

Matthew 15:1-20. Jesus Eats With Unwashed Hands.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus teaches that it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, and that true cleansing from sin comes through the spiritual washing of the blood of Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Ezekiel 36:25, Matthew 15:1, Mark 7:14, Ephesians 5:26, Titus 3:5, Hebrews 10:22, 1 John 1:7

Topics: "Inner Cleansing", "Spiritual Purification"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about Jesus' boldness in confronting the false teachings of the Jewish elders, exposing their harmful traditions and emphasizing the importance of following God's commands over man-made rules. Jesus teaches that true defilement comes from the sinful thoughts and desires of the heart, rather than external actions, highlighting the need for inner cleansing through the blood of Christ. He emphasizes that only Jesus can wash away our spiritual impurities and transform us, offering forgiveness and sanctification to all who seek His mercy.

Transcript

It has often been observed, that in the character of Jesus, opposite qualities were united. We seldom (or perhaps never) see a man remarkable at once for meekness, and for boldness. Yet our Lord was remarkable for both. The incident we have just read, affords an instance of his boldness in dealing faithfully with his powerful and malicious enemies.

He would not countenance the custom of washing the hands before taking food. Yet was not this a harmless custom? Why did he not comply with it? Because, though harmless in itself, it was enforced on the people as a religious duty. The Jewish teachers taught the people that food defiled them unless eaten with washed hands. Now this was not a doctrine of God's word. These elders (or teachers) ought to have taught the truths contained in God's holy word. It was their office to explain the Scriptures to the people; but instead of doing this, they added commandments of their own. Jesus expressed his disapprobation of their conduct by not observing these human commandments. The custom of washing the hands before eating was innocent in itself; but there were other commandments taught by the elders that were very pernicious. Jesus gave an instance of one of these. God had commanded children to honor their parents. A child who honors his parents will provide for them in old age. But the Jewish teachers taught the people, that if they gave some money to the priests for the service of the temple, that then they might be excused

from supporting their aged parents. They instructed children to say to their decrepit parents, "It is a gift; what I should have given you has been bestowed upon the temple; so that I can do nothing for you." Such conduct was exceedingly wicked; yet the Jewish teachers said it was right.

We see from this instance that it is very dangerous to follow the opinions of men concerning what is wrong, or what is right. What God commands is good--what he forbids is evil; and the word of God is the only rule of good and evil.

Of course the Pharisees were extremely enraged against Christ for exposing their false instructions. But Jesus had so much compassion for the poor ignorant people, that he chose to undeceive them; though by this line of conduct he increased the hatred of his enemies. Had we more compassion for the ignorant, we should have less fear of man. A father would not stand by and see his child poisoned, whomever he might offend by his opposition.

Jesus explained clearly to the people in the presence of their teachers, in what respect they were deceived. He called them, and said, "Not that which goes into the mouth defiles a man; but that which comes out of the mouth, that defiles a man." Yet even the disciples could not understand this simple truth, and Peter called it a "parable," and asked Jesus to explain it. It is very hard to get rid of prejudices which have long darkened the mind. The heathen, even when converted, are apt to retain many superstitious ideas imbibed in their infancy. We are all naturally disposed to think that ceremonies can profit our soul; whereas none can sanctify us but the Spirit of God, and nothing can defile us but sin. Neither is it the sinful action only that pollutes--the sinful thought (which gives rise to the action) pollutes far more. It is not the act of stealing only, but the desire to possess our neighbor's property, that defiles; it is not the words of the lie merely, but the WISH to deceive, that stains the man; it is not so much the blasphemous expressions, as the irreverent feeling towards God, that constitutes the essence of profaneness. We perceive, therefore, that even if we have not committed gross and open transgressions, we are, notwithstanding, deeply polluted. Such defilement, no ceremonies can remove. Water cannot wash the heart. The blood of Christ alone can cleanse the inner man. It is a spiritual washing that we need; Jesus himself must wash us or we perish. He is gracious, and will pardon the vilest sinner that implores his mercy; he will not only pardon him but sanctify him, and give him a new heart full of holy desires.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/favell-lee-mortimer/matthew-151-20-jesus-eats-with-unwashed-hands/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net