



Grace Church Elementary

Camp Grace

LESSON 62

3rd and 4th Grade

Principle: The outward appearance does not determine our standing before God. The condition of our heart does.

Bible Character(s): Jesus and the disciples

Scripture Reference: Mark 7:1-23



PERSONAL PREPARATION:

Before this weekend, please read Mark 7:1-23. Certain customs and rituals had been developed and elevated in importance above God's law. The Pharisees strove to observe these religious traditions. They were more concerned with keeping these traditions than allowing God to change their hearts to live for Him. As you read about the ceremonies and traditions of the Pharisees, think about the different rituals or traditions you keep that do not accurately reflect your heart. It might be a routine prayer before a meal, communion, a worship response, or serving others. What are your motives behind your behavior? Are you more concerned with how others see you, or with how God sees you? Are your behaviors and actions based on Biblical truth or man-made rules? Do you judge others who do not follow your rules? Spend a few minutes in prayer and ask God to reveal how you live for yourself and how you appear to others, instead of living for Him.

PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

God Looks at the Heart

Supplies:

Large bowl (1 per bin)

Jug/bottle of water (1 per bin)

"What are some things that can make you dirty?" (Playing in the mud, painting etc.) Most of these would make you dirty. You would need to wash your hands, face, or even your clothes to clean off all of the mess. Today we are going to learn about a story where the Pharisees think that Jesus'

disciples are unclean (unclean meant that they were very wrong and were sinning). What do you think the Pharisees thought was unclean? (Allow responses.)

Ask for a helper and instruct the child to cup his hands over the bowl as you pour water into them.

The Pharisees thought that if the disciples did not wash their hands a certain way before eating they were “unclean” and sinning! Jesus would later say that this is not true. What kind of things does Jesus think is sin? (Allow for responses but make sure to address that sin, of any kind, makes us dirty.)

BIG GROUP TIME - 35-40 minutes

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God** through worship, **Respecting All Leaders**, and **Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears, minds, and hearts – fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

The Bridge to Small Group

Today we will focus on the condition of our hearts. We will see that our actions do not determine our standing with God; the condition of our hearts is what matters. It is not bad to do good things, but these things do not matter if your heart is not right.

Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes

Getting Started

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

What did you learn in Big Group? What was the Drill Sergeant focused on? (Following the rules, looking clean and neat on the outside.) **What did the staff member who arrived late teach the Drill Sergeant?** (God cares about our hearts, not just how we look on the outside; God wants us to focus on loving others well instead of how others see us.)

Last week, what did we learn about Jesus? (We learned that He is our provider.) **What did He give the disciples?** (Rest.) **What did He give the people?** (Bread and fish; they were hungry and He fed them.) He gave them enough food from five loaves of bread and two fish to satisfy more than 5000 people! It seemed impossible, but Jesus could provide this food because everything is possible with God. We learned that we can trust God to take care of all our needs.

Does anyone remember what a Pharisee is? (Allow responses.) A Pharisee is a religious leader (similar to a pastor, priest or elder) who focuses on following the rules or law. Today we are going to see how Jesus responds to the Pharisees. Let’s begin by reading the Bible in Mark 7 [NLT].

Mark 7:1-5

1 One day some Pharisees and teachers of religious law arrived from Jerusalem to see Jesus. 2 They noticed that some of his disciples failed to follow the Jewish ritual of hand washing before eating. 3 (The Jews, especially the Pharisees, do not eat until they have poured water over their cupped hands, as required by their ancient traditions. 4 Similarly, they don’t eat anything from the

market until they immerse their hands in water. This is but one of many traditions they have clung to—such as their ceremonial washing of cups, pitchers, and kettles.)

5 So the Pharisees and teachers of religious law asked him, "Why don't your disciples follow our age-old tradition? They eat without first performing the hand-washing ceremony."

What were the Pharisees accusing the disciples of doing wrong? (Allow responses.) The Pharisees were trying to say that the disciples were wrong for not washing their hands. To them, this made the disciples bad people. These washing rules weren't given to them by God, though. They were made by man. These rules were not bad things; it is always a good idea to wash your hands before you eat, but washing their hands did not change their hearts and make them right with God.

