

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for February 19, 2017

The Problem Within
Mark 7:14-23

I. Defilement defined (7:14-15)

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."

- "And he called the people to him again and said to them"
 - After dealing with the incorrect authority of the Pharisees, scribes, and religious leaders, it appears that Jesus turns to address the people
- "Hear me, all of you, and understand"
 - Jesus summons the attention of the crowd signaling that He is about to say something of importance
- "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"
 - This is the main principle and point that Jesus wishes to teach
 - After dealing with authority that had been given to purification and defilement in the oral tradition, Jesus gives further teaching
 - Jesus surprises the Jews stating consumption of any animal will not defile
 - This seems to blatantly contradict the Law of Moses
 - Both Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 are explicit in stating which animals are clean and unclean to eat
 - Leviticus 11:44-45 "For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. 45 For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."
 - Deuteronomy 14:2 "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."
 - "These ceremonial regulations in the law had a function, teaching symbolically the reality and importance of moral purity..."

- “They demanded an external separation which pointed to the need for an inner heart condition of separation unto God.” (Hiebert, Logos)
- Deuteronomy 14:21 “You shall not eat anything that has died naturally. You may give it to the sojourner who is within your towns, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God.”
- Jesus completely shifts the focus and emphasis for the concern of purity and defilement away from the external (unclean animals)
- The New Testament confirms this shift in addition to Jesus’ teaching
 - Hebrews 10:1 “For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities...”
 - Colossians 2:16-17 “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”

II. Defilement defended (7:17-19)

- 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.)*
- Notice we skipped v. 16 because it isn’t in the earliest and best manuscripts of the New Testament
 - Some bibles simply remove this verse to a footnote (ESV) or put it in brackets to inform the reader of its doubtful historicity (NASB)
 - Not only a consensus believes v. 16 should not be in our modern english bibles but v. 16 is not a loaded verse for doctrine or practice in our faith
 - “And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable”
 - Obvious transition from religious leaders and people to house setting
 - Apparently Jesus’ teaching principle on defilement came across as a parable that needed more clarification
 - “And he said to them, ‘Then are you also without understanding?’”
 - Jesus seems surprised by the disciples’ slow understanding
 - Verses 18-19 further explain the first half of verse 15, “There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him,”

- “Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?”
 - We have already noted that the purpose of Old Testament purity Law was to point to a greater reality of Israel’s commitment to God in holiness
 - Now, Jesus builds on that idea by signifying that the heart is the essential operation center of mankind’s commitment to God in holiness
 - Proverbs 4:23 “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”
 - Thus, in the example of unclean food, Jesus explains that it does not defile in and of itself
 - This is because the unclean food does not even impact the heart
 - In order to communicate this, Jesus recaps the simple bodily functions of eating, digestion and elimination to show how eating food has nothing to do with the heart
- “(Thus he declared all foods clean.)”
 - Mark notes the implication of Jesus’ statement
 - Defiled foods have nothing to do with the heart
 - As a result, Mark notes that all food must be clean since it can enter into the stomach and pass through the body without causing defilement

III. Defilement displayed (7:20-23)

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.”

- These verses further explain the second half of verse 15, “but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.”
- “And he said, ‘What comes out of a person is what defiles him... 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’”
 - This must have been an absolute paradigm shift for the common Jew in that time under the defilement obsessed Pharisees
 - Jeremiah 17:9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”
 - Ezekiel 36:22-36!!!
- “For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.”

- Jesus seems to be showing that all sin comes from within mankind
- The bible teaches us the truth about man
- Man is not perfect, innocent, or even good
 - Romans 3:10-12 “as it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.’”
- Man is not solely the product of their environment (psychology)
- Man is sinful because of Adam, the federal head
 - Romans 5:12 “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned”
- Man is sinful because of his own wicked heart
 - James 1:13-15 “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God,’ for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”