

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Jesus Broadens His Ministry
Mark 7:1-8, 14-30

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

For the youth application time, have a piece of poster board or newsprint and pictures of people from many different ages, races, and socio-economic groups. The youth will make a collage of people who are welcome to worship with us. It should serve as a focal point for the Worship Time.

Worship Time Leader:

Ask someone ahead of time to give the “**Praying for the World**” moment. Information for that may be copied from the second from last page of the material for this week.

Music Sources:

“You Are My King”, **WOW Worship** (Yellow) 2003.

“Awesome God”, **WOW Worship** (Yellow), 2003.

“You Are My All in All”, **WOW Worship** (Yellow), 2003.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Jesus Broadens His Ministry*****Focal Text**

Mark 7:1-8, 14-30

Background Text

Mark 6:53-8:10

Main Idea

Jesus breaks down the barriers of human traditions that people sometimes try to erect to restrict access to God's salvation.

Question to Explore

What barriers do we insist that people cross to have access to God's salvation?

Teaching Aim

To help the class decide to do away with any human barriers that restrict access to God's salvation.

Gathering together:

Sing "You Are My King", **WOW Worship** (Yellow) 2003.

First thoughts:

John and his sister Becky were on a trip with a group of young adults. John and Becky were very close and enjoyed each other's company. The group was to catch the blue bus in order to visit a place for several hours. The group stayed together most of the day, but somewhere along the way, John disappeared. The group waited at the bus stop for over two hours. Waiting on John! Everyone felt sorry for Becky. She got on the bus to everyone's amazement. She said, "John got his own self lost, he can get his own self found." Everyone followed her. John did show up later. He had gotten on the wrong bus and had to start all over again.

The Pharisees had made a similar mistake. They chose to follow the traditions of men rather than the way of God. Our lesson today brings this choice into sharp focus.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Jesus Broadens His Ministry

Focal Text

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Introduction to your personal study:

In various cultures there is disagreement about what it is to have true religion. Some would say pray five times a day. Others would crawl on hands and knees for a required distance. Some would say visiting a particular location or shrine would be acceptable religious practice. Still others would say attendance at a religious service is sufficient to be religious. Just yesterday the writer heard the statement, “This is not a church.. It couldn't be because of the kind of music they sing.” These and many other barriers are erected that seek to restrict access to God. Today's passage looks at what Jesus says is proper religious practice and what is useless religious tradition and how he seeks to break down these obstructions.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

It would be a good exercise to research a little of the conditions of public markets found in the towns of Palestine 2000 years ago (dirt, rotting vegetables and meat, raw sewage, etc. and the heavy smells that accompanied all of that). If you have a Bible dictionary or perhaps access to the Internet, you can learn much about the marketplaces of that area in those days. Such information can help your group visualize the situation that provides reasons for the story you will study.

Focusing on the Meaning:

Jesus teaches about futility of outward religious ceremony (Mark 7:1-16).

Mark 7:1 Pharisees and other teachers came to Capernaum to check out Jesus and his teaching. They came from Jerusalem which was about twenty-five miles west of the Northern tip of the Dead Sea. They had come to Capernaum on the Northwest side of the Sea of Galilee. The Pharisees had come at least seventy miles to investigate Christ.

Mark 7:2 The Pharisees were disturbed that the disciples were eating with “unclean” hands. Their objection was not based on sanitary or health concerns but from ceremonial traditions. The disciples had ordinary hands, not dirty hands. The Pharisees were concerned about the traditional cleansing.

Mark 7:3 Ceremonial washing consisted of rubbing one hand and arm with the other hand clasped. One scholar suggests that this could be done without water. The Pharisees and Jews ceremonially washed, to be in observance of the traditions. The Pharisees despised people who neglected the traditions and habits of the elders.

Mark 7:4 The conditions of the marketplaces made it impossible for individuals not to be ceremonially defiled. The Pharisees observed this ceremonial washing in addition to many other traditions. Most of these were outside the Mosaic law. The teachings of the teachers became equally authoritative with the actual word of God. In the ceremonial cleansing, it was customary to break pottery cups and pitchers and to dip into water with wooden vessels. This was all for ceremony and not for sanitary and health reasons.

