



“Who Is Clean and Unclean?”

Mark 7:1-23 ♦ Pastor Jim Lennon
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Introduction –As we return to Mark chapter 7, the Scribes and Pharisees confront Jesus about how they were violating the Jewish “purity laws.” Jesus rebukes the religious leaders for their hypocrisy, but then relates a parable about “cleanness” to the crowd, and then explains it afterward to His disciples.

I. The Controversy Over the Clean Laws. (7:1-13) (Review)

- A. The Old Testament ritual purity, or “clean” laws, were not about hygiene but about following God’s instructions to enter His presence in a worthy manner.
- B. The ritual washings served as a visual aid to teach the people that they were not fit to come into God’s presence without first being cleansed of their sin.
- C. The ritual washings were specifically given for the priests to do before entering God’s presence.
- D. Over the years, the Jewish elders expanded the priestly requirements of the law to apply to everyone.
- E. But as Jesus points out, our cleanness before God is not based on externals, but on the heart.

II. The Source of Our Uncleanness. (7:14-23)

- A. “Uncleanness” is a sense of knowing that we don’t measure up.
- B. Like the religious leaders, we take great pains to try to make ourselves clean.
- C. Jesus’ parable teaches us that the source of our uncleanness is not what we do or don’t do externally. The real source of our uncleanness is the evil internally, in our own hearts.
- D. We are all unclean, unable to make ourselves clean before God.

III. How to Be Made Clean.

- A. Being religious (trying to be good) won’t make us clean because it doesn’t change the heart.
- B. Jesus declared all foods clean.(7:19)
- C. Only Jesus can make us clean before God.
- D. How Jesus makes us clean.

Conclusion