss:**

This chapter is an example of Saint Mark writing for a Gentile (non-Jewish) audience. He is explaining Jewish customs to us. He would not be explaining all of this if he were writing for Jews because there isn't any need to explain something to someone who already knows about it. It would be like explaining to you that we light a candle and kiss the icons in the narthex before we go into the nave of the church. All of you already know that because you've been raised as Orthodox Christians. We would have to explain this to someone who was not an Orthodox Christian.

The Jews were confused and scandalized that Jesus and his disciples were eating without washing their hands first. It wasn't so much done for the sake of having literal clean hands before eating but was done more for religious, ceremonial reasons. They believed that it washed away the defilement, the spiritual uncleanness that one would pick up amongst the marketplace of those who were not clean in the sight of God.

Jesus had taught the disciples to work towards virtue and not to worry about less important things. The Pharisees and scribes are once again trying to find something to criticize about Jesus and the disciples. The hand washing was an oral tradition of the Jews and not part of their law. They are gasping at anything to criticize Jesus.

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**Verses 6-13:**

Jesus comes right back at the Pharisees and explains harshly to them how they are wrong. One of the ten commandments (brought to them by Moses) is to honor your father and mother. But, the Pharisees had made a rule to get around this law. They taught their people that if your parents asked you to help out by providing some money to the family, you could tell your parents that you've already dedicated that money to God. Therefore, you didn't have to obey your parents. Jesus tells the Pharisees that they are disobeying the commandment of God by doing this!

**Verses 14-23:**

Jesus explains that it is not the food we eat that taints us. It is what comes out of us - the things we say and do. If we eat a hamburger on a fast day, the hamburger itself is not wrong. Fasting, in part, is to help us develop self control in all aspects of our lives. It's how we treat others around us through our words and actions and our own pride that can make us unclean in the eyes of God.

**Verses 24-30:**

Jesus had taken His disciples to the outskirts of town because they were exhausted from all the work they had been doing. There had been little to no time for sleep or eating. The hope of staying somewhere unnoticed did not work because a Greek (Gentile) woman had seen Jesus and begged Him to heal her daughter from a demon.

Jesus knows that His disciples needed to rest. There was no way He could make a quick trip to her house because of the hospitality customs at the time. Instead, because of her great faith, He healed her daughter from afar and still allows His disciples to have a break from traveling and the crowds of people.

**Verses 31-37:**

Fr. Lawrence Farley explains that Jesus heals a man who is both deaf and tongue-tied by explaining the linguistic choice of words Saint Mark uses in his writings. Additionally, the more Jesus tells people not to share what just happened, the more they tell as many people as possible. Jesus is not looking for fame, only to guide people to God.

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## REVIEW:

- Why does St. Mark explain Jewish customs?
- What is more important, what we put into our body (such as food) or what comes out of our mouth and through our actions? Why?
- Summarize one of the miracles that happened in this chapter.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

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3RD - 4TH GRADES

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1ST - 2ND GRADES

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## GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 7

### **Jesus Heals the Deaf and Mute Man:**

Jesus and his disciples left the area of Tyre and traveled through Decapolis. While they were there, people brought a man who could not hear and had great difficulty being understood when he talked to others. The people begged Jesus to heal the man who could not hear and could not talk.

Jesus took this man away from the crowd and put His fingers in the man's ears and then spit and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, Jesus prayed that the man be healed. Immediately, the man could hear and talk!!

### **Activity:**

What do you think life would be like if you couldn't hear what was going on around you and you couldn't tell people that you needed something? Let's pretend you can't hear or talk and you need to interact with the rest of the class.

### REVIEW:

- Can you tell me what happened to the deaf man who also couldn't talk?

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PRE-K - KINDERGARTEN

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Christ heals the deaf man, 14th century mosaic, Kariye Camii, Istanbul

Church of the Holy Saviour, Chora



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