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Man's Tradition & God's Commandement.

Matthew 15:10-20

Matthew 15:10-20, *When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand: ¹¹Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man." ¹²Then His disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" ¹³But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."*

¹⁵Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us." ¹⁶So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? ¹⁸But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. ¹⁹For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. ²⁰These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

We are all very conscious today of the term “pollution.” We see it in the TV, newspapers, we hear it discussed all the time, air, and environmental pollution.

The word “pollution” is also a biblical word.

Every time we see the word “defile” in the Bible, it could be translated “pollute.”

Every time you see the word “defilement,” it could be “pollution.”

In this passage our Lord speaks to the issue of pollution.

Five times in that text the word “defile” appear.

The word “defile” means to make impure, to make unclean, to make dirty, to make foul, or to pollute.

In the Greek, *koinōō* is an antonym for clean, it means unclean, dirty, defiled, polluted.

In the New Testament, there are five verbs used for the word “defile,” there are three nouns and one adjective, and the combination of these nine different terms is used **12 times**.

The New Testament does say much about defilement.

In the Old Testament, Hebrew word *chahal*, which means to defile or pollute, appears **225 times**, **175** of which it refers to

defilement or pollution. So, we can say that hundreds of times, God speaks to the issue of being polluted or defiled.

Psalm 119:1, *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the Lord!*

James 1:27, *Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.*

1 Corinthians 8:7, *However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.*

Hebrews 12:15, *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;*

1 Corinthians 3:16-17, *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.*

Revelation 3:4, *You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.*

Revelation 14:4, *These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.*

Revelation 21:27, *But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.*

Believers are to be like Jesus Christ according to the scriptures.

Hebrews 7:26, *For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;*

When we study the Old Testament we find the man of great virtue, Daniel.

Daniel 1:8, *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.*

- ✓ God calls for an undefiled life.
- ✓ God has called His people to be clean,
- ✓ God has called them to be pure,
- ✓ God has called them to be holy,

- ✓ God has called them to be undefiled, to be spotless, to be unpolluted.

If we are to be undefiled and unpolluted, then we must understand what pollutes us and how to deal with that.

The apostle Paul says that God wants to present to Himself a chaste virgin, a pure church. He told the Ephesians that the Lord wanted His church to be spotless, without blemish.

If God calls us to an unpolluted, undefiled, pure, and holy life, then we must know what it is that pollutes so that we can deal with it.

We will see that in this text.

The principle detailed, explained, violated, and explained.

1. Principle detailed.

Our Lord gives us the clear word on true pollution.

V 10, *When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand:*

What multitude is this?

Very likely the multitude described for us in Matthew 14:34-36.

The multitude of people who had come from the area of Gennesaret, which was a plain area, an agricultural area without a city in it. But it had people living in various places, and they were all collected there. It's very near Capernaum.

They were there for healing. Jesus was speaking with them, teaching them, and healing them.

That incident there, which may have lasted for a long time, or many days, some Pharisees came to Jesus.

Matthew 15:1-9, the multitude was there. The Pharisees had come and attempted to discredit Jesus publicly, to make Him look bad.

They had confronted Jesus.

V 2, *“Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.*

V 6, *then he need not honour his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.*

Jesus pointed out one of their traditions, which was nothing more than a manmade rule to keep their own money so they

wouldn't have to give it to their needy parents, which was commanded in the Scripture.

So rather than them embarrassing and discrediting Jesus, they had been publicly shamed and discredited by the piercing words of our Lord. Ended up Jesus' denunciation in **V 7-9** by calling them hypocrites who were described by the prophet Isaiah. They were drawing to God with their mouth, but their hearts were far away.

The multitude has heard all of this. They are standing there. Having gone through this dialogue with the Pharisees, He wants the multitude to come a little closer to Him because He is about to give a principle that they must know.

So, Jesus calls them to Himself.

The term "*hear and understand*" is a very important phrase because it is like saying, "This is very important, I want you not only to hear it, but I want you to get it in your mind."

What He is about to say is an absolutely monumental new thought for them, and it will strike a devastating blow at all of the religion that they are used to.

Jesus says, "Now listen and understand."

2. Principle Explained.

V 11, Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

It is not so hard to understand as it is hard to accept.

A very simple statement.

It isn't what goes in you that pollutes you, it's what comes out of you that pollutes you.

