

Clean Hands and Dirty Hearts

Our religious rules can cause us to focus on _____

- They can blind us to the amazing _____ in the lives of others
- They can make us feel _____ before God when our hearts are far from Him.

Our religious rules can cause us to _____ our greatest problem.

- Our greatest problem is being _____ before God.
 - We are not unclean because of what comes _____
 - We are unclean because of what comes _____
- Our greatest problem is _____
 - Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-12

Our religious rules cannot do what _____

- Only God can _____
- Only God can _____
- Only God can _____

Personal observations from the message.

1. How would you summarize what you learned in a sentence or two?
2. What point or verse did you find most helpful? Why?
3. What is a question you have?
4. What is the next step you will take?

Discussion questions from the message.

1. What are some extra-biblical religious rules that we often see in the church? What are some “religious rules” that people in our culture follow that they think make them better people? How can “religious rules” be good? What problems can they create?
2. Read Mark 7:1-5. What are the religious leaders concerned about? What have they missed (see 6:53-56)? How can religious rules keep us from focusing on the right priorities?
3. Read Mark 7:6-8. How would you summarize that Jesus is saying? Do you think the Pharisees and scribe thought their hearts were far from God? Why or why not? Why do you think they were focused on having clean hands? What do you think they might have said if Jesus gave them time to respond after verse 8?
4. Read Mark 7:9-12. What is going on here? What was likely the motive behind the idea of Corban? How are we sometimes guilty of this – keeping some religious rules so we have an excuse not to do what God says?
5. Read Mark 7:13-23. What are things that come into us that we think might make us unclean before God? Why can’t things from the outside make us unclean? Does this mean that we can take into our bodies whatever we want since it doesn’t make us unclean? Why or why not?
6. What do verses 20-23 reveal about our hearts? How does this line up with what Jeremiah 17:9 says about our hearts? Why is it so hard to accept apart from God’s Word and His Spirit?
7. If the reason we are unclean is because of what is in us, what hope do we have for being clean? What has God done so that we can be different? What should the life of someone who has been given a new heart look like (consider the opposites of what verses 21-23 describe).