

6.19.15 Mark 7:1-23

O. INTRO:

*WWI they called it "shell shock"

*WWII and Korea "Combat fatigue"

*Now, PTSD

*Many combat veterans did not like the term "combat fatigue"...it wasn't combat exhaustion it was a kind of horror that inhabited their soul.

*Others don't like the term PTSD, too clinical.

*Civil War Americans called it "soldier's heart"

*Some soldier's today prefer this phrase because war had changed the source of who they are and how they interacted with the outside world.

*Their hearts had been changed by war...now their heart changed the way they lived in the world.

*What is the heart? How does it affect us? How do we affect it? How is it changed?

*The heart in the Bible is the thinking, choosing part of us...our executive center.

*The heart is what God closely observes and most directly addresses in human beings...he pays attention to our hearts.

*God cares little or nothing for outward show...he responds to the heart because it is above all, who we are, who we are choosing and have chosen to be.

*What God wants of us can only come from there...our hearts.

Mark 7:1 The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and 2 saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were “unclean,” that is, unwashed. 3 (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

*Mark, was writing to a non-Jewish audience so he felt the need to give his readers some context.

*He explains the tradition of ceremonial cleansing so that the point of the narrative could be made to his Roman readers.

5 So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with ‘unclean’ hands?”

*The list of rules necessary to be "right with God" had grown quite long by this time.

*They had a rule for every situation...they were not yet written down and codified but they were passed down orally and they were widely known...especially by those who were religious teachers (Rabbis) like Jesus.

*They were not concerned with good hygiene but with the ceremonial cleanliness...how could Jesus claim to be a Rabbi, a religious instructor if his own "staff" didn't even follow the basic rules of what it means to be spiritual?

6 He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 7 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men." 8 You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men."

*They were focused on the external (ceremonial, ritual) and were neglecting the internal...the heart.

*Jesus then gives an example of how they let go of the commands of God for the traditions of men...and showed how they had learned to "work the system"...they were just playing at it.

*So they were called "hypocrites"...a hypocrite was a word that meant an "actor" in a play.

9 And he said to them: "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' 11 But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. 13 Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that."

*The example Jesus gives was a common ploy used by these religious "play actors" to get around taking care of their own parents.

*A ceremonial loophole had been invented that was used to break an outright commandment...honor your parents.

*Someone could say "This money is devoted to God, so I can't give it to my folks."

*However, they were not required to actually follow up and give the money away...they were legally excluding their parents from getting help...but they could spend the money on themselves.

*This is a great example of the "hypocrisy" of the focus on externals...symbolism without substance.

*The mentality is that if I can find a sort of loophole in the law...I can be spiritual and have my own way at the same time.

*This loophole approach to God reveals a heart that cares little or nothing about God himself...or at least the God who actually exists.

*This is an attempt to manipulate or to appease a policeman-God, or a scorekeeper God, or even an old duffer-God who could be outwitted by these religious play actors.

*They did not understand the God of infinite purity and holiness...who invites people into his joy, but does not tolerate playing games with serious matters.

*So Jesus goes to the heart of the issue...which is the heart.

*Again, its important to know that Mark was writing to the church comprised largely of Gentile converts to Christ.

*They were experiencing pressure to conform to the new legalism...the Judaizers, Jewish background believers were teaching that the Gentile background believers must become Jews in order to then be "good" Christians.

*Paul addressed this in his letter to the Galatians...the Jewish believers were trying to compel the non-Jewish Christians to be circumcised and follow other ritual laws.

*Paul shut this down..."uh, uh" he said, "I tried all that, it is a deadly dead end...you cannot add to what has been done for you."

*Here Mark is giving the precedent from the teaching of Christ himself.

Mark 7:14 Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. 15 Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.'"

*What a person eats has no bearing on being right with God...it's not what "goes in" to a person's body that matters.

*Externals...like this...which were the prime focus of the religious people of the time...had no bearing on becoming right with God.

*And likewise they did not reveal a heart that was set on God.

*It's what comes out...good actions, attitudes, words...or lack of ...that reveal a person's heart condition and direction.