Let's continue reading the Bible to see how Jesus responded to the Pharisees.

Mark 7:6-8

6 Jesus replied, "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote,

'These people honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.'

7 Their worship is a farce,
for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.'

8 For you ignore God's law and substitute your own tradition.'

The Pharisees made additional laws and added them to God's commands. They believed that following these laws made them a better person, or acceptable to God. Jesus says that the Pharisees looked good on the outside because they followed the rules, but He said, "Their hearts are far from me." Why did Jesus say the Pharisees' hearts were far from Him? (Allow responses.) The Pharisees' actions did not make them right with God; it did not remove the sin from their heart. Even though they tried to obey all of the rules, they were not following and worshiping God; their hearts were still sinful. Were the Pharisees following these rules to live for God? (Allow responses.) No, they were following these rules for themselves, not because they wanted to bring God glory.

God is interested in our hearts (our thoughts and the reasons we do things), not just our actions. If you lied to your mom, will washing your hands make you feel any better about it? Will that take the lie away? (Allow responses.) No, washing our hands when we lie does nothing about the lie or the sin. We have to admit we are wrong and ask for forgiveness. Let's look at some examples of times when our hearts are not in the right place.

Condition of the Heart



The purpose is to see that following rules and doing the right thing does not matter if we do not have the right attitude and motive.

Supplies:

Situations guide (2 per bin)

White board

Write "The Correct Action" on one side of the white board and "Condition of the Heart" on the other. Explain that as you read through the situations, the campers should tell you what the correct action was in each. Write these on the board.

Then have them tell you what the condition of the person's heart was (the motive behind the action) and write that down. Discuss with your campers if the people were doing the right thing but did not have a good attitude or motive, or if they were doing the right thing because they knew it was what God would want them to do. Do this for each situation. Help them see that doing the right thing does not matter to God if we do not have the right attitude and motive. If you want to go deeper, take a couple of the examples and ask your class what a godly attitude would look like.

Tie It Together

 This can be a hard thing to understand. Some of these actions aren't bad. The difficult thing is recognizing when our heart is not right. God cares more about the condition of our heart than our words or actions. Sometimes it is very obvious that our attitude is wrong. There might be times when we think we are doing the right thing, but our reason for doing it is wrong. Doing the correct action doesn't matter; it doesn't make you a good person. God cares about the condition of your heart (your attitude, motives, and intentions.) When we grow closer to God through reading our Bible, praying, and spending time in community, God can show us the sinful attitudes that we have in our hearts. Let's continue reading the Bible.

Mark 7:14-15

14 Then Jesus called to the crowd to come and hear. "All of you listen," he said, "and try to understand. 15 It's not what goes into your body that defiles you; you are defiled by what comes from your heart."

What does defile mean? (Allow responses.) Defile means to make dirty. Jesus explained to the people that it is the sin in our heart that makes us dirty. The food we eat does not make us dirty or sinful. It is the condition of our heart, that is shown in how we talk and act that makes us sinful or dirty inside. Our actions and words show whether we are living for ourselves, or living to bring glory to God. Our hearts are unclean because of sin, but God sent Jesus to die as a sacrifice for our sin, so that our sinful hearts can be made clean through faith in Him. Let's examine this further.

Overflowing Pitcher



The purpose is to see that the condition of our heart is seen in our actions.

Supplies:

Jug/bottle of water (1 per bin)

Bottle of food coloring (1 per bin)

Red plastic cup (2 per bin)

Fill both cups halfway with water. Place a few drops of food coloring in one cup. Ask the kids which

cup looks clean by looking at the outside. Now have them look inside the cup and ask them which cup looks clean. (Make sure to rinse out both cups for the next service to use.)

Tie It Together



God cares about our heart, what's on the inside, more than how we look on the outside. He cares about whether we live to bring Him glory, or if we live for ourselves by choosing to do and say things because of how it will make us look to others. When we live for ourselves, we can look like we really love God and want to serve Him, but our hearts are dirty with sin. We are really doing and saying things to give *ourselves* glory, not God. It's kind of like this cup with dirty water inside of it. We can look clean on the outside, but we are dirty on the inside because of sin. How we look on the outside does not change how we look in the inside. Our actions, thoughts, and behaviors are what come from our heart, but they do not change our heart. When you put your faith and trust in Jesus, your heart is washed clean. You can live to bring glory to God by having a desire to love and serve Him in all you do, instead of living for yourself.

