

污秽的源头——马可福音 7:14-23

The Source of Defilement—Mark 7:14-23

Introduction, Outline

- Scripture Reading; Mark 7:1–23; Hebrews 9:8–14, 10:19–25.
- Scripture Mark 7:14-23 [NASB1995]

The Heart of Man

14 After He called the crowd to Him again, He *began* saying to them, “Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: 15 there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man. 16 [“If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”] 17 When he had left the crowd *and* entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable. 18 And He *said* to them, “Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, 19 because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?” (*Thus He* declared all foods clean.) 20 And He was saying, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. 21 “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting *and* wickedness, *as well as* deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride *and* foolishness. 23 “All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”

- “The reason why I am who I am is because... I was born in a broken family! I didn’t get a good education! My husband is always away from home; my wife always complains we don’t have enough money; my children are stubbornly obedient; my boss is a tyrannical exploiter!.....” In other words, my problem is my environment! It's everyone else’s fault! Is that so? What does the Bible say?

- Outline:

Title: The Source of Defilement

1. The Conflict over Defilement (Background)
2. The Scope of Defilement (v.14)
3. The Illustration for Defilement (vv.15-16)
4. The Confusion about Defilement (vv.17-19)
5. The True Source of Defilement (vv.20-23)

The Conflict over Defilement (Background)

- In the first 13 verses, the Pharisees accused Jesus and His disciples of not washing their hands according to traditional rules. Their issue was not personal hygiene but the endless cleansing rituals that the Pharisees had kept for centuries as an attempt to cleanse

themselves. Jesus first debunked their hypocrisy, and then, He took the opportunity to teach a lesson on the real issue of cleansing.

- Let's learn about legalism from the Pharisees. *“Legalism is a class of people who have come to be known as **“controllers.”** These people only know **black and white.** There're **no gray areas** to them. They insist you live your Christian life according to their opinions. If you reject their way they'll try to **intimidate you or manipulate you with weapons like “guilt trips,” rejection and gossip.** Legalism lives by a **standard of conduct that goes beyond the teaching of Scripture—this conduct becomes the measuring stick for spirituality in the Christian community.** Legalism happens when you create personal convictions for yourself in areas not specifically addressed in the Word of God, which can be okay for you. But as soon as you **elevate your personal convictions to the authority of Scripture,** you become a **legalist—you're adding to the Word of God.”** - A pastor*

The Scope of Defilement (vv.14)

- “He called the crowd to Him... ‘Listen to Me, all of you...’”: This is not just for the Pharisees, but all of you! You all must face this reality. Defilement of the heart is a reality everyone must face on their own. The defilement you need to deal with is not other people's defilement, but your own defilement first. Don't apply these teachings to others, you don't know other people's heart!

Psalm 51:5 “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.”

Jeremiah 17:9 “The heart is more deceitful than all else, And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?”

[Misuse] Don't use this principle to challenge others' motivation: “Are you really doing this out of love? Are you trying to please God or people?” This kind of motive battle has no end! Jesus wants each of us to face our own inner defilement!

The Illustration for Defilement (vv.15-16)

- “... goes into him ... proceed out of the man”: Verse 15 says this is a metaphor, that is, using concrete things to illustrate abstract principles. So, the picture Jesus wants us to see is this: food, excrement. Which one is dirtier? The Pharisees take great care of the food that goes in from their mouths, but they can't see that the whole place is filled with their excrement!

Matthew 23:25-26 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.”

[Principle] Paying too much attention to external piety may indicate the Pharasaic kind of spiritual mysophobia, which really is an attempt to avoid the real issue of inner defilement. You can divert attention by putting on all kinds of pious shows, such as, “See how I dress up for Sundays and do all this of service,” whereas no one really knows about your corrupt personal life. It is this kind of hypocritical spiritual mysophobia that Jesus exposes of the Pharisees.

Titus 1:15 “To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure,”

[Principle] The difference between true purity and spiritual mysophobia lies largely in the difference between the inside and the outside.