Mark 7:17 After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. 18 "Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? 19 For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")

*The disciples were still so slow to understand.

*Jesus asks..."How can you guys not see this?"

*Food is just food...it has no bearing on the actual condition of a person's standing before God...it does not affect their heart, their soul...only God can do that.

*The reason they were slow to understand is that this flew in the face of everything they had heard and believed.

*In fact the way to know if a person was "religious" or "God-centered" was by observing what they did with the ritual laws.

*The sad thing was (and often still is) is that a person could be a religious super-star in terms of the ritual stuff...and a real jerk in terms of actual character.

*Think about the example Jesus gave...a person could be a religious leader and use a "loop hole" to not take care of his own parents.

*Imagine how Jesus would be appalled by someone being applauded by his peers and have a heart that is going the opposite direction from the very heart of God.

*This is not uncommon today.

*A person can in some settings be considered quite advanced in his or her faith because of adherence to certain types of activities or external behavior...church attendance, witnessing, bible reading, giving...even though they are people with sharp tongues, critical spirits, apt to hold onto grudges and look for revenge, unkind, and the like.

*This is what Jesus found unfathomable...unacceptable.

*A common example of this is in the realm of Christian apologetics.

*This doesn't mean to apologize for your faith, it's a word that means to give a "reasoned defense".

1Pet. 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...

*Notice, its important to be prepared to give a reason for your faith...but the manner in which that reason is to be given is equally important...gentleness and with respect for the other person.

*Too often Christians have used unkind methods, attitudes and words in attempting to convince others of the reality of the gospel.

I have a book on apologetics entitled "The Allure of Gentleness."

*Unusual title for a book on "defending the faith" but it comes straight from 1 Peter...gentleness and respect.

*It is a book on apologetics done in the in the manner and attitude of Jesus.

*So apologetics is not the problem...mean spirited apologetics is...a heart to win arguments rather than friends is the problem.

*In fact it is a very helpful and useful thing for many people to hear reasons for the faith...the problem is not in the activity but the heart behind the activity.

*Just as giving, going to church, reading the bible are not the problems.

*The problem is the belief that the externals make a person right with God...or reveal some level of spiritual maturity.

*The condition of the heart is the key...the externals may look similar in that two people who may engage in identical activities.

*But one person may be acting from a heart of love and faith...the other may be acting from pride and self-will and a desire to look spiritual and to stand above others.

***Verse 19 has a parenthesis...(In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.”)**

*He is making a declaration of fact...something like this..."From this moment on, all foods are clean."

"I calmed a sea, brought a young girl back to life, cast out demons, created food to feed the crowd...I have clearly demonstrated my authority...now, on my own authority...I declare all foods clean."

*He is not calling the dietary laws of the OT inconsequential...or without meaning.

*What is going on here is that he saying that the law is fulfilled in him...he has completed it.

*The ceremonial/dietary laws were no longer in effect because the one that those laws pointed to was now here.

*The purpose of the ceremonial law was to move them towards God.

*Jesus had a high regard for the Word of God...not a single letter or period would ever pass away...become irrelevant or untrue, or be superseded by some new 'truth.'

*What he is saying here...this part of the law...is complete...not outdated...but done...the one to whom it pointed has arrived.

20 He went on: “What comes out of a man is what makes him ‘unclean.’ 21 For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’”

*Jesus is driving them, us to the heart...resolutely, clearly...he is undoing their external perspective that completely missed the point.

*According to the cleanliness laws, if you touched a dead animal or human being, if you had an infectious skin disease like boils or rashes or sores, if you came into contact with mildew (on your clothes, articles in your home, or your house itself), if you had any kind of bodily discharge, or if you ate meat from an animal designated as unclean, you were considered ritually impure, defiled, stained, unclean.

*That meant you couldn't enter the temple— and therefore you couldn't worship God with the community.

*These were part of the ceremonial law that pointed as signs to our condition before God.

*Like miracles were sign posts planted in the created order to point us to God, these ceremonial laws were sign posts planted in their daily lives to point them to God as well...but in a different way.

