



### **Part Six: Purity**

One of the things that got Jesus in the most trouble with the religious leaders of his own tradition was what he taught and modeled when it came to how you treat people who are drastically different. It's a touchy subject that hasn't gone away.

**Scripture:** Mark 7:1-23

**Bottom Line:** Jesus doesn't cast out people; Jesus casts out evil.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Have you ever taken precautions to make sure that you don't catch a cold or other illness from someone else who is sick? Can you think of ways in which we take precautions from allowing people to 'infect' us spiritually, morally or religiously? Do you think these things are helpful or unhelpful?
2. Read Mark 7:1-23. What does Jesus teach about what makes people pure or impure? How does this differ from what many people might expect?
3. Why do you think this was a controversial topic for Jesus and the religious leaders?
4. It is fairly common for people to think that the proper response to 'sin' in the world is to separate as much as we can from it. How does Jesus' life and teaching challenge that way of thinking?
5. What do you think a practical application of this teaching is for us?
6. Read the next story in Mark 7:24-30. How do you think Jesus' teaching on purity connects to his interaction with this woman?
7. As you read this story, what emotions do you think you would have felt if you were (a) the woman, (b) Jesus and (c) one of the disciples watching this interaction?

### **Moving Forward**

What are some of the feelings you get when you interact with people who are different from you when it comes to things like lifestyle, morality, race, religion, political affiliation, etc.?

What does the conversation we read tell us about how we should approach people who are different from us?