

Life Group Notes & Discussion Guide, March 15th, 2026

“Lessons from Jesus”

“That Which Defiles”

Sermon text: **Mark 7:14-23**; Old Testament Text: **Psalms 138:1-8**; New Testament Text: **Romans 14:13-19**.

Read **Mark 7:14-23** as you listen to the sermon, then answer the questions below.

1. Read **Mark 7:14-15**. What teachings of the Pharisees and teachers of the law is Jesus speaking against in this passage?
2. Read **Mark 7:16**. What is Jesus saying in this verse?
3. Read **Mark 7:17**. Why do you think Jesus’s disciples had trouble understanding what He was saying in v. 15?
4. Read **Mark 7:18-19**. Why would the Jewish religious leaders have at least two objections to what Jesus taught in this passage?
5. Read **Mark 7:20-21**. What does Jesus say defiles a person?

6. Why is that so much more difficult to judge than what the religious leaders claimed caused defilement?

7. How can we judge the condition of a person's heart?

8. Is there anything inherently sinful about the religious leaders' concerns over the cleanliness of people's hands?

9. What has their preoccupation with the cleanliness of the body caused the religious leaders to forget?

10. Read **Mark 7:23**. After reading about the things that defile us, how clean do you consider your heart?

11. What will you remember most from this talk?

Discussion Guide for Your Life Group Meeting

- I. At your Life Group meeting, first read **Psalm 138:1-8** aloud. It can be helpful to have several people each read one verse from their Bible. This helps people feel involved and can also introduce some interesting discussion if several translations are used. After reading the passage discuss it. If you are having trouble stimulating discussion, you can try asking some of the following questions:
1. Read **Psalm 138:1**. Why is it so important that we give thanks to God with an undivided heart?
 2. Read **Psalm 138:2**. What two things is the psalmist careful to thank God for?
 3. What has God exalted above all things?
 4. Knowing these things are exalted above everything else, how should we be careful to live our lives?
 5. Read **Psalm 138:3**. Can you think of any reasons why God might have answered King David's prayer so quickly?
 6. Read **Psalm 138:4-5**. Have someone read these verses first from the ESV. Then, have someone read them from the NIV. Why might the NIV be a more realistic translation?
 7. Read **Psalm 138:6**. Paraphrase this verse in your own words.
 8. What's the life lesson we should derive from this verse?
 9. Read **Psalm 138:7**. How might this verse comfort and console us when we find ourselves going through hard times?
 10. Read **Psalm 138:8**. How could this verse give you the ability to carry out a call the Lord has placed upon you that initially seemed impossible for you?
- II. First, read **Romans 14:1-12** to gain a better understanding of what **Romans 14:13-19** is about. Then, read **Romans 14:13-19**, utilizing several group members to each read one verse aloud. After reading the passage discuss it. If you are having trouble stimulating discussion, you can try asking some of the following questions.
1. Read **Romans 14:13**. Drawing upon what you learned from **Romans 14:1-12**, name some things we are not to make a stumbling block to our brothers and sisters in the faith?
 2. Read **Romans 14:14**. What is the apostle Paul saying in this verse?
 3. Read **Romans 14:15**. How does this verse help you to see the damage we can do to someone by our eating habits?
 4. Read **Romans 14:16**. Then, read **1 Corinthians 10:23-33**. How does this passage from 1 Corinthians help you to better understand this entire passage?
 5. Read **Romans 14:17**. Then, read **1 Corinthians 8:8**. After reading these two passages, how important are dietary restrictions to God under the New Covenant?
 6. Read **Romans 14:18**. According to this verse, how are we supposed to serve Christ?

7. Read **Romans 14:19**. Drawing upon this entire passage for inspiration, how do we live out **Romans 14:19**?

III. Read **Mark 7:14-23**, utilizing several group members to each read one verse aloud. After reading the passage discuss it. If you are having trouble stimulating discussion, you can try asking some of the following questions:

1. Read **Mark 7:14-15**. What teachings of the Pharisees and teachers of the law is Jesus speaking against in this passage?
2. Read **Mark 7:16**. What is Jesus saying in this verse?
3. Read **Mark 7:17**. Why do you think Jesus's disciples had trouble understanding what He was saying in v. 15?
4. Read **Mark 7:18-19**. Why would the Jewish religious leaders have at least two objections to what Jesus taught in this passage?
5. Read **Mark 7:20-21**. What does Jesus say defiles a person?
6. Why is that so much more difficult to judge than what the religious leaders claimed caused defilement?
7. How can we judge the condition of a person's heart?
8. Is there anything inherently sinful about the religious leaders' concerns over the cleanliness of people's hands?
9. What has their preoccupation with the cleanliness of the body caused the religious leaders to forget?
10. Read **Mark 7:23**. After reading about the things that defile us, how clean do you consider your heart?