*Miracles revealed God's power, his authority...the ceremonial laws revealed our need, our sin.

*Jesus did not disagree with their need to be clean in order to come before God, he did disagree with the source of their uncleanness and how to "clean up"

*He said in our normal, natural state...we are unfit for the presence of God.

*But no manner of external scrubbing will change us, no external rituals will make us acceptable to God...because God sees our hearts...and it is our hearts that infect all that we are and do.

***Many would disagree with Jesus on this...**

*Much effort is given trying to convince ourselves and others that we are "okay"

*The idea that we are sinful to the core, in desperate need, not "okay" is not a popular notion.

*But if we are okay, why does it take so much effort to convince ourselves of it?

*Some say, "Its because Christians are heaping guilt on people so that we struggle with feeling good about ourselves."

*That argument might have held water years ago, when Christians actually had a voice in the general culture...but not anymore.

*The cultural spokesmen and women have a single controlling meta-narrative and that is "you are okay."

*So how is that the masses are being told by so many and so often that they are "okay" and yet they do not believe, feel, or act like they are okay?

*Because we are not okay.

*Thomas Harris, "I'm Okay, you're okay" 1969...15 million copies...many books and TV shows followed suit.

*Yet people remained unconvinced at their core...it shows in out insecurity and guilt driven behavior.

*Again, if it were true that we are really "okay"...

*We would be un-self-aware that we are okay.

-We wouldn't have to work so hard to convince themselves and others.

*The cultural current flows in this direction...you are okay...but the fact remains...people do not feel okay and they don't believe others are okay either.

*All the heavy-handed diversity "training" has not made us more accepting of others who think and act and believe differently.

*What is fascinating is that when a person actually acknowledges that "I am not okay and neither are you" that they are positioned:

A. Become "okay"

B. Be in a place to accept others as "okay" as well.

*When we realize our brokenness is not primarily because we are victims but because we are sinners, then we are positioned to allow Jesus to actually get to our very hearts and change them.

Old Testament scholar, Ray Dillard, died in 1993 at 49, preached on Zech. 3, a prophetic book in the Bible...(I read about this sermon in a book by Tim Keller.)

*In Zechariah 3, the prophet had a vision and was transported into the center of the temple and there the Lord showed him Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord.

*Some background here...The temple had three parts: the outer court, inner court, and the holy of holies.

*The holy of holies was surrounded by a thick veil and inside was the Ark of the Covenant (case with artifacts), on top of it was the mercy seat and there the glory of God was manifested in a physical way.

*This was all rather dangerous stuff...one time a man touched the Ark of the Covenant and died instantly.

*There was a lot at stake here for humanity.

*If the reality of God's holiness and majesty were lost to humanity...the results would have been utter devastation.

*There is evidence of this everyday as we peruse the news...when people, families, neighborhoods, cities, nations...lose sight of God...devastation follows...always follows.

*Israel was God's chosen people...to maintain and proclaim the knowledge of the true God.

*So here's the process he set up to reveal himself and the need of the people in ongoing fashion.

*One person on one day of the year was allowed to go into the holy of holies...the high priest on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.

*So Zechariah had a vision from inside the holy of holies where he saw Joshua standing before the Lord on the Day of Atonement.

*Here's the preparation that went into this one day, once a year experience:

1. A week before the Day of Atonement, the priest went into seclusion, he was taken from his home to be completely alone so he would not accidentally touch or eat anything unclean.
2. Clean food was brought to him, and he would wash his body and prepare his heart during that week.
3. The night before the Day of Atonement he would stay up all night praying and reading God's word to purify his soul.
4. Then the next day he would bath head to toe, dress in pure, unstained white linen and enter the holy of holies to offer an animal sacrifice to atone for, or pay the penalty for his own sins.
5. After that he came out and bathed completely again, and new white linen was put on him, and he went in again, this time sacrificing for the sins of the priests.
6. He would come out a third time, and he bathed again from head to toe and they dressed him in brand-new pure linen, and he went into the holy of holies and atoned for the sins of all the people.
7. All this was done in public, the outer temple was crowded and people watched his coming and going through a thin screen.
8. It was very important to him...for his own personal safety...and for the people watching for their cleansing from sin...that all this be done correctly...that he have not stains, his garments and skin be perfectly clean...that he be a right representative.

