

## Why we like to add to what God says

Working on the outside gives us control; working on the inside requires change.

Mark 7:1-23

The Pharisees turned helpful spiritual tools into rigid religious rules.

Romans 14:1-7, Proverbs 30:5-6, Colossians 2:20-23, Mark 7:1-9, Micah 6:6-8

God doesn't want our religion - he wants a relationship.

Isaiah 1:11-20, John 1:11-13, Romans 8:14-16, John 14:15

### Man's Traditions

Outward forms—bondage

Frivolous rules

Outward piety

Neglect, replace the Word

### God's Truth

Inward faith—liberty

Fundamental principles

True inward holiness

Exalts the Word of God

## NEXT STEPS

Welcome to the Winter Quarter of Life Groups!.

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great meeting as you come together to connect and encourage one another to grow and to see God change our lives from the inside out!

### GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. If you had to choose a new mode of transportation for your daily use, and it wouldn't affect your ability to get from place to place, which one from the list below would you choose and why?

- Sports Car •Quad •Motorcycle •Speed Boat •Skateboard
- Horse •Camel •Limo •Train •Bicycle •Police Car •Fire Truck
- Other

As you look toward 2012, what are one or two things you're looking forward to?

### Digging Deeper Mark 7

The Pharisees often placed their cultural teachings and man-made rules on equal footing with the teachings of the Bible. Jesus responded to this practice in Mark 7:1-13. Read it and then answer the questions below.

What does He say are some of the results of elevating tradition and man-made rules to the level of the Bible?

As you look at your own life, are there any areas where you've allowed some tradition or man-made rule to have as much authority as the Bible?

What specific complaints does Jesus raise against the Pharisees' approach to tradition? Mark 7:6-13

What sorts of traditions do we observe today that get in the way of really honoring God?

How does Jesus' view of becoming "unclean" differ from that of the Pharisees (vv. 14–23)? Mark 7:6-13

In what ways do we sometimes emphasize appearance over internal reality?

Why is the condition of our heart so important to our actions?

Read Psalm 51:10. How can you have a clean heart?

## **TAKING IT HOME**

### **1. HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?**

As you look to this new year and life group session, are there any character traits or descriptions of God you especially want to keep in mind?

2. What are you looking forward to in this new Life Group quarter? Is there anything you personally want to put extra focus on to grow yourself spiritually?

Possible ideas for you personally:

- Serving others
- Time with family
- Personal time with God
- Additional time on Life Group homework
- Prayer
- Using my gifts & abilities
- Words of kindness/ encouragement to others