

Mark 7:1–13

- **We’re called to meet folks at the bar!**

- Making the laws is always easier than actually following them!
 - Our appearance as ‘church folk’ doesn’t define our identity...
...we do not make the Law...we’re just people trying by grace to obey it!
 - God sets the bar for who may enter low enough for even a child to enter...
...and high enough to knock sense into the self-righteous!
 - The commandments that God make are for our own good...
...the traditions we establish are for our own good...see the difference?
- If our hands are clean, we haven’t spent enough time getting them dirty!
- We meet at the bar because that’s where everyone is equal!
 - Equally sinful, equally guilty, equally condemned without Christ! –

- **The practice of ministry is a WHOLE lot messier than the theory.**

- Faith is about more than saying the right words in the liturgy and performing the right actions...! t’s about your hope rest when you can’t!
- The words of the Gospel call us to an inclusive, pub-oriented approach ministry...
...and away from the clean-cut country club mindset of entitlement by tradition.
 - The folks that Jesus and the disciples spent the most time with were sick, demon-possessed, and unclean by every established system! (see Mark 6:53-56!)
 - If our traditions, structures, and sensibilities are offended by those we’re called to be with, the issue isn’t with them!
 - Our “non-negotiables” are things with eternal impact...not earthly importance.
- The fact is...we are stewards of the Gospel, but ministry always belongs to God!

- **We should be fed up with consuming anything that doesn’t build up the Body!**

- We love to meet our neighbors at the bar, where we’re welcomed with open arms!
 - Acts of Service: As it becomes even more tempting to isolate ourselves away from the brokenness of others...how can you be intentional in being in ‘the middle of the mess’? As we continue to partner with Lutheran Social Services of Alaska...what are some ways you can be a blessing as they prepare for the Harvest of Hope Auction on September 21st? As ministry opportunities continue to abound with Anchor Lutheran School...how can you be a blessing supporting Anchor’s teachers in their classrooms?
 - Intentional Discipleship: As our family of faith continues to welcome new folks...how are you actively seeking out ways to grow deeper in your faith? With a world bent on breaking down men and women of faith...who are intentionally gathering with to built back up? When the mess of ministry gets heavy...whom do you go to share the weight?
 - Invitations to Worship: As we return to having two opportunities to worship on a Sunday...how will you be intentional about being in relationship with folks in both?
- “The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel.” (Isaiah 29:19)

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