*Now with this in mind...go back to Zech...he saw Joshua the high priest standing before the presence of God in the holy of holies...**covered in excrement...utterly defiled.**

*Zechariah couldn't believe what he was seeing.

*Dr. Dillard said that the interpretative key question is: How could this have happened?

*The answer: God was giving Zechariah a vision so he could see us the way God sees us.

-In spite of all our ceremonial, external efforts to be pure, good, moral, to cleanse ourselves,...this is how God sees our hearts and they are full of filth.

*Our good works don't get to the heart, ceremonial activities don't get to the heart...but just as Zechariah was about to despair he heard this:

"Take off his filthy clothes." Then God said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you. "

*Then he said... **I am going to send my servant and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day"** (Zechariah 3: 4 and 8-9).

*This was of course, Jesus.

*This could be called the Gospel of Zechariah.

*All the years of going through this ceremonial cleansing and God was saying, "Your not clean, not at the heart level...all this ceremony is to keep your need in front of your eyes."

*"But the day will come when the sacrifices will be over, the cleanliness laws will be fulfilled in a single day."

*Centuries later, another Joshua...Yeshua, Jesus, Joshua...same name in Aramaic, Greek and Hebrew...will show up.

*One week before his death (his own day of atonement) he began to prepare, the night before he didn't sleep, he prayed...instead of being clothed in rich garments, he was stripped naked, beaten, and killed.

*He was bathed in human spit, the Father turned his face away from him.

*Why? **"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5: 21).**

*Look in Rev. 19, the Bride is us, the church...the Lamb, of course, is Christ.

Rev. 19:7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

*This is not mere ceremonial garments...this is representation of what God has done at the heart level.

*God clothed Jesus in our sin. He took our penalty, our punishment so that we, like Joshua, the high priest can be clothed in his righteousness.

*So Jesus is upset with these religious play actors precisely because they were playing with powerful, eternal, precious things...the very lives and souls of people...their own and others.

*This is no religious game...this is of ultimate importance.

*Easy to see some great military or political or business leader or watch some national event...dealing with large numbers of people, or money, or geography...and think..."wow, now that is important!"

*But, this...this is church stuff, Bible stuff, religion stuff...doesn't quite feel as important.

*When in fact this is eternal, permanent, transcending all that we tend to find so important.

*That's why the hypocrites...the "actors in a religious play" were so very wrong.

*The gospel is good news of Great joy...but it is no game...no play.

*And the issue is not "looking a certain way for others to see"

*But "being changed by God at the heart level."

Applications:

What do we do with the Law?

-The Ten Commandments, the OT as a whole?

-What about the many rules, many things we are to obey in the NT?

*Lots of dos and don'ts there as well.

*Jesus talked a lot about obeying.

*Does it matter what we do? Aren't we saved by faith...not by doing?

*Once again, it is important to remember the difference between: Justification and sanctification.

1. Justification: Becoming right with God by grace through faith...act of trust, placing our confidence in what God has done for us that we could have no part in.

*If this happens in a heart...that heart changes...that heart, that will, has a new desire to obey.

*Obey what? The will and ways of God...because his will and his ways...start looking good, because they are good.

2. Sanctification: Cooperation with God's grace through our own actions to become more like Christ over the course of our lives.

"Law is not the source of rightness, but it is forever the course of rightness." Willard

*The Judaizers in the NT wanted to add obedience to the ritual law to faith in Christ...this was absolutely wrong.

*Some today want to **subtract** the moral law from Faith in Christ...so it becomes possible to be a Christian who remains unchanged over time.

*Grace is not opposed to effort but earning...we have talked about this a great deal the past two years...we are to train in godliness...

*Not in order to earn God's favor but because we have it and we love him, so we want to become more like him.