Mark 7:5 The Pharisees and teachers question Jesus about the conduct of his disciples. They were concerned about the disciples observing the traditions of the elders. The law of God is not even among their considerations. They are concerned about the keeping of religious traditions. They accused the disciples of eating with unclean hands rather than hands that had been ceremonially cleaned. Jesus was not disregarding the need for physical cleanliness. Remember that it was Jesus who

washed the feet of his disciples and often healed people by having them wash and cleanse themselves. Rather, he concerns himself in these moments with the hypocrisy of those who were verbally attacking Jesus and his followers.

Mark 7:6 Jesus reminds them of the teachings of Isaiah about hypocrisy. Isaiah taught of outward worship without inner devotion and of religious speech without obedience. God desired outward behaviour that came from inner relationship and attitude.

Mark 7:7 God desired devotion based on his requirements and not ritual as determined by other man's customs or teachings. Worship of this type was futile. What the Pharisees taught were rules made by man. They had substituted tradition and minuscule commandments for the law of God.

Mark 7:8 Jesus made a sharp distinction between the commandments of God and the traditions of men. He says that the commands of God are subverted to the customs of men. The Pharisees have abandoned the word of God to be obedient to the traditions of their elders. They substituted tradition for the commands of God. They traded will of God for the opinions of man. The elders became their authority rather than Moses or Jehovah.

Mark 7:14 Jesus turned from the Pharisees and addressed the multitudes. He made an appeal for the people to see through the trickery of the religious leaders. He called for the people to both hear and to understand.

Mark 7:15 Jesus explained to the crowd that it was not the lack of observance of religious tradition that made man unclean spiritually. He explained that real defilement came from the mind and heart of man himself.

Mark 7:16 (This verse is omitted in early translations).

Jesus further explains emptiness of outward ceremonial practice (Mark 7:17- 23).

Mark 7:17 Leaving the crowd and going in the house, the disciples asked Jesus for an explanation. Alone, they wanted him to clarify the parable of clean and unclean more thoroughly.

Mark 7:18 Jesus questioned and chastised his disciples about their lack of understanding. They had listened to his teaching, yet they were under the Pharisee's theological influence. They knew the traditions of "clean" and "unclean." They didn't understand Jesus' teaching on these subjects. Jesus told the disciples that they were intellectually dull and spiritually stupid.

Mark 7:19 Mark wrote his gospel account from the accounts of others. The statement here is probably a recitation that comes from Peter's experience in Joppa. Peter had an experience on the housetop where he refuses three times to eat unclean animals and

God responds saying nothing was unclean that God had made clean (Acts 10-14-16). Jesus was illustrating that there was a great deal of difference between the Pharisaic uncleanness and Godly uncleanness.

Mark 7:20 Instead of what goes into a man, it is what comes out that that is unclean. It was not unclean food that a person ate that made him spiritually unclean. It was what came out of a man's being that made him spiritually unclean.

Mark 7:21 Jesus tells about the uncleanness that comes out of man. He lists uncleanness of the heart rather than uncleanness of religious practices. Among them: evil thoughts - thinking that defile a person just as outward evil defile. Sexual immorality - sexual sins of the unmarried. Theft - taking that which is not rightfully yours. Murder - the taking of a life. Adultery - sexual sin of the married.

Mark 7:22 Greed - wanting what is not ours. Malice - other hurtful evil deeds. Deceit - to lure or trap others. Lewdness - unrestrained sexual impulses. Slander - damaging talk. Arrogance - putting self before others. Folly - lack of sense.

Mark 7:23 Jesus summarized by saying that the evils just listed come not what is taken in to the body but comes from the heart of man. The issues of the heart are what makes a person unclean.

Jesus is Concerned About all Cultures and Races (Mark 7:24-30).

Mark 7:24 Jesus went into a distinctly heathen land around Tyre. He is getting away from the influence of the Pharisees. Jesus sought privacy and rest. This was his purpose in going there. Notice the "yet." He was not able to keep the quiet and privacy he sought.

