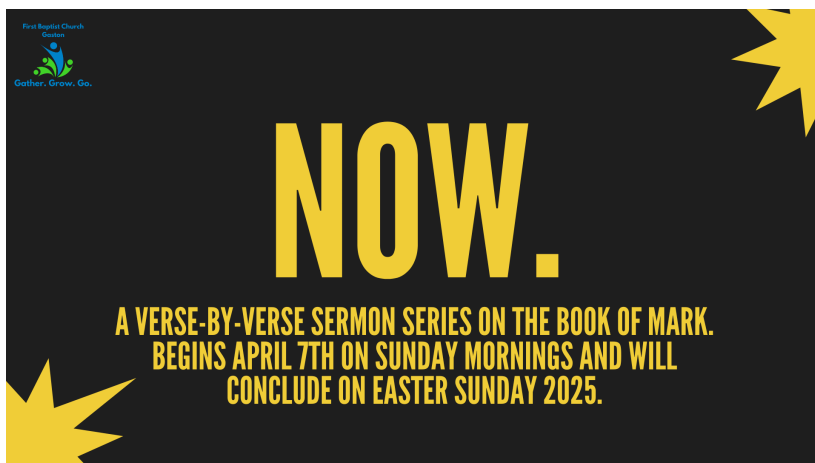


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‘Now!’ Sermon Series

Sermon #27

‘When Was Your Last Heart Check-Up?’

Mark 7:14-23

Sunday, November 3rd, 2024

Last week in ‘NOW’ sermon series:

- Last week we looked at a situation where the Pharisees come to Jesus about a complaint regarding His disciples: ***They weren’t washing their hands!***
 - From Mark 7:1-13, I preached a sermon entitled ***‘Tangled up in Tradition!’***
 - Last week I asked the question:
 - ***How are you and me similar to the Pharisee’s in this passage when we get tangled up in tradition instead of following Jesus?***

- **Truth #1: *Lurking on Others.*** (vv. 1-4)
- **Truth #2: *Lesson for Us.*** (vv. 5-8)
- **Truth #3: *Leaving God’s Word Behind.*** (vv. 9-13)

- Based on last week’s sermon, are you live a Text-Driven life or a Tradition-Driven life?
- Are you tangled up in the tradition of man, or are you rooted in God’s Word?

‘When Was Your Last Heart Check-Up?’

Mark 7:14-23

Sermon in a Sentence:

We can have a spiritual heart check-up today with the Lord when we Reverse our Thinking, see the Root of our Tongue, and the Repercussions that come from a Troubled Heart.

Intro:

- Our heart is one of the most, if not the most, important organs when it comes to your living.
 - ***Your heart pumps and brings air to parts of your body, as well as pumps blood throughout your body.***
 - ***If your heart's not in good condition and is not functioning properly, it won't be long till many of your other organs also begin to not work as well.***

- *Oftentimes the health of your heart will dictate your overall health*
- *As Pastor, it is pretty often (daily) that sometimes I'll have a conversation with one of you about your health where you ask me to pray with you about certain things concerning your health, which I'm honored and privileged to do so. In some cases, the requests get very detailed with health concerns.*
 - *One of the things that comes up often in these conversations oftentimes is the heart.*
 - I know many of you have doctors that are specifically assigned to your heart and they check up on it and do blood tests, blood work, monitor your blood pressure and all of those kinds of things.
- *Trust me, this is very important, but how often do we concentrate more on the health of our physical heart than we do our spiritual heart?*
 - How often do we converse more with our friends and family about our physical health or even physical matters, than our spiritual health and well being?
 - *While on a daily basis I have conversations with you about your physical health, very rarely, hardly ever, do you come to me with your spiritual needs and shortcomings to God...*
 - How much healthier believers we would be, if we discussed our

own spiritual needs and shortcomings, than always concerned about these temporary bodies.

- *The initial point that we will find in our text this morning, is if we think the health of our physical bodies are important, if our physical bodies are only temporary, how much more important is our spiritual health considering that our soul will live forever in eternity?*
- Our passage of scripture this morning is a continuation of the debate between Jesus and the pharisees in Mark 7:1-13.
 - *In our text this morning Jesus goes even deeper on the idea of tradition, and points to what really defiles us, the heart.*
 - Not the laws and what we put into our bodies physically, but what comes out of our bodies.
 - *Remember from last week, that the Pharisees believed that if you ate with defiled hands (unclean), you were defiled.*
 - Jesus explains that the pharisees were wrong in thinking they were acceptable to God because of what was on the outside.
 - It's an internal problem not an external.
- So as we walk through the text this morning and conclude with communion, I want us to enter the Lord's

examination room, and examine our hearts before Him today before taking part in communion to close the service...