*The law given to Moses and the people was the most precious possession of human beings until the coming of the Messiah.

“What great nation is there,” Moses exclaimed, “that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law that I am setting before you today?” (Deut. 4: 8).

*God's law was and is beautiful, it is an expression of the perfect mind of God.

*Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible devoted to the Law of God in all its beauty.

*When Jesus' hearers believed he was trying to abolish the law he said "as long as creation stands, not the least part of the law...not "one jot or tittle" of what God intended with it, will be retracted, or superseded, or become outdated."

*So what are we to do with this perfect, beautiful law...it is all rather confusing.

Three Things:

1. The ceremonial law is completed by Jesus. It pointed to him, he has come.

*The sacrifices and the other symbolic measures are not necessary...they were signs directing us to Jesus...we have arrived at Jesus...we no longer need those signs.

2. The moral law is a thing of beauty and a gift to mankind. God has told us how he designed life to be lived.

*He gave us the instruction or user manual for our very lives.

*It shows us how to live lives of beauty, and wholeness and joy.

*However since our hearts are sinful, we could not keep the law, we failed over and over.

*So Christ has done for us what we could not do for ourselves.

*Now, through faith in Christ, his righteousness is credited to our own individual accounts.

3. Now, as followers of Christ, we have renewed hearts(wills)...we want what he wants and we want to want what he wants.

*So as we look at for instance, at the Ten Commandments...we are not looking for loopholes, we don't see it as a burden too heavy to carry...we are not checking boxes in order to try and appease God.

*We see it as it is, a gift...God has told us how to live lives that are whole and beautiful...we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live lives that increasingly reflect his intention for us...his will and ways.

*It is a good and beautiful thing to have a heart that is increasingly free from jealousy, hatred, lying, dishonoring God and others...the law of God is a snapshot of the heart of God.

Are we to keep the law or not? I guess it depends on what you mean by the question.

***Are we to keep the law in order to earn God's favor...no...here's what Jesus said.

John 6:29 “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

***If by the question you mean...is obedience important? Of course it is.

*When we have experienced Christ, he transforms our very hearts...then we begin the life-long journey with him of training our hearts (will) to align with his.

*The "law of God" ...the beautiful representation of his will and ways...is not something we do in order to earn or prove something.

*We train for godliness because we love God and are loved by God.

*The work of God to change our hearts is something only he can accomplish...once we have trusted him with our hearts (surrendered our will) then we can and must begin the collaborative project of "working out our salvation".

***Working out what God in his mercy has worked in.**

CONCLUSION:

*In Christ... you are okay...in all the ways that truly matter...you are okay.

*Are you living with guilt from your past, perhaps you have spent your life trying to deal with this guilt.

*Maybe you don't struggle with specific guilt but rather with feeling generally worthless or inconsequential.

*The "outside in" approach that is common to humanity doesn't work.

*God's work is "inside out"...his work in us first, then it flows out of us.

*If you are in Christ, you are okay...now you can pursue real, lasting change that flows from the heart.

SMALL GROUP NOTES

Intro:

1. What are different things people mean when they use the word "heart?" (Apart from a physical organ.) Give some different expressions, sayings, or contexts for the use of the word.
2. In the Bible the "heart" is the "thinking, choosing me." It is the executive function of the person. With this in mind, why is the heart so important to God?
3. The word "hypocrite" comes from a word that means "actor in a play." Based on our normal use of the word hypocrite does this idea of an "actor in a play" fit or not fit? Why or why not?

Read:

Mark 7:1 The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and 2 saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were "unclean," that is, unwashed. 3 (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.) 5 So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?" 6 He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 7 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.' 8 You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men." 9 And he said to them: "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' 11 But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. 13 Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that." 14 Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. 15 Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.'" 17 After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. 18 "Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? 19 For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.") 20 He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' 21 For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'"

Discuss:

Mark 7:1 The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and 2 saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were "unclean," that is, unwashed. 3 (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

1. Why do you think they were so focused on ceremonial "cleanness?"

5 So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with ‘unclean’ hands?” 6 He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: “‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 7 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ 8 You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”

2. Jesus called them "play actors" (hypocrites) here, why?

9 And he said to them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! 10 For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ 11 But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban’ (that is, a gift devoted to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. 13 Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

3. Jesus used an overtly terrible example of how they set aside the true intentions of God for their own "play acting." He said, "And you do many things like that."

