

## **THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION**

### **Mark: Jesus The Perfect Servant Of God**

#### **Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52**

##### **X. Christ's Work To Correct Errant Traditionalism**

##### **2. Christ's Work To Correct A Legalistic View Of Spiritual Defilement (Mark 7:14-23)**

###### **I. Introduction**

- A. We learned in our first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright service from personal failure.
- B. At times, such failure arises from an artificial spirituality caused by adopting a false, legalistic view of spiritual defilement, a view that makes external matters determine spiritual life when internal matters do so.
- C. Jesus countered this false view of spiritual defilement in Mark 7:14-23, so we view it for our insight:

###### **II. Christ's Work To Correct A Legalistic View Of Spiritual Defilement, Mark 7:14-23.**

- A. Having shown in Mark 7:1-13 the error of the Hebrew elders in setting up human rules that undermine God's commands of Scripture, Jesus then addressed the specific issue His Pharisee and Scribe critics had leveled at Him in His letting the disciples eat with unwashed hands, allegedly sinning in such a violation of an elder rule.
- B. Accordingly, Jesus called all the people around to Him to tell every one of them to hear and understand His teaching on true versus errant, legalistic views of spiritual defilement, Mark 7:14.
- C. Christ then taught the parable that nothing outside a man that can enter into him can spiritually defile him, but that such defilement proceeds from within the man himself, Mark 7:15. [The Mark 7:16 verse about having ears to hear "is absent from important Alexandrian witnesses . . . (and) appears to be a scribal gloss (derived perhaps from 4:9 or 4:23, introduced as an appropriate sequel to ver. 14," Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 1971, p. 94-95.)]
- D. Without explaining this point to the crowd, Jesus entered a house, so His disciples approached him to ask the meaning of this parable on defilement (Mark 7:17), and Jesus responded in Mark 7:18-23 (as follows):
  - 1. Jesus first asked His disciples, "So then are you *also*" like the Scribes and Pharisees "without understanding?" (Mark 7:18a; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 134) Even the disciples were spiritually hardened in not understanding this truth, hardened likely due to the pressure to conform to the rules of the elders without question, much as the stony ground in the Parable of the Sower where fear of persecution or affliction for the sake of God's Word drowned out the truth in favor of legalism, cf. Mark 4:16-17.
  - 2. Accordingly, the Lord graciously explained to His disciples that whatever enters a man from the outside cannot defile him, for such food does not enter into his heart to affect his morality, but into his stomach, and from the stomach the food is eventually eliminated from the body as waste material, Mark 7:18b-19a.
  - 3. In effect, then, Jesus declared all foods to be innately clean, setting the stage for the New Testament Church era's diet where all foods are edible, cf. Mark 7:19b with Acts 10:9-17 and 1 Timothy 4:1-5.
  - 4. On the other hand, Christ revealed that what comes out of a man defiles him, for from the heart proceeds "evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly," Mark 7:20-22 NIV. These things that, coming from within a sinful heart, spiritually defile a man in God's estimation, Mark 7:23.
  - 5. [Jesus spoke to people under the Mosaic Law that forbade them from eating certain kinds of meat like pork (Leviticus 11:1-47, esp. verse 7), but Jesus did not here teach them to violate that Law. Rather, He taught that "the defilement that came to a Jew who ate 'unclean' food was caused not by the food itself but by the rebellious heart that acted in disobedience to God," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Mark 7:18. Jesus in Mark 7:14-23 merely taught that the Law's dietary laws were to be heeded *not* because the forbidden foods were *innately evil*, but because *Scripture then forbade them from eating such foods!*]

**Lesson:** *Jesus taught that spiritual defilement cannot occur by an external source entering a person, a false, legalistic view of contamination, but from the sin within man's heart when he disobeys the Word of God!*

**Application:** *(1) May we cease holding to false views of defilement that make external entities in themselves produce spiritual defilement, but yield to the Word of God's definition of right and wrong and apply it from the heart. (2) May we also accept all edible creation as edible for our diet today as Christians, for we are no longer under the jurisdiction of the Law and its dietary restrictions, cf. Acts 10:9-17; 1 Timothy 4:1-5.*