Read Mark 7:14-23

Question to Ask:

How can we have a spiritual heart check-up this morning based on what Jesus said here?

Truth #1: *Reverse Your Thinking. (V. 14-15)*

- ‘And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: **15** There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.”
 - **The words Jesus spoke in verses 14-15 were on the heels of the situation where Jesus debates the pharisees.**
 - To the Jewish crowd He would’ve been speaking to, this would have been counter-cultural.
 - **Verses 14-15 are a gentle, surface level reminder compared to how in-depth Jesus is about to go in on this subject in the verses that follow.**
 - What Jesus is essentially saying is **Reverse Your Thinking from what you originally thought, to what Jesus is now teaching.**

- The early NT Church really struggled with what to do concerning the Old Testament laws regarding food.
 - Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14:1-21.
- **From the information that Peter shared with Mark, it seems that Mark uses this information to explain that Christ had made all foods clean (hence the parenthetical citation Mark adds in verse 19).**
 - The early NT Church that received Mark’s Gospel letter, would have been relieved and encouraged with these words, but maybe also confused, as we will see the disciples were.
- ***Word Study***
 - The greek (**προσκαλεσάμενος**) word ‘Proskaleomai’ means to summon and invite.
 - **The ESV translates it to ‘Hear’ while many translations translate it as ‘listen’.**
 - **This verb only occurs 9 times in Mark’s Gospel, and each time they are solemn pronouncements.**
- Scholar James Edwards said ‘Mark again emphasizes that faith and understanding result from hearing. The Jews were fully agreed that eating forbidden or defiled food contaminated one and necessitated a cleansing bath. But Jesus

reverses the direction of flow: it is actually inner impurities that defile things outside.’

- ***If you live close to and with Jesus, He will transform and Reverse your thinking.***
 - ***For Jesus to reverse our thinking is a sign that we’ve been born again in Him.***
- For us to see that we need to reverse our thinking, I think we see one truth we can all apply today...
- ***We must Change Our Mindset to what Christ Cares about, and not mankind. (V. 15)***
 - ‘There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.’
 - ***While you and I don’t have to worry about the ceremonial food laws like the jews, we do have an issue that Jesus touches on here.***
 - ***It’s not what happens on the outside that matters. It’s on the inside, the heart, that only God can see.***
 - As human beings many of us focus solely on the outside, and that’s how we judge a person.
 - Whether that’s by the car they drive, the clothes they wear, the places they eat, or who they hangout with.
 - ***We are so infatuated with the outside.***

- ***What Jesus says here in verse 15, gives us the application that we must reverse our thinking from being so concerned about the inside, to what is growing and going on in the inside of our heart.***
 - ***What comes out of your life, is a result of how closely you are, or are not, walking with God.***
- What comes out of your mouth, says what you believe.
 - ***Do you need to change your mindset this morning to be more aligned with what Christ Cares about and not what mankind cares about?***

Truth #2: *Root of the Tongue. (V. 17-19)*

- ‘And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. **18** And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, **19** since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?”^[1] (Thus he declared all foods clean.)’
 - ***Before we can study verses 17-19, I want to address the ‘elephant’ in the room as to why verse 16 is not found in most modern translations. If it is in your Bible, it is usually in brackets.***
 - Verse 16 adds the phrase ‘if anyone has ears to hear let him hear.’

God is like based on how you talk to others and how you talk about them...

- It is appalling and sad to me that many people who claim to be a 'Christian' sound more like the world than even those who are non-believers.
 - Here's the thing: ***When we eat food, it never touches the heart. But what comes out of our mouth, originates in the heart.***
 - Sadly, many 'Christians' have not had the heart change that the Lord desires for us to have.
- ***Very clearly and plainly Jesus reveals to us that He is concerned about what is on the heart of His people.***
 - ***The jews were more concerned about the legality and logistics of what foods you could eat and which one's you could not.***
- Whether it be food, or not washing your hands, Jesus is showing His disciples that these things do not define your heart.
 - The condition of your spiritual heart is not based on what you eat.
- ***Dr. Daniel Aiken said 'Food is eaten, digested in the stomach, and expelled. Sin, however, remains in the heart and then produces all manner of defilement and death.'***

