



Cuyahoga
Valley Church

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Week of 3.15.26
Mark 7:1-23 // Joe Valenti

Please take the opportunity to revisit the CVC Equip
Portrait of a Healthy LifeGroup on a regular basis

CONNECT (10 MIN)

- ① What is one way that you have seen God's goodness in your life this week?

EXPLORE (30 MIN)

Create Context (5 min):

HERE is the Sermon Recap video playlist on Vimeo.

Study & Discussion (25 min)

Read Mark 7:1-23. Pray to begin.

- ① Revisit Mark 7:1-5. What were some ways that the religious leaders in Jesus' day held tradition and rituals above the commands of God, or above relationship with God? What are some ways that Christians today are tempted to do this same thing?
- ② Revisit Mark 7:8-13. Then read Exodus 20:12 and Leviticus 19:3.
 - Based on these texts and on how Joe explained Mark 7:8-13 on Sunday - in your own words, how were the people dishonoring their parents utilizing the idea of "Corban?"
 - In what ways were the people being called to honor their parents in this culture during Jesus' time?
 - What do you think it looks like to honor your parents in this season of your life as a way to respect and care for them and also live in obedience to the Lord?



③ On Sunday, Joe mentioned some “traditions” that Protestants today can hold over and above what Jesus tells us is most important in the Scriptures. He gave a few examples of what these can look like: political affiliation, church involvement or consistent attendance, acts of service, consistent giving, Bible knowledge, etc. No matter what denomination we are in or what time period we live in, Christians are always tempted in some way to try and justify ourselves by our behavior rather than by trusting in the finished work of Jesus.

- What are some ways that you are sometimes tempted to ignore what’s happening in your heart by focusing instead on the things you are doing for God? In what ways are you tempted to rely on yourself instead of relying on and trusting in who Jesus is and what He has done?
- What’s going on in your heart today that you need to pay attention to, that you need to give over to God, in order that you can love Him more deeply and walk with Him more closely?

④ Read Psalm 139:23-24. On Sunday, Joe gave us some reflection questions to consider at the end of his sermon. Take a moment to reflect on these before breaking into groups of 2-3 to discuss them.

- Are there any areas of your life where your outward behavior looks right, but your heart is not in it?
- Are there places where money or possessions have captured your heart even while you continue to appear generous? Ask the Lord to show you what you love - to show you where your trust is.
- Are there relationships in your life where bitterness or resentment have taken root and have yet to be dealt with?
- Are there any ways where you’ve learned to put on “a good Christian show” but deep down your heart has grown distant from God?

⑤ Is there anything that the Lord has put on your heart, in the reading of the passage, the hearing of the sermon, or the discussion in your LifeGroup, that you feel you need to share with someone? If so, be bold in sharing your heart and asking for prayer - whether this is a sin struggle, a renewed commitment, or a new step into faithfulness and trust in Jesus Christ.

PRAY AND APPLY

1. Pray for the preaching of God's Word.

Ask the Lord to give Pastor Joe clarity, boldness, and compassion as he explains this difficult passage. Pray that his words would faithfully expose the difference between outward religious activity and true heart transformation, and that the authority of Scripture—not the personality of the preacher—would carry weight in the room.

2. Pray that the Holy Spirit would search and soften hearts.

Ask God to protect people from the instinct to compare themselves with others or deflect conviction. Pray that the Spirit would gently but clearly reveal areas where outward obedience may be masking deeper heart issues—pride, bitterness, lust, greed, envy, or self-sufficiency.

3. Pray that conviction would lead to repentance, not shame.

This passage exposes the condition of the human heart. Pray that those who feel conviction today would not retreat into guilt or defensiveness, but would be drawn toward repentance and the grace of Christ. Ask that people would experience the kindness of God that leads to real change.

4. Pray for those who may feel spiritually confident but distant from God.

Ask the Lord to lovingly disrupt any sense of false spiritual security that comes from religious habits without heart transformation. Pray that those who have relied on external practices—knowledge, church activity, generosity, or moral behavior—would recognize their deeper need for the transforming work of Christ.

5. Pray for genuine heart renewal in our church.

Ask God to continue shaping CVC into a church that values true transformation over outward performance. Pray that our worship, relationships, generosity, and service would flow from hearts that genuinely love and trust Jesus.



Cuyahoga
Valley Church

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week of 3.15.26

Please take a moment to share these announcements with your group.

INVITE

Easter Services 2026

Friday, April 3

Family Tenebrae: 5:30 pm (Lower Level)

Tenebrae: 7:00pm

Easter Saturday: April 4

3:00pm, 5:00pm

Easter Sunday: April 5

8:00, 9:30, 11:15am

SEND

Panama Mission Trip Interest Meeting - March 15

INTEREST MEETING - FILTER OF HOPE PANAMA TRIP. March 15 at 1:00pm in lower level 101/102. Attend the meeting to hear from the trip leaders Dave & Karen Genco and find out who can apply for this trip, what the requirements are, when the application opens and closes, what the trip cost is and what it covers, and more!

CULTURE Link - March 20-21

CVC Send Ministry is excited to announce that the CULTURELink Seminar is coming back to CVC on March 20-21! Whether you are a former, current, or future mission trip leader, this practical and engaging training is designed to equip you for effective cross-cultural ministry.

[REGISTER HERE!](#)