

# WHO DO YOU SAY HE IS?



## Who Do You Say He Is? Mark 7:1–23

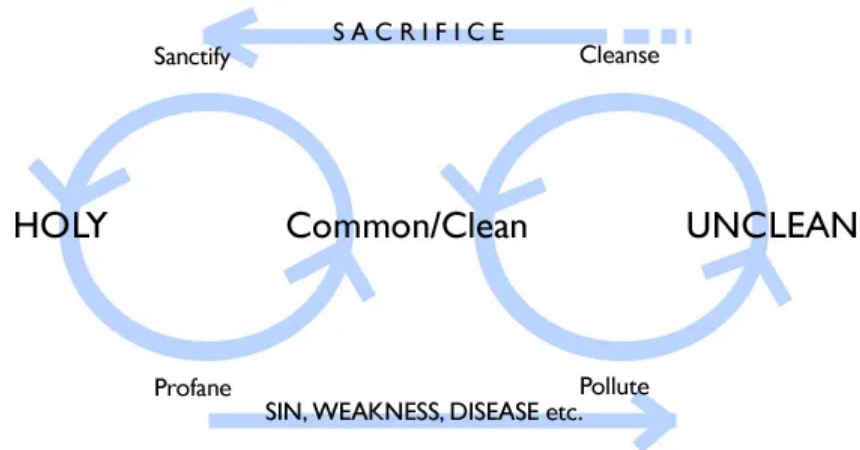
Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, **2** they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. **3** (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders, **4** and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) **5** And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?”

### Be careful not to confuse God’s Word with man’s word – Mark 7:1–5

- What did God’s Word command?
  - Holiness
    - And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, **2** “Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy” (Leviticus 19:1–2).
  - Why?
    - **5** Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; **6** and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:5–6).
    - **11** I will make my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. **12** And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people. **13** I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not

be their slaves. And I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect (Leviticus 26:11–13).

- What did man's word command?
  - Rules
- What was the point of these rules?
  - "A place for everything and everything in its place" (Jerome H. Neyrey, "The idea of Purity in Mark's Gospel," 93).
  - The rules created a fence to protect God's Word from being broken.



- But we don't need more words!
  - God's Word is sufficient.
  - We need new hearts.

6 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;

7 in vain do they worship me,  
teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

9 And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' 11 But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban"' (that is, given to God)— 12 then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, 13 thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

Be careful not to confuse performing with obedience – Mark 7:6–13

- How were they performing?
  - Jesus says they allow man-made tradition to break the God-given commandments.
- How should they have obeyed?
  - Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12).
- But we can't obey on our own.
  - We need new hearts.

**14** And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: **15** There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.” **17** And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. **18** And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, **19** since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) **20** And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. **21** For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, **22** coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. **23** All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

Be careful not to confuse religion with holiness – Mark 7:14–23

- How were they religious?
  - They were concerned with the appearance of holiness (e.g., kosher food).
  - **25** “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. **26** You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean. **27** “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. **28** So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (Matthew 23:25–28).
- They were concerned with ritual purity; Jesus was concerned with spiritual holiness.
- How should they have been holy?
  - They should have been concerned with their hearts.
  - A changed heart produces changed behavior.

Your relationship with God works from the inside out, not the outside in.

How's your heart?