

Authentic Spirituality comes from the heart

Mark 7:1-23

The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus ² and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³ (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. ⁴ When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

⁵ So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?”

⁶ He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

“These people honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.

⁷ They worship me in vain;
their teachings are merely human rules.’

⁸ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”

⁹ And he continued, “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ ¹¹ But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God)— ¹² then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. ¹³ Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

¹⁴ Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. ¹⁵ Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.” ^[16]

¹⁷ After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. ¹⁸ “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? ¹⁹ For it doesn’t go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)

²⁰ He went on: “What comes out of a person is what defiles them. ²¹ For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³ All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”

1. What defiles a person is what comes out of their heart

Mark 7

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2. The un-transformed heart is full of evil

Jeremiah 17

“The heart is more deceitful than all else
 And is desperately sick;
 Who can understand it?
¹⁰ “I, the LORD, search the heart,
 I test the mind,
 Even to give to each man according to his ways,
 According to the results of his deeds.

3. No external religious action can change the heart

Mark 7

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Colossians 2

²⁰ If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, ²¹ “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!” ²² (which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? ²³ These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.

4. Our hearts are changed by the regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit

Romans 2:28-29

²⁸ For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹ But he is a Jew who is one inwardly;

and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Titus 3

⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

5. Authentic spirituality is lived from a transformed and renewed heart

Romans 6:17

But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the **heart** to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

Galatians 4:6

Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our **hearts**, crying, "Abba! Father!"

2 Corinthians 3:3

being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human **hearts**

2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our **hearts** to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Ephesians 1:18

I pray that the eyes of your **heart** may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 5:18-19

...but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

2 Thessalonians 3:5

May the Lord direct your **hearts** into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

1 Timothy 1:5

But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure **heart** and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Hebrews 8:10

“FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR **HEARTS**. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.