

### That Which Defiles

**1** The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus **2** and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, 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 defiled 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 merely human rules.’

**8** You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”

**9** And he continued, “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 mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ **11** But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God)— **12** then you no longer let them do anything for their 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 person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”

**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 person from the outside can defile them?

**19** For it doesn’t go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)

**20** He went on: “What comes out of a person is what defiles them.

**21** For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come— sexual immorality, theft, murder, **22** adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. **23** All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”

### Jesus Honors a Syrophenician Woman’s Faith

**24** Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. **25** In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. **26** The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

**27** “First let the children eat all they want,” he told her, “for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

**28** “Lord,” she replied, “even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.”

**29** Then he told her, “For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.”

**30** She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

### Questions:

1. What kind of rules or traditions did the Pharisees (teachers of the law) practice?
2. Describe in your own words what Jesus had to say about the Pharisees in verse 6-8.
3. Explain what Jesus means when he says, “Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”
4. What are the evil thoughts that come from a person’s heart? verses 21-22.

Which of these do you see in your own heart?

5. Why was Jesus amazed at the Greek woman’s faith? Explain

Share a time when you chose to trust or put your faith in God.