

SERIES: GETTING TO KNOW JESUS

**SUBJECT: NOT WHAT GOES IN BUT WHAT COMES
OUT**

SCRIPTURE: MARK 7:1-23

SERMON NO. 15

Introduction

There was a young man who lived in the South Bay area of San Francisco, by the name of David Kraft. David grew up with a father who loved him, who consistently lived a godly life before his family, and who intentionally introduced his children to the love of Jesus and His salvation when they were all very young.

David was a big, athletic young man, standing six feet two inches tall and weighed two hundred pounds. Shortly after he graduated from seminary, he accepted a ministry role with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes organization.

A short time after his 32nd birthday, he was diagnosed with cancer. Over the next year, the cancer wracked his body, and by the end of that year, he had dropped from weighing two hundred pounds, to just eighty pounds.

Death was closing in as he lay in his hospital bed. He looked up at his dad and weakly said, "Dad, do you remember when I was a little boy, how you used to just hold me in your arms close to your chest?"

David's father nodded. Then David said, "Dad, could you do that one more time? One last time?"

His father bent down to pick up his 32-year-old six-foot two-inch, eighty-pound son, and held him close to his chest so the son's face was right next to the father's face. Tears were streaming down both faces. And David Kraft said to his dad, "Thank you for building the kind of character into my life that enables me to face even a moment like this." (adapted from an illustration used by Ron Lee Davis, "Introducing Christ to Your Child," Preaching Today, Tape No. 92.)

How do you build into your child the kind of character that would enable him or her to face such a crucial moment like death? How do you gain the kind of character that will affect those around you in such a positive way? We're really asking how do you impact people with your faith?

Jesus tells us how in Mark 7

I. DIALOG WITH THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS (1-5). Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashed, hands, they found fault. 4 And when they came from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tabled. 5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

1. The issue was not the washing of hands. They didn't wash them properly according to rabbinical law. In this ceremonial washing, the hands were of primary importance. To do the cleaning exactly right, the rabbis taught that the hands were to be

held out with the fingers slightly up, and the water poured into the palms. The water was allowed to roll back across the wrists and slightly up the forearms. Then a fist was made with the right hand, and with that fist you scrubbed the palm of the left hand. Then you reversed the process. Finally, the hands were pointed downward, and clean water was poured from the forearms, down the hands, and the excess water dripped off the ends of the fingers.

This was this process that the Jewish religious leaders referred to when they asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?"

The answer Jesus gave (6-7). Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. 7 Howbeit it in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

2. Jesus knows the real issue with these religious leaders (8) For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

They had let go of the commands of God and set up man-made rules and regulations, in their place.

Mark 7:9-13 Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. 10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother, and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: 11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest profited by me; he shall be free. 12 And ye suffer him no

more to do ought for his father or his mother; 13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered and many such like things do ye.

a) The law of God requires a person to take care of his parents when they are in need; this is part of honoring them, as one of the 10 Commandments teaches.

The greedy Jewish leaders had devised a way to get around this command of God to take care of their parents. If a person simply made a public declaration that the money he would normally have used to take care of his elderly parents was "Corban" which means money set aside for God's use, then he was released from and under no obligation to take care of his needy parents. He didn't even have to give this money to the Temple! He only had to declare that it was set aside.

This was clearly a case of establishing a human law to ignore and reject one of God's laws. And Jesus said, "This is wrong! This cheapens the authority of the Word of God!"

3. Getting to the heart of the issue (14-15). When he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me everyone of you, and understand: 15 There is nothing from without a man, that entereth into him can defile him; but the things which come out of him, Those are they that defile the man.

The religious leaders of Jesus' day said that if you did the right things, studied the proper Jewish religious curriculum, and followed the law to its exact letter, then you would be living in a right relationship with God, and contributing positively to society.

Today there is an almost sacred prevailing philosophy throughout our entire North American culture that says: all the ills, problems, prejudices, selfishness, and inhumanity in our society can be cured with the right external stimulant called proper education.

Jesus is saying, "No way!" It's not the education that goes into a person that makes that person lose negative behaviors, as good as that education may be.

II. THE NEW PHILOSOPHY (17-18). And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

1. Explanation to the disciples. (18). He saith unto them, Are you so without understanding also? Do you not perceive, that whatsoever things from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;

Did you catch it? There is nothing that can be done from the outside to a person that will make a permanent change in who he or she is, how they think, or how they act.

2. Its What Comes Out That Counts. (19-23) Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats. 20 And he saith, that which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

A list of heart polluters.²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, ²² Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, and evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: ²³ All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. These are the things that can

accumulate at the core of who we are, and cause all the good intentions of knowledge and education to fall flat.

It's what comes out of a human being, after being filtered through the human heart that makes a person acceptable or unacceptable to God; harmful or beneficial to society. The human heart can be a lousy filtering device. It can accumulate things that will pollute a human life.

We are living in the most educated society the world has ever known, our world isn't becoming a better, safer, more accepting or loving place.

Conclusion

Every night Ms. Ada cleans the filter in our coffee pot so it will not become polluted. The next morning we have good clean fresh coffee. Same is true of life.

And Jesus' point in this passage is that you can't live holy and godly lives if you have a heart that's polluted. So examine your heart, and if there is one or more of these polluters in it, get rid of it by confessing it as sin to God, and asking for the strength of the Holy Spirit to overcome it.

2 Peter 3:11 "what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives."

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