

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

Words, Works + Ways - Part 7

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Introduction

Jesus and the disciples were criticised by the Pharisees for disregarding religious practices and traditions. The Pharisees had fallen into the trap of religiosity and had become “hypokrites” (Greek word for actor). On a daily basis, we face different traps that could make us hypocrites and pull us further from understanding the words, works, and ways of Jesus.

Bible Passage

Mark 7:1-15

Discussion

1. Read Mark 7:5. The religious leaders wanted Jesus and His disciples to comply with tradition because it advanced their own agendas. How can we distinguish the difference between God’s agenda and our own? Discuss.
2. Read Mark 7:9. The Pharisees ‘sidestep’ (NLT) God’s law in order to hold to their tradition. How might holding onto tradition hinder our relationship with God? How might it help?
3. Mark 7:10-13 is an example of sidestepping. What are some other examples of sidestepping God’s law that you have witnessed?
4. Read Mark 7:6-8 and then take some quiet time for reflection. What is your understanding of Isaiah’s prophecy? What is God saying to you right now?
5. Read Mark 7:14-15, 20-23. What are the things that have been coming out of your heart?
6. Read Proverbs 4:23. Guarding your heart is very important. How can we do this? What is one thing that often hinders you from looking after your heart?

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Respond

Guarding our hearts and staying close to the words, works, and ways of Jesus reduces our likelihood of becoming hypocrites. Is there a mask that has been difficult for you to take off? Take a time of quiet reflection and confession. Share and pray with the person sitting next to you.

Reading Plan:

Week 7 - Read and reread Mark 7.