

Now You've Got My Attention

When we think about the gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – Mark isn't usually the first place we go. Yet Mark, listening to the eyewitness accounts of Peter, wrote a fast-paced gospel sharing the miraculous things Jesus did, including His death and Resurrection, to convince his Roman readers that Jesus is the Son of God. Let's not overlook what we can learn about our Savior in the overlooked gospel.



INTRODUCTION

In our continued exploration of “The Overlooked Gospel,” Mark 7:1-30 teaches that God’s attention is captured by the condition of our hearts more than following a set of rules.

STARTER QUESTION

The sermon scripture shows that Jesus’ attention was caught twice - once by the Pharisees who were ruled by their laws and again by a pagan woman’s earnest heart. What gets your attention?

INTO THE WORD

Read Psalm 51. Journal or discuss how this psalm shows honesty, trust, brokenness, and hope. How are these heart qualities different than simply obeying rules?

Read Acts 13: 42-52. Compare how both the Jews and the Gentiles reacted to Paul and Barnabas’ teaching. What are the similarities of the Jew’s reaction in this passage to that of the Pharisees in Mark 7:1-23? What is the root of their antagonism?

Read Ephesians 22:11-22 and Isaiah 49:5-6. Discuss/journal the promises made in scripture. How can we reconcile these verses with Jesus’s response in Mark 7:27? How do these verses apply to the division our nation is experiencing today?

APPLICATION

From today’s message, who can you identify with: the Syrophenician woman; the Pharisee; or one of Jesus’ disciples? What is one practical step to maintain and/or cultivate a relationship with God vs. simply building a resume of following the law?

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for following “the tradition of men” (Mark 7:8). How do we see people today act like Pharisees? How are we to respond to those around us who choose the tradition of men over the commands of God?

On the surface, Jesus’ reply to the Syrophenician woman is confusing and out of character. Have you ever been turned away by God because it wasn’t your time? How did you handle it?

PRAYER

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.
Psalm 51:10-12