Doesn't take much to understand the statement in terms of its basic sense.

Defilement is an inside matter, not an outside matter.

The Pharisees had come along and said to them **how dare you eat food without going through ceremonial cleansing?**

You eat with defiled hands. You therefore defile the food, you take it in and you defile yourself. You pollute yourself because you have not washed their hands from a cleanliness perspective but whether they went through the ceremonial rinsing's.

The Lord is saying it isn't what goes in that defiles you, it's what comes out.

Jesus is saying pollution and defilement,

- is not a physical issue, it is a spiritual one.
- is not a ritual matter, it is a moral one.

We see Jesus crystallize in one statement the antithesis between extant Judaism, or current Judaism, and the truth that He came to proclaim.

He came to proclaim the truth that was inward, and they were completely committed to that which was outward religion.

Paul says they had a form of godliness that was impotent. In that one statement, Jesus set Himself in absolute diametric opposition to the religion of the Pharisees and scribes.

They shouldn't have been so shocked that He would preach that the heart was the issue because even in the Old Testament.

1 Samuel 16:7, *But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

Had not the prophets repeatedly said that God desired the heart to be circumcised?

Had not it been said over in the Old Testament that the issues that proceed out of the heart are the matters that concern God?

Jesus says that. It isn't what goes in your mouth, it's what comes out.

Mark 7:15, *There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.*

The evil that is in us is not only demonstrated by what we say but it is demonstrated also by what we do.

So, Mark gives us the broadest perspective, and that indicates to us that Matthew is using "mouth" here to make the analogy a little tighter in comparing it with eating of unclean foods and using the mouth as a symbol of the whole man.

The mouth is a good symbol of the depravity of man because it is nowhere more evident than in what comes out of his mouth.

Your mouth is the dominant revealer of internal pollution.

Here mouth being a symbol of the whole man.

In other words, it isn't what goes in you that defiles, it's what comes out of you that defiles.

This is absolutely devastating to the Jewish people.
Mark adds all foods are purified.

Mark 7:19, *because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?"*

Jesus is saying there are no more unclean foods,

- there is no more kosher,
- there is no more ceremonies,
- there is no more forbidden food.

All that is over!

They couldn't handle that.

They lifelong had been prescribed diet based upon clean and unclean. Not only that which was defined biblically but that which was defined as such traditionally. They had this mass of ceremonial things that they had to abide by in their diet and in their activities, eating, drinking, touching, and all these things. They were living by external rituals.

Any religion other than Christianity cannot change the heart, then it can't ever really deal with the inside of a person. Therefore, all religion apart from the truth is left with only externals.

All religions except Christianity tend not only to feed on externals but to sort of mass them up, just to sort of have mounting external kind of activities.

Look at any false religion and you will see it is all bound up in all kinds of ceremonies, rituals, and external issues. The heart is wretched.

Theirs were filled with hate and desire to murder Jesus, and yet they were going through all these external ceremonies.

Two questions.

Why did they feel so strongly attached to external issues?

Where did all this ceremony, ritual, washings etc come from?

Basically, it all started in the Bible from the **book of Leviticus**.

When we read Leviticus, we will find a whole long list of ceremonial observances that they were required to follow.

- There are lists of animals they could eat and animals they couldn't eat.
- Birds they could eat and birds they couldn't eat.
- Things they could touch and things they couldn't touch.
- The way they could cook and the way they can't.
- Certain features of diet they can have, and they can't.
- Certain features of clothing they can wear and can't.
- Certain things they could drink and not drink.

There is a mass of ceremonies in the Old Testament.

For example, they were considered defiled,

- If they had contact with the carcass of an unclean animal, according to **Leviticus 11**,
- with any carcass according to **Leviticus 17**.
- By eating a carcass according to **Leviticus 22**.
- If they came in contact with issues of the body, any kind of issue abnormally coming from any bodily organ according to **Leviticus 15**.
- They were considered unclean in the process of menstruation. They were unclean by contact with anybody who was unclean so that it could be passed to a second level.
- They were unclean after childbirth.
- They were considered unclean by touching anybody who had leprosy.
- They were unclean if they touched the dead or contacted somebody who touched the dead or by funeral rites, **Leviticus 21**, or by creeping things, **Leviticus 22**.

The list goes on and on.

They had all these things that ceremonially made them unfit.

