

## **INSIDE OUT** *(Mark 7:1-23)*

*The Scriptural truths of purity in Jesus' day had been reduced to a long fenced-up system of trivial external washings. In other words, the focus was on a practice of religion rather than a personal relationship with God. Jesus revealed the nature of real purity and its source.*

### **I. TRUE PURITY CANNOT BE ACHIEVED BY LEGALISM (vv. 1-13)**

1. What is legalism?
  - It is the strict conformity to the letter of the law rather than its spirit.
  - When tied to Christianity, it's the idea that following a certain set of rules or traditions can make one holy and acceptable before God.
2. Jesus was confronted because His disciples weren't following the traditional code.
  - Notice those accusers couldn't even cite a Scripture reference for these laws. They cite the "tradition of the elders." (v.5)
3. Jesus sends them reeling with a scathing indictment. (v. 6)
  - *Hypocrite* was a term used in theater meaning "one who plays a part on the stage."
    - Jesus was saying their religion was all words and show. It wasn't real and had no purpose.
  - Notice the progression of established legalism:
    - First, they taught the commands of men (v.7)
    - Second, they left the commands of God (v.8)
    - Third, they rejected the commands of God (v.9)
    - Fourth, they made void the commands of God (v.13)
4. Jesus called them out on the hypocrisy of legalism with the example of Corban (v. 10-11).
  - They broke the fifth commandment by getting around taking care of their elderly parents.
5. Traditions are not all bad in themselves. They are bad when they are put on the same level with Scripture.
  - Legalism can never bring you purity – true cleanness.
  - If we try to justify ourselves by it, we wind up modifying it.
6. Legalists try to make others fit their box.
  - The methods become the focus, and then become the doctrines.

### **II. TRUE PURITY CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED FROM THE INSIDE OUT (vv. 14-23)**

1. You cannot make someone a Christian by forcing them to consent to a set of norms.
  - Nor can you become a Christian by trying to simply follow some system of good works or religious rituals.
2. Jesus is saying that someone can look really good on the outside but be dead on the inside.
  - Purity is all about the heart – the center of one's will, the mind.
    - This is an internal problem that needs an internal solution.
    - And every human heart has the root of sin in it.
  - The only thing that will bring purity and righteousness to our hearts is a radical new birth.

*There are only two approaches to religion: What must I do? Or what has Christ done? Apart from Christ, we are desperately, hopelessly lost. Have you experienced Christ's change from the inside out?*