Mark 7:25 In this heathen area Jesus and his compassion and power were known. He had not come to preach or work miracles. He could not keep his presence secret. A woman came who had a daughter with an evil spirit. We do not know what the woman had heard of Jesus. We do know she felt that Jesus could do something with her daughter's possession by an evil spirit. She acknowledged her humility and need by falling at his feet.

Mark 7:26 A woman with a Greek religion, Syrian speech, and of Phoenician race came to Jesus. She came in behalf of her daughter. She implored him to drive the demon out of the daughter. It was a persistent request.

Mark 7:27 Jesus responded that his ministry was to the Jews. Jews had the first claim on the Messiah. He was saying that his teaching, healing, and ministry was to the Children of Israel. He is saying this even as the Jews are not accepting him as the Messiah. Jesus pictured the family dog playing under the table as a family eats. To bless the Gentiles would be like taking food from the Jews.

Mark 7:28 The woman did not resent Christ's statement but turned it to her advantage. She indicated that the children had their portion of the food. The dog under the table had their own provision. She pointed out that the dog under the table got to eat the crumbs that fell to the floor. She did not want the provision for the children, but the portion for the dogs. She recognized that even the smallest of his blessing would be adequate for her need. She knew that Jesus had the power to satisfy her request. She was demonstrating a faith that the Jews had not yet exhibited. We do not have another record of a person arguing with Jesus and turning his statement back to her advantage. She was not afraid of him but she was reverent toward him. She was bold in her approach to Christ as she presented the request and argued for him to grant it.

Mark 7:29 Her answer satisfied Jesus. Her petition was granted. The demon had left the beloved daughter. Jesus told her that because of her response that the request was fulfilled. Jesus saw her faith and rewarded it.

Mark 7:30 The woman returned home. Her daughter, still lying on the bed, was free of the demon. The demon was gone. The mother's request to Jesus and the bold defense of the request brought Jesus' intercession. The girl had not seen Jesus. The request of her mother and the blessing of Christ brought relief and freedom.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Jesus is equally available to all people. This access to the saviour is not through another person, priest, pastor, religious teacher rabbi or guru. It is not through performing a specific religious act or routine. It is not by following a specific tradition handed down by family. Relationship to Jesus is not determined by race, blood line, tribe, language or nationality. Many times Christians as well as others erect barriers that would hinder the lost from knowing Christ. This passage helps us understand that Jesus has broken down these walls and that all people can approach him directly.

For Personal Reflection:

1. **What have I learned from this study?**
2. **What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**
3. **What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Jesus Broadens His Ministry

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc. Children who stay with their parents in the Youth/Adult study should have the material on worship as suggested in **The Children's Corner** at the beginning of this **Unit** of studies. (Ask your leader who downloads the studies for those suggestions).

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Mark 7:1-8, 14-30

Background Text

Mark 6:53-8:10

Main Idea

Jesus breaks down the barriers of human traditions that people sometimes try to erect to restrict access to God's salvation.

Question to Explore

What barriers do we insist that people cross to have access to God's salvation?

Teaching Aim

To help the class decide to remove any human barriers that restrict access to God's salvation.

Connect with Life:

Tell this story to the congregation: Following World War 2, Germany was divided politically, militarily, and geographically into an Allied section and a Communist section. People from the East wanted to go to the Western sections because life was so much better. People from the Communist section were leaving by going into the Allied portion of Berlin. To keep the people from doing this, the Communist built what was known as

the Berlin Wall. It was almost 100 miles long and made up of a concrete wall and/or barbed wire fence with an average height of almost 12 feet. There were 302 watch towers manned by police and equipped with spot lights and arms. People sought to escape by climbing over or under the barricade. Some jumped from windows overlooking the wall. Some dug tunnels and crawled through to escape. Approximately 170 people were killed or died trying to escape during the 28 year existence of the wall. Something like 5,000 individuals managed to escape through, over, or under this barricade.