At no time in the Old Testament does it ever say that these things were sinful.

- It is not sinful to have a child.
- It is not sinful to have a bodily function.
- It is not sinful necessarily to touch a dead body.
- It is not sinful to touch an animal that wasn't fit for diet.

Bible never says these things were sins.

Bible says that it constituted a person ritually unfit so that they could not come into worship God.

Because of this external unfitness until they had followed cleansing was necessary to prepare them physically to come into the presence of God. It all this started in the Old Testament.

The question that immediately comes to your mind is why?

It was external, it is never defined as sin.

It is only defined as ritual unfitness.

When God gave the Old Testament, it was in the early, dawning days of God's redemptive plan with God's covenant people. The New Testament calls it the basics, the ABCs.

Now, whenever you want to impart information to a child what we gave our children were books. But the books they got when they were very little were full of pictures.

We don't give your kid the Encyclopaedia Britannica but pictures.

- There were lots of pictures, and the world began to dawn through pictures.
- Then when they learn words, words make sense because words describe things they see in the pictures.

The Old Testament is a book full of pictures, and the entire ceremonial system was like a book given to a child, full of pictures.

God was saying, **“Do you see how you cannot come into God’s presence to worship Him physically when you are ceremonially unclean?**

God want you to come to worship Him spiritually only when your heart is pure.

Do you see the picture?

The whole ceremonial system is a picture of what God wants on the inside.

Circumcision doesn't save people.

Circumcision was a constant sign that what tearing away had occurred in the flesh, God wanted to do in the heart.

Jeremiah 4:4, *Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, And take away the foreskins of your hearts, You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Lest My fury come forth like fire, And burn so that no one can quench it, Because of the evil of your doings.”*

“Circumcise your heart.” The reason that God gave the ceremonial system was as a picture.

But if God was concerned that we be clean on the outside, **how much more was He concerned that we be clean on the inside?**

When we come to God’s holy hill, we must come with clean hands and a pure heart. Clean hands was to demonstrate the need for the pure heart.

Sadly, throughout the history of Israel, they abandoned the reality and kept just the pictures.

By the time you come to Jesus, instead of going on to the fullness of real spirituality, they were just multiplying the pictures. They had added multitudinous ceremonies to the ones which were given in the Bible.

They have not only rejected the reality when it came, they killed it.

By Jesus' day, the Pharisees and scribes had developed such an elaborate external system of ceremonies. It was so complex that it became an absolutely intolerable burden, and it cast its shadow over the whole New Testament.

Matthew 23:4, *For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*

They developed the law of intention. If you got up in the morning and said, "I intend to be pure all day," you could waive all the ceremonies.

If God didn't intend for holiness to be an external matter, why all these ceremonies?

Pictures and symbols.

This is really the essence of the **9th and 10th chapter of Hebrews**. You will never understand the book of Leviticus until you understand the commentary on Leviticus, which is Hebrews.

Hebrews 8:5, *who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to*

make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

The Old Testament is an example and a shadow of heavenly things.

Hebrews 9:9-10, *It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience— concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.*

What is the time of reformation?

Time of the arrival of the Messiah and the new covenant.

That was the picture-book time, but when Jesus came, it was graduation from elementary school.

Hebrews 10:1, *For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.*

They were always intended as a shadow, as a sketch, as a picture.

Hebrews 10:22, *let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

Let us go to the spiritual cleansing that God was after.

Hebrews 6:1-2, *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ²of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

It is not talking about Christianity. It is talking about Judaism. The word, translated baptism, that word is always translated washing, that's what it means, let's leave the washings, move out of those things.

Hebrews 5:12- 6:8, it's all written to Jews who are sitting on the fence, and they won't abandon their ceremonialism.

Let us not lay again the foundation of repentance toward God, dead works, those basic doctrines, let us get on to perfection.

Perfection. Every time you see it in the book of Hebrews, it refers to salvation.

Leave the washings, those were pictures, symbols, nothing more. God wanted to impress deeply, and He gave them all the pictures they needed.

How tragic it is that they just kept the pictures and rejected the reality?

What is the Lord saying in verse 11?

God all along had intended that it wasn't what was going in from the outside that defiled, it was what was coming up from inside.

You could go through all the ceremonies you wanted to, but your heart could be a pool, pumping out filth.

