

# THE GOSPEL OF MARK "Unclean"

## CHECKING BOXES

- \*The Scribes raised up a small issue that Jesus took and made a major point of discussion.
- \*Following the 'traditions of the elders'
- \*The Pharisees wanted to be holy before God so they had rules within rules to put "a fence around the Torah" to protect God's laws.
- \*They were sincere in making Israel like no other nation but it meant that keeping the rules became more important than keep Gods word.

## JESUS STIRS THE POT

- \*Jesus goes for the throat in quoting Isaiah 29:13
- \*Hypocrite – It means someone who acts a role without sincerity, hence a pretender. He was not challenging their commitment – they are so committed they confuse drama with reality.
- \*God's word verses Traditions of Man—**Do we run the same risk today?**
- \*"a fine way" of getting around God's word. Honoring Parents—Exodus 20:12 and Deut 5:16 (Exodus 21:17) & Keeping Vows Numbers 30:2, Deut 23:21-23
- \*An example of the many ways that a man made tradition trumps Gods word. *"And you do many things like that."*

## JESUS OPENS THE BARN DOOR

- \*Leviticus 11 was about what animals could be eaten. Jesus changes what made the difference between Jew and Gentile, what set them apart.
- \*What goes in the mouth does not effect the heart! It goes in the stomach and out the other end and makes no difference in your walk with God. It is what comes out of the heart that makes us unclean. The heart in both the Greek and Hebrew understanding means the spiritual, intellectual part of us, including the will.
- \*There is a long list of what makes us unclean— all coming from the heart. Other lists: Galatians 5:19-21, 2 Corinthians 12:20, Romans 1:29-31, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Colossians 3:5,8, 1 Timothy 1:9-10, 2 Timothy 3:2-5, Titus 3:3, 1 Peter 4:3
- \*The whole issue of eating food was something that the early church had to constantly deal with because you had both Jewish Christians who chose to remain kosher and Gentile Christians who had no food issues. Acts 10:9-16, Acts 10 & 11, 15:1-29, Gal 2:11-14, Romans 14.

### Mark 7:1-23 (NIV)

(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.'" (16) " (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!'"

**Did the early church not understand what Jesus said or is it that all religious communities are slow to change it's fundamental traditional values until there is no other option?**