

## Discussion Notes

Mark 7.14-23 – Inner Purity

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This passage leads us to yet another “high point” in Mark. Jesus, Mark shows us, wants to re-write our narrative. God is inviting us, through Jesus, into a different, new and better story. As we travel further with Jesus we see that the options with “what to do with Jesus” are limited. We either obey and accept him, or we do away with him altogether.

### Adding or Subtracting:

- As we see in the previous passage (1-13) Jesus tells the religious leaders that adding or subtracting from the Mosaic law are both signs of rebellion.
- Adding is legalism (justifying ourselves based on good works), subtracting is outright disobedience to what God has commanded.
- Jesus, ironically, is about to do some subtracting! Who can do this? Only God.

### Purity Laws (yesterday and today):

- For the Jews in the first century, and every culture before and after, purity definitions help us make sense of the world and define ourselves. (Eg: Canadians are polite. We are proud of this. If we are not polite we transgress a cultural law)
- Purity rituals and laws help define cultures and aided to Jews in not getting “sucked in” to other cultures and ways of worship. This is why they did not eat pork, wore certain clothing or styled their hair in a particular way. The point is to be defined, or different (Leviticus 11.44-45).
- Jesus gets right at this issue of identity and gives us a new paradigm in what it means to look like God (14-23)
- He seems to “subtract” from purity laws, and rightly so if he is God. It will be years until his followers realize what he has done. Peter finally gets this in Acts 10.

### Remaking the World

- Jesus says his people are no longer defiled by what comes from the outside, but from the inside. In other words, we are made unclean by what comes out of our hearts rather than what we ingest.
- Jesus re-orders things making life about character. God’s intention is to remake us so we may reflect his character.
- It challenging for us to imagine a time (especially most of us are “gentiles”) before Jesus came along. The very reason we are in the Kingdom is because Jesus made us clean. He infected us with his life and character, and wishes work through us to impact and “infect” others with his life and character by how we live.

Discussion Notes:

- What kind of “purity laws” did you grow up with? What kind of narrative did you raised in? IE: what was sacred?
- How has/is Jesus remade/remaking your narrative? What has he taught you?
- How does a passage like this challenge us as we engage with people who don’t know Jesus?
- As you get to know God better (through the person of Jesus) do you feel you live more out of a narrative of fear, or love? How is God inviting you into a new story?