Jesus, then, sets Himself in diametric opposition to the Pharisees.

It is one of the ways in which Jesus fulfilled.

Matthew 5:17, *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil.”*

There are many ways He did that, but this was one of the ways, by abolishing the ceremonial system, putting an end to the pictures, and bringing the reality.

In the New Testament, we see this transition.

Mark 7:19, *because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?"*

New Testament, whenever you see things that defile or things that pollute, they never have anything to do with the outside.

Never!

Never at all in the New Testament.

Matthew 15:18, *But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.*

Unbelief defiles.

Titus 1:15, *To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.*

Idolatry defiles.

1 Corinthians 8:7, *However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.*

Bitterness defiles.

Hebrews 12:15, *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;*

So, defilement is always internal in the New Testament.

The external picture has passed away.

An illustration: Acts 10.

Peter went up onto the roof to pray. Lord gave him a divine anaesthetic and put him in to a trance. He was really hungry, so he was thinking about food.

Peter had have seen a big table spread with kosher food, but instead, heaven opened in his vision and a big sheet came out of heaven. Pulled together at four corners, and everything was on it. Four-footed beasts of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air.

Now this would be very difficult for a Jew to handle because you just can't mix all those animals. They had clean and unclean animals, clean and unclean birds. A voice comes saying, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat."

What was Peters reaction?

"Not so, Lord, I have never eaten anything that is common," or separated and unclean.

All your life long like that, you just can't!

The voice spoke un him a second time, “What God has cleansed, that you don’t call common.”

Do you know something?

Peter was so thick God had to speak **3 times** to get the message.

A good Jewish boy like this, raised all his life to eat only that which is clean, now he was told to eat anything.

The ceremonial law is abolished.

Too tough.

Romans 14. Some of the Christians, some of the Jewish Christians just couldn’t handle it.

Gentile Christians would invite them over for dinner and want to sort of show them their liberty, so they would serve up ham.

They just couldn’t eat it, and it was causing tension in the church.

Romans 14:2-3, *For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. ³Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him.*

Doesn't matter what you eat.

Doesn't matter, if a person's conscience bothers him, don't force him to eat something that will bother his conscience.

Pastor Sasha funny story about kosher meal with ham.

What Paul is saying here is that eating isn't the issue, but don't offend somebody. Don't force the thing.

Romans 14:14-15, *I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.* ¹⁵*Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.*

Romans 14:20, *Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.*

1 Timothy tells us the same thing, that this whole deal has been abolished.

1 Timothy 4:3-5, *forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.* ⁴*For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it*

is received with thanksgiving; ⁵for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

There is no more clean and unclean.
Jesus abolished the ceremonial system.

Matthew 15, and here we are introduced to where that really happened.

A monumental statement by the Lord that just totally pulled the rug out from under their entire perspective of religion.

3. Principle violated.

We are face-to-face with the hypocrites, the Pharisees, and the scribes, who have confronted Jesus.

V 12, *Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?”*

Mark tells us they had now moved to a house.

It could have been the house the Lord used to stay in in Capernaum. They are inside. They are away from the crowd, the scribes, the Pharisees, and now it's time to face the issue.

They were really trying to warn the Lord.

Lord, you really got them angry. I mean we got to avoid those people because they were offended.

They were totally offended by what He said that you could eat anything you want, just blew them away.

They were trying to help the Lord out here, say, “Lord, you got to sort of be careful what you say. Going to get us all in a lot of trouble.”

The whole statement and He knew it was a fierce blast at their empty worship and hypocrisy.

But the disciples thought that was offensive, wait until they get to chapter 23 when He calls them whitewashed grave.

When Peter calls them wells without water, empty clouds.

In **Matthew 23**, the Lord called them.

- Hypocrites, devouring widows’ houses.
- Hypocrites, shutting up the Kingdom of God.
- Hypocrites, blind guides, fools, blind.
- Hypocrites, paying tithes of little herbs and omitting justice, faith, and mercy.
- Hypocrites, swallowing camels and straining at gnats.
- Hypocrites, cleaning the outside of the cup.

- Hypocrites, whited washed tombs.

Jesus offended them purposely. The disciples were curious about all this, but the Lord knew exactly what He was saying.

They were so deep into their system that they had God in their system.

They believed that God was the presider over the heavenly Sanhedrin, and that the rabbis sat next to God in order of rank according to their holiness, and that together, they studied the **Halacha** (Jewish law) and made decisions.