Guide the Study:

Say: Many of us put up barriers for people to surmount to become Christians. Some people would say you have to be of a certain race. Others would indicate that a person has to have a certain pattern of behaviour. Still others would say you would have to do certain things (such as be baptized). Still others would say you have to attend a church that goes through certain prescribed acts.

Ask: Can you think of other traditions that some individuals would insist that people observe so they can become Christians? Allow time for responses.

State, Let's look in Mark 7:1-8 to discover one of the barriers the Pharisees placed in the way of Jesus and his disciples.

Have a person or persons read Mark 7:1-8.

Ask: What was the fence or barrier they confronted Jesus with? Give this answer if pupils do not volunteer it: "They said Jesus' disciples were not ceremonially cleansing their hands before eating".

Explain the tradition of hand cleansing as promoted by the Pharisees. Use the comments from Mark 7:2-5 as material.

Ask: How did Jesus answer their accusation they made in Mark 7:5-6? Help pupils arrive at answers in verses 6-8. (These should include "used scripture from Isaiah to condemn them, called them hypocrites, and accused them of obeying the traditions of men, not following the commandments of God).

Mention: Also in v. 13 he told them that they cancelled the word of God by their adherence to human traditions.

Ask: What does Jesus say to clarify what really makes a person unclean before God? Help those in attendance discover the answer in v. 31-32. (He explains that it is what comes out of a man is what makes a person unclean.)

Say: Let's look in Mark 7:20-23 to see what uncleanness can come from people. Read scripture. Give a mini-lecture detailing each of the unclean things that come from people's hearts. List each item and then describe it using the commentary from the verses.

Comment: Each of these attitudes and actions exist even today. Jesus is concerned about what comes out of a person rather than the person's strict adherence to human habits or feelings about what is correct.

Say: In addition to erecting barriers of traditional practices there are other fences we want to build.

Say: Let's read Mark 7:24-30 to discover another. Read scripture.

Call for answers: What is the barrier? Help members to see that the barriers listed here are language, nationality, and race. Use the commentary to add to this answer.

Question the group: Why did the woman approach Jesus? (She had a daughter with a demon).

Ask: How did Jesus respond to the woman's request? Give answer as stated in v.21.

Seek an answer: What was the woman's response? (She acknowledged Jesus' mission to the Jews and simply asked for the overflow, the leftovers, of his ministry to them).

Call for a response: How did Jesus respond as listed in Mark 7:29-30? (Jesus told the woman the daughter's demon was gone and the woman found the evidence of this when she got home).

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Say: In this study we have found that tradition is placed as a barrier to people finding Jesus. Tradition can simply way we have always done a thing. We also discovered that language, nationality, and race can be barriers to us making Jesus available to all people.

Tell this illustration: "A small church had a building that could accommodate one hundred people for worship and Bible study. This church, in a metropolitan area where it is extremely difficult to own or rent a building to use for worship, was running about

ten adults in attendance. A larger group of believers from a different culture and language wanted to use the building in the afternoon. However, on occasion, the other group needed to serve certain kinds of ethnic food to their people when they brought visitors to special services. It would be a breach of courtesy in their culture for them not to do so. If they did not do so, the visitors would probably not return. The ten members refused the language group because the food which the other group needed to serve would leave strong odours in the building.”

Ask: How do you feel about the actions of the ten people who owned the building and met there? Get responses. Do not be judgmental toward the responses given. They may not agree with the response that you might give.

Ask: What are some barriers that we have placed in people's ways of encountering Christ?

Let pupils give their ideas and suggestions. Lead in prayer that God will help us to overcome these barriers to others becoming Christians.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Jesus Broadens His Ministry **Mark 7:1-8, 14-30**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Focal Object for Worship Time

Make a collage of pictures of those who should be welcomed to worship with God's people. The collage should serve as a focal point for the Worship Service to follow.

Use different colours, shapes, sizes, writing etc. than you did for your previous collage.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Jesus Broadens His Ministry***
Mark 7:1-8, 14-30**Beginning the Service:**

Sing "Awesome God", **WOW Worship** (Yellow), 2003.
 "You Are My All in All", **WOW Worship** (Yellow), 2003.
 Or, choose a hymn or worship song known to your church.