- ***The Old Testament Dietary Laws are no longer extant. (V. 19b)***

- '(Thus he declared all foods clean.)'
- This part at the end of verse 19 is a parenthetical citation that Mark adds.
 - ***Jesus teaching here declared that all foods were clean.***
- ***The Jews at this time in Jesus earthly ministry, still followed the Mosaic ceremonial laws that distinguished between 'clean' and 'unclean' foods according to Leviticus 11:1-47.***
 - The purpose of the Mosaic ceremonial laws in the Old testament was to instill an awareness of God's holiness and of the reality of sin as a barrier to fellowship with God.
 - Meaning, to understand how Holy God was and how they weren't near as Holy as He.
 - ***One foundational truth the Jews didn't understand, is that the Old Covenant Laws (like this one), were never meant to be permanent, they were placeholders.***
 - Sadly, many Jews still practice the dietary laws today.
- ***Once a person has full fellowship with God through the atoning death of Jesus, the***

ceremonial laws have fulfilled their purpose and are no longer needed nor required!

- The Blood of Jesus is enough!
 - ‘I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.’ Romans 14:14
- ***What Jesus said here, showing that it’s not what we put in our mouths that defiles our spiritual hearts, is the reason you can eat a steak today! Or a hamburger tonight.***
 - But the root of your tongue, is an issue and Jesus is clear in that. What comes out of your mouth, reveals what is growing inside.
- ***Is their spiritual fruit growing in the garden of your heart? Or is it the fruit of sin?***
 - We’ve seen that we must reverse our thinking, the root of the tongue, now we move into the part of the text that reveals the repercussions/proof of the heart.

Truth #3: *Repercussions of a Troubled Heart. (V. 20-23)*

- ‘And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. **21** For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, **22** coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. **23** All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”’

- ***These verses are the final point and emphasis that Jesus makes in regards to the heart, and in His Galilean ministry.***
 - Mark 7:24 and Matthew 15:21 will tell us that Jesus and His disciples were going to head north next to Tyre and Sidon.
- ***I find it very significant that the last point of Emphasis that Jesus leaves on the Galilean region before heading to the gentiles up north, is the issue of the heart.***
- ***Verses 20-23, are the explanation and real life examples that Jesus gives in explaining to His disciples, what He originally said back in verse 15.***
 - ***Jesus started out by wanting them to reverse their thinking.***
 - ***Don’t think in terms of ritual cleanliness, but spiritual cleanliness.***
 - Not what you put in, but your actions and attitude that comes out.
 - ***Then Jesus wanted to show His disciples that the root of the tongue is the main indicator that there is indeed, a heart issue.***
 - By looking at what comes out, you are able to see what the temperature of the heart really is...
 - Let’s take a look at the Repercussions of a Troubled heart.

- **Repercussions of a Troubled Heart. (V. 20-23)**
 - **In these verses, we find the Repercussions of a heart that is troubled, defiled, and not connected to the Lord.**
 - The sins that we find here are the repercussions and fruit, of a heart that is focused on self and not the Lord.
 - **If the Holy Spirit is living in the heart of a believer, then good spiritual fruit will grow.**
 - **The same is true if sin's roots are in a person, the fruit of sin grows and it is ugly.**
 - Jesus mentions 13 characteristics of the evil actions that come out of a sinful heart.
 - **If any of these are prevalent in your heart today and you haven't truly repented, today is the day you ask Him to forgive you, and allow the Holy Spirit to come in and cleanse your defiled heart...**
 - **These 13 characteristics in the greek text are quite fascinating...**
 - The first 7 items that Jesus mentions (all in verse 21 and 2 in verse 22), are in the plural.
 - **Because they are plural in the greek, this would imply they are repeated acts without remorse or repentance.**

■ **The last 6 items that Jesus mentions are in the singular in the greek, which would imply that they are attitudes.**

- Whether it be repeated acts or attitudes, both can defile our spiritual hearts, and the blood of Jesus is the only thing that can clean us up!
 - Now let's quickly look at each of the repercussions of sinful heart that Jesus Himself stated...