They also believed that the last three hours of each day, after such hard work in the law and the Mishnah, God spent three hours at the end of each day playing with Leviathan, the dragon.

They taught that the Almighty was so grieved over the destruction of the temple that once in each of the three watches of the night, He roared like a lion, and when tears fell from His eyes, they plopped in the ocean and caused earthquakes.

They taught that God wore a prayer shawl and **phylacteries** (a small box containing the law of God).

Worse than that, they taught that when God came to Egypt, He got defiled and had to be purged by Aaron, and when God went to the burial of Moses, He touched Moses. So, God had to be bathed in a fire to purge Himself.

They had God right in their system.

When Jesus blasted their system, from their perspective, it was a blast at God and everything they considered to be sacred.

Luke 11

This Pharisee invites Jesus to dinner, so it says He went in and sat down to eat. Now Jesus is the guest of the Pharisee.

When the Pharisee saw it, they marvelled that Jesus had not first washed before dinner.

Now, he was not marvelling that He had dirty hands, He didn't go through the ceremonies. The Pharisee can't believe it.

The Lord didn't say, "I am sorry, I will do that, I don't want to offend you." No, He didn't say that.

Luke 11:37-44, *And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat. ³⁸ When the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner. ³⁹ Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees*

make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you. ⁴²“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ⁴³Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them.”

Can you imagine by this time what would have happened?

This is the last time he will ever invite Jesus for dinner.

Jesus always took this direct blast at hypocritical religion. We learn the first thing about hypocrites that I want you to note in our passage, they are offended by the truth.

They were offended, V12.

There is no question about that.

Hypocrites may come into this church and be offended.

There are many people who say, “I will never come back to that place. I don’t like what he said.”

There places I visit they will never invite me again to preach because the truth offends them.

Hypocrites will be offended because when they are brought to the truth, they come up short, they are unmasked. There is no one in the sight of God so ugly as that person who covers his ugliness with the paint of beauty when there is no real change at all.

If your heart is offended by the truth, then you ought to look deeply in your heart because it may be that you are a hypocrite.

Hypocrites they are not only offended by the truth, but they are destined for judgment.

V 13, But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.

They are going to be judged.

He sees a field, and in that field, there are lot of plantings, the Greek word here is planting. There are a lot of different plantings there.

The parable of the wheat and the tares, where God sowed the wheat, and the enemy came, Satan, and sowed the tares.

Matthew 13:37-39, *He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. ³⁹The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.*

Jesus says the ones that God doesn't plant are going to be rooted up.

They are going to be judged.

Judgment on the hypocrite. The only person that God in Christ really blasts in the New Testament, where you get the person along with the sin, is the spiritual hypocrite.

They will grow together until the judgment, and then my Father will separate them out.

They are not His and they will be rooted up.

V 14, *Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."*

A hard statement.

Let them alone.

What do you mean?

It really could be translated “Stay away from them.”

Anybody who pretends to represent the true religion, anybody who pretends to know God, anybody who pretends the truth but inside is not true, stay away from him.

Hosea 4:17, *“Ephraim is joined to idols, Let him alone.*

They are abandoned to judgment.

Remember how we saw that in the wheat and the tares?

When they said to Him shall we go rip the tares out?

He says to them don't. That is not your job. The angels will come in due time and do that. Your job is to proclaim the message of the Kingdom. We will take care of the judgment. Don't you go trying to rip them up.

I confess to you that that's hard!

One of the great tensions I have in my heart is how God can want His church so pure and at the same time tolerate such horrible impurity in the midst of it.

God can tolerate so-called Christian hypocrisy. So, stay away.

Not only stay away in terms of abandoning them to judgment, not only stay away in terms of not thinking you can tear them up because you might not know who the tares are.

You might rip up the wheat and leave the tares alone in your acts of judgment.

Stay away from them.

Why?

V 14, *Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."*

It is not the word for ditch.

It is the word for the hole in the field where they fill it up with water to give water to the animals.

The pit can mean nothing other than hell, they lead people to hell, that's what they do.

Stay away from them. You don't ever expose yourself to these kinds of people, not in the name of anything.

In **Jude**, it says when you come across such a person, you snatch them like a brand from the burning lest your own garments would be spotted. You don't want to get near that stuff, you don't want to listen to their knowledge, falsely so called.