Have a young person explain the collage which the youth made during the Bible Application time.

Offering:

Have a child take up the offering. If he/she is comfortable doing so, ask him/her to say a prayer of thanksgiving.

Praying for the World:

(The time of **Praying for the World** should be given by another member of the group. Demonstrate inclusiveness in your worship service today by using as many of the group as possible.)

The following is printed on the next to last page of this session. Copy it out for the person to read in the time of **Praying for the World**.

Think about keeping a personal prayer journal. In it write specific prayer needs for each day of the week. Adopt a missionary family and pray for them each day. Organize requests by categories, such as illness, financial problems and physical and emotional upheavals. Pray for the lost around the world and for specific people. Expect answers to your prayers and make notations of when and how prayers are answered.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond

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16

***Jesus Broadens His Ministry* – 02-05-07-en**

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to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

The Track to Salvation

Ephesians 2:8-10; Mark 7:1-16

Introduction:

Have you ever looked at a railroad track? You can either go forward or backward. The tracks don't give you any other obvious choices. Our text offers a similar choice to us. We either take the traditions of men or the laws of God. We choose either works or grace. The track to salvation takes the way of grace. Works go the wrong way. Paul wrote, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works (Eph. 2:8-9a)."

Most people today expect to go to heaven. They trust that the God of love will know they have tried their best to be good. He surely would not send them to hell. The thought that is missing is that God gives each of us a free choice. We decide which direction we want to go – forward to grace or backward to works. Which direction are you going? Jesus told us how to know.

I. The way of works will not lead to salvation.

The Pharisees were very righteous men. They kept all the laws they could to be right with God. In Mark 7 they accused Christ and the disciples of not observing "the tradition of the elders (V.5)." Ceremonial washings were the works of men, not the will of God. No one has ever found salvation by observing rules. What part of "not by works" do we not understand? The rich young man of Mark 10:17 attempted to keep the commands of God and was still unsatisfied. The way of works will always disappoint us. Mark 10:22 records that the young man "went away sad." He could not – would not - change directions. The track to salvation is not the works track. We did get our own selves lost, but how do we get our own selves saved?

II. The way of grace will lead to salvation.

Nicodemus learned that he would never even see God's Kingdom unless he was born again (John 3:3). That new birth is a gift from God. He has provided all we need to be saved. Paul writes in Romans 5:8, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We are saved by his death! It is a free gift from God. It is grace through faith, not works. The Pharisees held men's traditions high in their hearts but were lost. Letting Jesus into our hearts can save us.

III. How does a person change direction from works to grace?

Paul's answer is "through faith (Ephesians 2:8)." We must admit we are going in the wrong direction. By faith we must ask God to save us through Jesus. He is the one who turns us around. It is not of "ourselves." It is God's gift! Paul experienced this change of direction. He was persecuting Christians. On the road to Damascus he met Jesus and was saved (Acts 9). He totally changed directions.

Call to Commitment:

John Newton was thinking about the track to salvation when he wrote:

***"Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."***

John Newton, 1725-1807

Which track are you on? Choose faith today.

Concluding the Service:

Ask your congregation to stand and read together Romans 1:14,16,17; 12:1,2.

This passage is printed for copying from the New International Version on the final page of this session.

It can be found for reading in the "antiphonal" format as #530 in the Baptist Hymnal, 1991 edition. Antiphonally, the leader will read the light print and the congregation will read the dark print.

Praying for the World:

Think about keeping a prayer journal. In it write specific prayer needs for each day of the week. Adopt a missionary family and pray for them each day. Organize requests by categories, such as illness, financial problems and physical and emotional upheavals. Pray for the lost around the world and for specific people. Expect answers to your prayers and make notations of when and how prayers are answered.

(Make enough copies for all the group to see while reading.)

Read together or antiphonally as the benediction to the service:

¹⁴I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish.

¹⁶**I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.**

¹⁷For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

¹**Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.**

²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

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