

MARK 7:1-23

OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY?

1. What do the Pharisees and scribes observe about the disciples of Jesus and why does this offend them
2. What is the question that they ask Jesus?
3. What does Jesus call the Pharisees and Scribes? How does he answer their question?
4. What example does he give to show how they violate God's law and replace it with human tradition?
5. What does Jesus say can defile a man? What cannot defile a man?
6. Where do the things that defile a man (Make a list of these from this passage) come from or originate??

INTERPRETATION: WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE MEAN?

1. Why do you think the Pharisees held to the practice of not eating with impure hands? What did they think they were protecting themselves from?
2. Jesus really doesn't answer the question directly to the Pharisees. It isn't until he is alone with his disciples that he answers the question (vs. 17-23). He uses a "parable" in verse 15 which he explains to the disciples later. How would you answer the question directly to the Pharisees, using Jesus' words?
3. What is Corban?
4. Discuss, explain the following phrase: "There is nothing outside the man which going into him can defile him."
5. How do you differentiate between traditions of men and the word of God? Aren't there some traditions we hold dear that have there basis in the word of God? When do they become violations of the word of God??

APPLICATION: WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE MEAN TO ME/US?

1. What "traditions of men" are you holding higher than "God's word" in your life?
2. Are there areas of your life where you fake holiness to avoid doing what you know God wants you to do?
3. Time for inner examination: What is the state of your heart? This passage tells us that it is what proceeds out of our heart that defiles us. What is your heart doing to bring "defilement" into your life and what can you do about it?
4. Are there outside things you have been using either as a scapegoat or a whipping boy that are keeping you from acknowledging the state of your heart? (Are you using the Flip Wilson excuse "The devil made me do it"?) What will you do to change that?
5. However you describe the inner and outer life this passage encourages us to examine the relationship between them. How does your heart impact your actions? How do your actions impact your heart?

ACTION PLAN

Spend time personally and with others in coming up with an action plan inspired by your study. What in this passage compels you to desire a change, to move to action, to become more like Jesus? It could be a change in thinking, behavior, character. It could be internal or external. It could be personal or relational. Just don't leave studying the Bible as simply an intellectual exercise.