

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON MORALITY

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

I. THE ACCUSATION

- A. *“Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with hands defiled?” (Mark 7:5)*
- B. It’s a Dirty World!
 - 1. We are obsessed with cleaning. We buy Kaboom and Comet by the box load. We use antibacterial soap.
 - 2. The world is so dirty. There are germs everywhere we go. If we’re not careful they will make us sick.
 - 3. That same sentiment can easily be transferred to people.
- C. The Mr. Clean Approach.
 - 1. The word “Pharisee” literally means “separated ones.” Let’s just stay away from all “dirty” people!
 - 2. They did their best to live morally and involve God in every aspect of their lives. They looked good on the outside.
 - 3. They were the best Bible students and the best behaved.

II. THE CONDEMNATION

- A. *“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 ...’ (Mark 7:6)*
- B. The Source of Pollution.
 - 1. *“These people make a big show of saying the right thing, but their heart isn’t in it. They act like they are worshiping me, but they don’t mean it.” (The Message)*
 - 2. They were teaching their doctrines as God’s Word.
- C. A Pharisee Quiz:
 - 1. Are you hypocritical?
 - 2. Are you critical? Do you see what’s wrong with everything?
 - 3. Are you self-righteous? Are you closer to God than others?
 - 4. Are you a fixer? God has appointed you to fix everything.
 - 5. Are you bossy and intolerant?
 - 6. Do you over-react to sin?
 - 7. Do you glory in anything but Jesus and the cross?

III. THE EXPLANATION

- A. *“For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts...”(7:21)*
- B. The Dyson Experience.
 - 1. Sleeping Beauty’s Castle.
 - 2. Inside-out Living.
 - 3. Which would you prefer: good habits or a good heart?

Prayer Concerns: Members – *Burney Biesel, Mac Kerr, Jane Lipford, Anne Miller, Vicki Page, Mildred Sentell, Carol Webb ...*
Friends – *Madison Brooke Binkley, Bobby Byrd, Sarah Clark, Richard Cole, Jack Cothran, Cledus Creel, Larry Fowlkes, Mary Ann Griffin, Nancy Gunnels, Bonnie Hart, Ralph Henson, Sharon Jefferies, Jeff Joyner, Linda Lindner, Van Lynch, Macy Morgan, Jordan Murray, Taylor Murray, Judy Owen, David Ray Petrie, Patrick Ramage, Skip Riley, Tom Sinis, Elizabeth Todd, Lloyd Watson, Thomas West, Bobby Williams ...*

PASTORAL PRAYER

Loving Father, the trouble with life is that it comes to us so quickly that we don't always have time to think about how to respond to it, about what to do and what to say. Suddenly it's on us, and we're speaking and acting, and all our training is put to the test. And later, in the quiet moments, we remember how we did.

Be with us in this quiet moment of worship, as we confess how many times what we did does not look good in the remembering, how just a bit of gentleness could have stopped that quarrel short and saved so much pain, but we were not gentle. How just a touch of understanding could have started a process of healing, but we were not understanding; how just a word of hope could have made all the difference to someone, but we had no hope to share at that moment.

Be with us, then, in those quick encounters that come so unexpectedly upon us. But more than this, comfort us with the knowledge that we are not perfect. We will say the wrong things and do the wrong things too many times. But we are still your children, and you love us. Let that love encourage us and keep us coming back and trying our best, we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

MARK 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Now when the Pharisees gathered together to him, with some of the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem, they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands defiled, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash their hands, observing the tradition of the elders; and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they purify themselves; and there are many other traditions which they observe, the washing of cups and pots and vessels of bronze.) And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with hands defiled?" 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;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.'

You leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men..."

And he called the people to him again, and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him ... For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a man."

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

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| September 10 | <i>Good News for Desperate People</i> | Mark 7:24-37 |
| September 17 | <i>Gideon Speaker</i> | |
| September 24 | <i>Christ-minded Christianity</i> | James 3:13-4:8 |

On the Radio (1450 AM)

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| September 10 | <i>I Believe in God</i> | Genesis 1:1-2, 26-28 |
| September 17 | <i>I Believe in Jesus Christ</i> | John 1:1-18 |
| September 24 | <i>I Believe in Prayer</i> | Matthew 6:5-15 |