Paul says to Timothy in **1 Timothy**. *“Purge yourself from these influences.”* Stay away from these people. Don’t expose yourself to them because they lead people to disaster.

Of course, this blind leader of the blind is a play on their own teaching because the rabbis called themselves the leaders of the blind.

Romans 2:19, *and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,*

The Lord several times calls them blind guides and the blind are leading the blind.

The people that are leading them are blind, the leaders who are leading them are blind, and they all fall into hell. Stay away from them.

- Don’t go near them.
- Don’t expose yourself to hypocrites.
- Don’t expose yourself to people pumping out false religion in the name of Christianity.

It eats like a gangrene.

Don’t even give them the satisfaction of an audience. They have a self-inflicted, self-deluded blindness, and they push people to hell.

Matthew 23:15, *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.*

I encourage young people, when they go for their education, to be obedient to the Word of God and not put themselves in the place where they are going to be interacting with hypocrites.

A hypocrite is anybody who pretends religion on the outside and doesn't know God on the inside.

Stay away from them.

4. Principle explained.

V 15, *Then Peter answered and said to Him, “Explain this parable to us.”*

What parable?

It is a question of honesty, they wanted to know, it wasn't that they couldn't understand what He meant, it was just they couldn't accept it, Peter especially.

That's why he had to have three visions in Acts 10 of the same thing, and then go to a gentile, and have a gentile convert.

Peter still really didn't get it well because later on, when he went up to Antioch, **Galatians chapter 2** says some Judaizers came along who still believed you had to keep all the ceremonies, and as soon as Peter saw the Jews, he separated from the gentiles and went over with the Jews and started doing all that stuff.

Paul must withstood him to the face. It was very hard to for Peter to make that adjustment.

V 16-18, *So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding?"¹⁷ Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated?¹⁸ But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.*

You can't be defiled by what goes in your mouth because it goes through normal body elimination process, it does not pollute you.

Now, the question the Jew is going to be asking at this moment is, "***what about all those ceremonies?***"

Those were only pictures/ representations of the real pollution. Jesus says that it just goes in your stomach and out the draught, but those things that proceed out of the mouth.

Mark mentioned, “out of the man” - come forth from the heart and they pollute the man.

You are never polluted because of what you take in, you are polluted because of what you pump out.

V 19, *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.*

Heart is not the physical pump, it is the inner self, the mind, the source of thought, attitude, motive, and desire.

Related to emotion, thought, feeling, primarily the thinking processes.

Jesus is saying that it's the filth pumped out of the inside, such as evil thoughts has to do with wicked schemes.

They were plotting right at that point against Jesus, the Pharisees were, or murders, murder being the destruction of human life, adultery, stealing, covenant breaking, fornication, theft, violation of others' property, false witness, dishonest testimony, blasphemy, malicious accusation, and slander.

Does that remind you of Matthew 5?

The Pharisees said that we don't do any murders.

Jesus said that if you hate in your heart, you might as well have murdered.

The Pharisees said that we don't commit adultery.

Jesus said that if you look on a woman to lust after her, you have committed adultery in your heart.

It is the heart that gives birth to the garbage on the outside. They washed their hands, but not they didn't wash their hearts.

Conclusion:

V 20, These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

The unwashed heart is what defiles, and so what is man's greatest need?

Ceremonial religion?

It is the religion of the heart.

The heart must be cleansed.

Titus 1:12-15, *One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, ¹³This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, ¹⁴not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. ¹⁵To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.*

Tell them to lay away themselves from those external, ceremonial activities.

They may profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him, they are abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work they are reprobate.

No matter what they say or what they profess or what kind of Jewish fables or commandments of men they go through, they are defiled on the inside, so everything on the outside is defiled.

However, in the middle, you have that wonderful statement of light in the midst of darkness, "Unto the pure, all things are pure."

Pure men with pure hearts receive all things as pure.

What do men need?

If we are to be sure we avoid the defilement and the pollution that God is so against, what do we need?

We need a pure heart!

Matthew 5:8, *Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.*

The prayer of every individual should be, “Lord, purify my heart.”

How does He do that?

Only one way can our hearts be purified, and that is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who purifies the heart, who washes away the sin.

Even, in the terms of Ezekiel, gives us a new heart.
Every man needs that.