***What some other examples, ancient or contemporary, where people have done the same thing? ("nullify the word of God by their tradition.")**

14 Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. 15 Nothing outside a man can make him ‘unclean’ by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him ‘unclean.’” 17 After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. 18 “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him ‘unclean’? 19 For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.”)

4. How is that the disciples could have missed Jesus' point, doesn't it seem rather obvious? What might have been going on to make them "dull?"

20 He went on: “What comes out of a man is what makes him ‘unclean.’ 21 For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’”

5. Jesus spoke of things that come "out of men's hearts...and make a man 'unclean'"

***Do you think he meant that the man's heart was made unclean by these actions or that these actions revealed an unclean heart, or both? Why or why not?**

6. What are some examples of how our culture tries to convince itself that we are "okay?"

7. What are some examples of how this isn't working?

8. What are some differences between the ceremonial law and the moral law?

9. Why might it be true that the ceremonial law is no longer in effect and the moral law still has implications for Christians?

10. What does it mean that the "Law is not the source of rightness but it is forever the course of rightness?" (Dallas Willard)

Apply:

***Do you sometimes, often or never struggle with:**

-Guilt from a past sin or series of sins?

-Feeling inconsequential or worthless?

***How does the gospel speak clearly and directly to these struggles?**

***How are you helped (or could you be helped) in these struggles by more consistently contemplating and embracing the truth of the Gospel?**

***Would you do that right now? Tell someone in your group and/or God about how the gospel has made you "okay."**

THE GOSPEL OF

MARK



Mark 7:1-23

**“FOR EVEN THE
SON OF MAN
DID NOT COME
TO BE SERVED,
BUT TO SERVE,
AND TO GIVE
HIS LIFE AS A
RANSOM FOR
MANY.”**

MARK 10:45

J. STILL

Mark 7:1-4 The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were “unclean,” that is, unwashed. (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

Mark 7:5 So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with ‘unclean’ hands?”

Mark 7:6-8 He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”

Mark 7:9-13 And he said to them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban’ (that is, a gift devoted to God), then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

Mark 7:14-15 Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a man can make him ‘unclean’ by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him ‘unclean.’”

Mark 7:17-19 After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him ‘unclean’? For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.”)

**1 Pet. 3:15 But in your hearts set apart
Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to
give an answer to everyone who asks
you to give the reason for the hope that
you have. But do this with gentleness
and respect...**

**(In saying this, Jesus declared all foods
“clean.”)**

Mark 7:20-23 He went on: “What comes out of a man is what makes him ‘unclean.’ For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’”

THOMAS A. HARRIS, M.D.



**I'M OK —
YOU'RE OK**

A
PRACTICAL GUIDE
TO TRANSACTIONAL
ANALYSIS

Zech. 3:1-4 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. The LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?” Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. The angel said to those who were standing before him, “Take off his filthy clothes.” Then he said to Joshua, “See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you.”

Zech. 3:8-9 “Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch...and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.”

2 Cor. 5:21 “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”

Rev. 19:7-8 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

"Law is not the source of rightness, but it is forever the course of rightness."

**Deut. 4:8 “What great nation is there,”
Moses exclaimed, “that has statutes and
judgments as righteous as this whole law
that I am setting before you today?”**

**1. The Ceremonial law is complete in
Jesus.**

**1. The Ceremonial law is complete in
Jesus.**

**2. The moral law is a thing of beauty and
gift to mankind.**

1. The Ceremonial law is complete in Jesus.

2. The moral law is a thing of beauty and gift to mankind.

3. Now, as followers of Christ, we have renewed hearts (wills).

"we want what he wants and we want to want what he wants"

John 6:29 “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

***Working out what God in his mercy has
worked in.***

***In Christ...you are okay in the ways that
matter the most.***