Finding Jesus Again

A Study in the Gospel of Mark

Mark 7

1 Now when the Pharisees
gathered to him, with some of the
scribes who had come from
Jerusalem, 2 they saw that some of
his disciples ate with hands that
were defiled, that is, unwashed. 3
(For the Pharisees and all the Jews
do not eat unless they wash their
hands properly, holding to the
tradition of the elders,

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4 and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) 5 And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?”

Exodus 30

17 The Lord said to Moses, 18 “You shall also make a basin of
bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it
between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water
in it, 19 with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and
their feet. 20 When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they
come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the Lord,
they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. 21 They shall
wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be
a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring
throughout their generations.”

The Potholes of Religion

1. Religion goes wrong when it expands on the life- giving wisdom of God in order to exclude others.

La religión se equivoca cuando se expande en la sabiduría dadora de vida de Dios para excluir a otros.

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6 And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

“‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me;

7 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’”

The Potholes of Religion

1. Religion goes wrong when it expands on the life- giving wisdom of God in order to exclude others.
2. Religion goes wrong when it is used to promote our status and power over others.

La religión sale mal cuando se usa para promover nuestro estatus y poder sobre los demás.

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8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.”

9 And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! 10 For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’

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11 But you say, ‘If a man tells his
father or his mother, “Whatever you
would have gained from me is
Corban”’ (that is, given to God)—
12 then you no longer permit him to
do anything for his father or
mother, 13 thus making void the
word of God by your tradition that
you have handed down. And many
such things you do.”

The Potholes of Religion

1. Religion goes wrong when it expands on the life- giving wisdom of God in order to exclude others.
2. Religion goes wrong when it is used to promote our status and power over others.
3. Religion goes wrong when it builds kingdoms that serve itself.

La religión se equivoca cuando construye reinos que se sirven a sí misma.

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14 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.” 17 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,

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19 since it enters not his heart but his
stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he
declared all foods clean.) 20 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.”

The Potholes of Religion

1. Religion goes wrong when it expands on the life- giving wisdom of God in order to exclude others.
2. Religion goes wrong when it is used to promote our status and power over others.
3. Religion goes wrong when it builds kingdoms that serve itself.
4. Religion goes wrong when it points fingers at the sin of others, forgetting that the source of evil is the human heart.

La religión se equivoca cuando señala con el dedo el pecado de los demás, olvidando que la fuente del mal es el corazón humano.

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24 And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. 25 But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. 26 Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophoenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

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27 And he said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.”

28 But she answered him, “Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.” 29 And he said to her, “For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter.” 30 And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

“After-words”

What examples of “religion gone wrong” have you seen in your life or in history?

Which of these are you most prone toward falling into?