



Week of September 2, 2018

Mark 7:1-8, 14-23

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him,

² they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them.

³ (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders;

⁴ and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.)

⁵ So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?"

⁶ He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me;

⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.'

⁸ You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

¹⁴ Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand:

¹⁵ there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile."

¹⁶

¹⁷ When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable.

¹⁸ He said to them, "Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile,

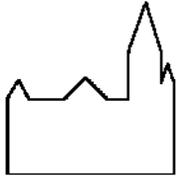
¹⁹ since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.)

²⁰ And he said, "It is what comes out of a person that defiles.

²¹ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder,

²² adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly.

²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."



Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

Gathering questions:

- A. What relatively innocuous habit of (some) other people drives you crazy? What do you think is your most annoying habit?
- B. If you could redefine sin, would you rather: declare one sin to be morally okay, or declare one thing that is considered okay to be a sin? What would it be?

Bible Study Questions:

1. In verses 3-4, what do you learn from the fact that the author chooses to explain Jewish practices?
2. After the explicit teaching of verse 15, the disciples still ask for an explanation. Why do you think they didn't understand what Jesus had just said?
3. Why do you think they focus their criticism on Jesus' disciples and not Jesus?
4. In verse 6, Jesus calls his critics "hypocrites", even though it is likely that they observe the law that they accuse Jesus' disciples of violating. What then do you think makes them hypocrites?
5. How concerned are you about negative outside influences, ranging from sex/violence on TV to porn on the Internet? How would Jesus' teaching influence the way you would respond to these influences?
6. What inner attitudes do you believe are most likely to lead to sin?
7. What can you do to have more good flow out of you to the world?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about being a better influence on the world around you.