

## A The problems of tradition:

### ❖ Substitute the commandments of God. Mark 7:1-13.

- Out of excess zeal, the Jews had extended a commandment addressed to the priests to all people, to avoid ritual contamination ( Ex. 30:17-21).
- The question of the scribes and Pharisees was intended to prove that Jesus did not respect the Commandments (Mark 7:5). But that question turned against him.
- Jesus did respect the Commandments. They were the ones who broke them and replaced them with their own traditions (Mark 7:6-8).
- An example: If they dedicated something to God [ *Corbán* ] – a house – became usufructuaries until their death, but they could not use it for any other purpose, such as helping their parents (Mark 7:9-13).

### ❖ What pollutes and what doesn't. Mark 7:14-19.

- The “sanctified meat” (of a sacrificed animal) became “unclean” when touched by someone ritually unclean (Haggai 2:12-13).
- In the Pharisaic tradition, this was extrapolated to any food (allowed by Leviticus 11), and to any person, whether impure or not. The question raised had nothing to do with the foods that could or could not be eaten, but with the way in which they were eaten (with purified – washed – or unpurified – unclean hands).
- But Jesus made it clear that clean food does not become unclean by eating it without performing the traditional rite (Mark 7:18-19).
- However, what really contaminates a person is what is inside them. Our sins arise from our desires and thoughts (Mark 7:20-23).

## B Tradition and the Gentiles:

### ❖ Little dogs that surpass their masters. Mark 7:24-30.

- According to tradition, a Jew could not touch a Gentile (pagan, foreigner), enter his or her house, or eat with him or her.
- In dealing with this Greek woman, Jesus seems to support these traditions (Mark 7:26-27). In this description, the Jews are the children of God, and the pagans are “dogs” (domesticated dogs).
- The woman caught the clues Jesus left in his message, held on to them by faith, and won the argument over Jesus! (Mark 7:28).
  - (1) “Leave first”: She could ask for second place and take advantage of the crumbs of the satiated.
  - (2) “Puppies”: Domesticated dogs (not strays) were part of the family and, therefore, could enjoy its benefits

### ❖ Ears that are left open. Mark 7:31-37.

- Upon arriving at Decapolis they brought a person to be healed. Taking him aside, he used a peculiar system to heal him (Mark 7:32-34). By his actions, Jesus allowed this man to exercise faith that He could heal him. As a result, many marveled at Jesus (Mark 7:35-37).
- But why did Jesus groan as he exclaimed, “Be open”? The deaf man could hear clearly, and the first words he heard were those of Jesus. But Jesus thought about those who, hearing, did not want to hear his words or receive his message.
- Jesus wants us to have our ears ready to listen to his messages, and also to hear the cry of those who need to hear a timely word from us.

## C The yeast of tradition. Mark 8:11-13.

- ❖ When they arrived at Dalmanuta , Jesus met the “deaf Pharisees,” who asked him for a sign of his authority (Mark 8:10-11).
- ❖ He refused to give them any sign. Nothing could convince those who did not want to be convinced. Disappointed, he left the region, embarking with his disciples (Mark 8:12-13).
- ❖ During the journey, Jesus spoke to them about the “yeast of the Pharisees,” that is, the teachings and traditions that permeated religion and corrupted it (Mark 8:15).
- ❖ The disciples did not understand the metaphor. They forgot that Jesus can make unlimited resources available to us (Mark 8:16-21).