MARK

Mk. 7:9-15
Wk 28
Pastor Chip

General:

- Where have you seen people create “workarounds” to avoid dealing with a problem directly? Why can that approach be so tempting?
- How can someone genuinely believe they're honoring God while actually resisting what He's asking them to do?
- Why do you think it's possible to use religious commitments as an excuse to avoid other responsibilities God has given us?
- How can we distinguish between traditions that help us follow Jesus and traditions that actually get in the way of following Him?
- In verse 10, Jesus points back to the commandment to honor our father and mother. Why do you think honoring God is so closely connected to the way we treat the people around us, especially those closest to us?
- Why can it be easier to demonstrate religious devotion than to practice genuine love, respect, and honor in our relationships?
- In verse 15, Jesus begins challenging the idea that external things are what ultimately make someone spiritually unclean. Why are we often more concerned with correcting outward behavior than addressing what's happening in our hearts?

Take Home 1: In what ways might we be rejecting God while clinging to our own traditions, beliefs, or boundary markers? *(Mk. 7:9)*

- How often do we defend certain church traditions or practices simply because "we've always done it that way"? How can we discern whether those traditions actually reflect what Scripture teaches?
- What personal preferences, convictions, or cultural expectations might you have elevated to the level of biblical requirements? How could that affect the way you view or treat other Christians?
- Why are we sometimes willing to overlook behavior in people we admire that we would readily condemn in someone else? What does that reveal about our priorities?
- How can our desire to have our own preferences, needs, and expectations met by the church distract us from participating in the Great Commission? Where might you see that consumer mentality in your own approach to church?

Take Home 2: We need to bring back some honor in our culture *(Mk. 7:10)*

- What's the difference between disagreeing with someone's decisions or beliefs and treating that person as unworthy of honor or respect? How well do you maintain that distinction in your own relationships?
- Pastor Chip emphasized that we should respect authority without making those in authority untouchable. How can we genuinely honor someone in authority while still holding them accountable when they're wrong?
- Who in your life is most difficult for you to honor right now? What might it look like to demonstrate genuine respect toward that person without necessarily agreeing with them or excusing their behavior?

Take Home 3: What is on the inside is what defiles us *(Mk. 7:15)*

- Pastor Chip said, "What we refuse to deal with internally will eventually show up externally." What patterns in your attitudes, words, or actions might be revealing something deeper that you haven't fully addressed in your heart?
- When you're confronted with something wrong in your life, are you more likely to address the underlying issue or simply work on making the outward behavior look better? Why?
- What is something you may need to stop hiding and honestly bring before Jesus?
- What would taking a practical step toward healing and transformation look like this week?