Let's read the Bible to see how the disciples respond to Jesus' teaching.

Mark 7: 17-23

17 Then Jesus went into a house to get away from the crowd, and his disciples asked him what he meant by the parable he had just used. 18 "Don't you understand either?" he asked. "Can't you see that the food you put into your body cannot defile you? 19 Food doesn't go into your heart, but only passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer." (By saying this, he declared that every kind of food is acceptable in God's eyes.)

20 And then he added, "It is what comes from inside that defiles you.

Jesus said it is what comes from a person's heart that makes them unclean. Our actions, what come out of us, do not remove the sin from our hearts. The condition of our hearts show in our actions and the choices we make. God is concerned with our hearts, and the thoughts and motives behind what we choose to do. He wants to change our hearts. We can ask Jesus to change our hearts because He died for our sins. Jesus is the only one who can change our hearts and make them clean. When we have a clean heart, it shows in our actions and words. We make choices to do and say things because we love God and want to worship Him.

God Looks at the Heart



The purpose is to remind us that God sees our hearts not our outer appearances.

Girls: Heart Sun Catcher

Supplies:

Spool of yarn (2 per bin – different colors – enough for two yards per camper)

Color floral wire (12" per camper)

Verse tag – 1 Samuel 16:7b (1 per camper)

Craft sample picture with instructions (1 per bin)

Pair of wire cutters (1 per bin)

Scissors

Hole puncher

Clip off a 12" piece of floral wire for each camper and have her bend it into the shape of a heart. Next, tie the yarn onto the heart and pull it across the heart, looping it around the wire on the opposite side. Repeat until the desired design is complete. Tie a knot and cut the yarn, leaving enough length to hang the heart. Give each camper a verse tag with a hole punched in the corner. Have them attach the tags to their hearts as a reminder that God does not look at the outward appearance, He looks at the heart.

Boys: Wire Heart Design (2 Options)

Thick wire (12" per camper)

Thin wire (1-2 yards per camper)

Chicken wire (optional – see option 2)

Bag of nuts, bolts, washers (1 per bin)

Verse tag – 1 Samuel 16:7b (1 per camper)

Pair of wire cutters (1 per bin)

Scissors

Hole puncher

Craft sample picture with instructions (2 per bin)

Option 1 (thin wire):

Clip off a 12" piece of **thick** wire for each camper and have him bend it into the shape of a heart. Next, wrap the end of the **thin** wire onto the heart and pull the wire across it, repeating and crisscrossing the process until the desired design is complete. As the camper crisscrosses the wire, he can add a few nuts and bolts for decoration. Tie a knot and cut wire with enough length for hanging. Give each camper a verse tag to add to the wire to serve as a reminder that God does not look at the outward appearance, He looks at the heart.

Option 2 (chicken wire):

Clip off a 12" piece of **thick** wire for each camper and have him bend it into the shape of a heart. Next, cut a piece of **chicken** wire the size of the heart and have the camper bend the ends to the thick wire heart, filling the middle of the heart with the chicken wire. Campers can use extra wire to attach nuts and bolts to the chicken wire for added decoration. Tie a knot and cut wire with enough length for hanging. Give each camper a verse tag to add to the wire to serve as a reminder that God does not look at the outward appearance, He looks at the heart.

Tie It Together

 The Lord sees our heart when He looks at us. He is not concerned with what we look like or how many good things we do. He is concerned with our heart, with our thoughts and motives for why we live the way we do. When we put our faith and trust in Jesus, He changes our heart so that we desire to bring glory to Him through the choices we make each day. We can make choices to say or do things in order to give God the glory. God knows our motives behind the choices we make; He can see what is in our heart. He knows if we are truly choosing to live for Him or not.

Prayer Time

Spend a few minutes in prayer to close small group time. Ask God to change our hearts, to give us a desire to follow him with happy hearts, to change us from the inside out.



2801 Pelham Rd. Greenville SC 29615 Ph: 864.284.0122 Fx: 864.284.0222