Psalms 51:10 “Create in me a **clean heart**, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Matthew 5:8 “Blessed are the **pure in heart**, for they shall see God.”

1 Timothy 1:5 “... love from a **pure heart** and a **good conscience** and a **sincere faith**.”

2 Timothy 1:3 “I thank God, whom I serve with a **clear conscience** the way my forefathers did...”

The Confusion about Defilement (vv.17-19)

- “His disciples questioned Him about the parable”: The disciples were utterly confused. They didn’t have a clue of what Jesus meant. This is all thanks to the influence of the Pharisees.

[Impact] When people’s attention is all preoccupied with external rules, no one will pay attention to the defilement inside. Therefore, under the leadership of the Pharisees, the entire Jewish culture became a culture of superficial mysophobia, and even the disciples were deeply affected by this.

- “Are you so lacking in understanding also?”: Your Old Testament Bible is full of requirements for the heart, so you have no excuse for not understanding this. You are my disciples, don’t you even understand this most basic truth? How can you shoulder the mission of preaching?

Deuteronomy 10:16 “So circumcise **your heart**, and stiffen your neck no longer.”

Proverbs 4:23 “**Watch over your heart** with all diligence, For **from it flow** the springs of life.”

Proverbs 21: 2 Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord **weighs the hearts**.

1 Samuel 16:7 “... man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the **heart**.”

1 Kings 8:39 “... act and render to each according to all his ways, **whose heart You know**, for You alone know the **hearts of all the sons of men**.”

[Discernment] What about all the external regulations in the Old Testament? There are many cleansing rituals in the Mosaic Law, which seem very similar to the Pharisaic

traditions, right? Answer: The cleansing regulations in the Old Testament were symbols, which have always been designed to depict spiritual truths. The purpose of all the cleansing rituals is to show us the need of cleansing, because our souls are defiled.

Hebrews 9:10, 14 “10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations **for the body** imposed until a time of reformation. 14 how much more will **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, **cleanse your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?”

- “Do you not understand that...”: Still in a rebuking tone. Don’t you even know this most basic truth?

[Application] Perhaps we should hear some rebukes too. Are there any traditions outside the Bible that we’ve come to love so much that it’s almost as inviolable as God’s command? What external standards, which are not clearly specified in the Bible, have become part of our nature that we use them to measure other people’s spiritual status?

- “... all foods clean”: Yes, Christians can eat pork and blood. All foods are clean as long as eating them doesn’t violate other principles of Christian living. If you still have any feeling that certain food should be avoided after all just because the Old Testament says so, it is all legalism and externalism and completely misses the point of the Old Testament!

Colossians 2:23 “These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.”

The True Source of Defilement (vv.20-23)

- “out of the heart of men”: The heart in the Bible usually refers to the control center of our mind, namely, our soul. The function of the heart is not to passively feel love, but to actively send out thoughts. What comes out of the heart are all kinds of evil schemes.
- “Evil thoughts”: This is a summary of the entire list. The original text has it standing alone at the front as a summary of the various sins that follow. It does not refer to some fleeting thoughts, but the process of contemplative reasoning which deliberately devices evil.

“The birds will fly over, but you don’t have to let them build a nest in your hair.” — Martin Luther

Philippians 4:8 “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.”

- “... fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness”: Six plural nouns, emphasizing specific crimes.

- “... deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness”: Six singular nouns, indicating these evil thoughts cannot be quantified. It’s more like a general attitude that continually proceeds from the heart, with no beginning or end, coloring all of one’s words and deeds.
- “All these evil things proceed from within”: Not that the environment has no influence, but when all your attention is on external environmental things, you forget the root of sin and you forget why in the world you need the Lord Jesus.

Summary and Application:

Only the work of the Holy Spirit can cleanse your inner defilement. Your responsibility is to trust in the work of the Holy Spirit to wash away your inner defilement. This is God’s work and your responsibility.