Evil Thoughts (Greek Kakos-κακός)	Corruption and devising schemes. Evil Thoughts set the stage for evil actions.
Sexual Immorality (Greek Pornēia-πορνείαι)	This general greek word refers to any and all sexual sins that go against God's design for sex.
Theft (Greek Klope-κλοπή)	All of these tend to lean heavily towards the OT (Jesus knew His audience, jews). The eighth commandment (Exodus 20:15), one should not steal.
Murder (Greek Phonos-φόνοι)	Taking an Innocent life, the sixth commandment (Exodus 20:13)

Adultery (Greek Moicheia-μοιχεΐαι)	Violating the marriage covenant by engaging in sexual behavior mentally (Matthew 5:28) or physically with someone you are not married to (Exodus 20:14), seventh commandment.
Coveting (Greek Pleonexia- πλεονεξΐαι)	Greed, and an advantage over another to obtain riches. The tenth commandment (Exodus 20:17)
Wickedness (Greek Poneria- πονηρίαί)	Deliberate malice and mischief. Evil disposition of the mind.
Deceit (Greek Dolos- δόλος)	A bait or trap to catch someone. Fraud, dishonest and cunning treachery.
Sensuality (Greek Aselgeia- ασέλγεια)	Unbridled and shameless living that is lacking in any moral compass whatsoever.
Envy (Greek Poneros Ophthalmos- όφθαλμός)	A figure of speech in the greek for envy, and jealousy, but rooted in

πονηρός)	unbelief. It believes that God is withholding His best from you. An attitude of always wanting more.
Slander (Greek Blasphemia- βλασφημία)	Slandering and railing someone to the point of defaming them. It is to speak evil of man and God.
Pride (Greek Hyperephania- ύπερηφανία)	Only time this word occurs in Greek NT, haughtiness and arrogance.
Foolishness (Greek Aphrosyne- άφροσύνη)	Spiritual insensitivity, and inconsiderate of others and the things of God.

- **The bottom line from these 13 characteristics is that evil actions will come from one's heart who is saturated in sin and not in the Savior.**
 - If even one of these characteristics are found in you this morning and you haven't repented (turned from them), then today is that day...

Conclusion:

- **In just a minute, we are going to transition from having our heart check-up with the Lord, to remembering His death, burial, and resurrection...**

- In just a moment our praise team is going to come and sing our invitational hymn.
- *While they sing, this will be our time of invitation.*
- ***If you are not saved this morning, if you've never asked Jesus to save you from your sin, then today is the day that you need to invite Jesus into your heart as Lord of your life. If this is you, I encourage you to grab my hand or Pastor Steve's hand during this time.***
 - If you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, it's time you ponder about your ***heart condition.***
 - ***Hopefully, you've already been allowing the Holy Spirit to diagnose your heart this morning. Now, it's up to you to respond.***
- After the time of invitation we are going to take part in the Lord's Supper: I'd like to take a brief moment and give some biblical instruction concerning communion.
 - **The night before Jesus was betrayed, he conducted the Lord's supper with His disciples.**
 - This has become the way that we remember what our Lord did for us on the cross. The way we remember His death which was the sacrifice for us.
 - As you picked up the communion cup that you received as you walked in, I want to remind you that Communion is for those who are believers in Christ Jesus.

- **If you are not a Christian, we ask that you not partake in communion.**
- Why?
 - ***Because how can you remember something someone did for you if you don't even believe in them?***
- **Preparing ourselves for the Lord's Supper.**
 - **Self-Examination.**
 - "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord." 1st Corinthians 11:27
 - We must examine our own hearts and ask Jesus to Cleanse us.
 - **Confess my Sins.**
 - "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1st John 1:9
 - It's important that we confess our sins in prayer and ask that the Lord will forgive us.
 - **He is faithful and just to forgive us.**

■ **Recommitment.**

- “I appeal to you therefore, brothers,^[a] by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” Romans 12:1
- Every day that we live on this earth following Jesus we just recommit ourselves to Him and away from sin.

■ **Restoring Relationships.**

- “So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, **24** leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24
- We should make things right with others before we partake in Communion.
 - If you have beef with someone, make it right.

■ ***Let’s take a moment to pray, reflect, and get things right with the Lord before we take part in communion after this song.***

■ **The Bread Represents the Body of Christ.**

- The Body that was pierced for our transgressions.
- ‘For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “**This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.**” -1st Corinthians 11:23-24

■ **The Juice Represents the Blood of Christ.**

- In the way we remember His body, we must also remember his blood that was spilled out for us!
 - “In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”-1st Corinthians 11:25-26
- *Instead of having a time of closing announcements today, I want to encourage us*

*to leave reflecting what God has done for us by
sending His Son.*