

## Holiness of the Heart

Mark 7:9-23 – Legalism and Grace – Part 2

- I. We can be externally right by man's standards but internally wrong by God's (Mark 7:9-13).
  - A. The Pharisees were loophole legalists (9-12).
    - They failed to honor their parents financially using "Corban."
  - B. The Pharisees actually disobeyed God's real commands by using their own rules (13).
    - *Do I keep personal rules while ignoring my sin?*
  
- II. Rule-keeping doesn't determine holiness; our heart does (Mark 7:14-23).
  - A. Food going into a person can't make a person unclean; what comes out of a person does (7:14-16).
  - B. Food is just a physical issue, not a spiritual one, and thus all food is spiritually "clean" or neutral (7:17-19)
    - The ceremonial law was fulfilled by Christ, who declared all foods now clean (7:19b; Matthew 5:17; Romans 14:14).

**Making personal choices**

  1. Grace frees us from rules about non-absolutes – We have freedom to make personal choices (Romans 14:14, 22; 1 Corinthians 8:4-8).
  2. Love should limit our freedoms – We shouldn't misuse our freedoms in ways that tempt or deliberately offend others (Romans 13:10; 14:13, 15-21; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13; Galatians 5:14).
  3. The pursuit of holiness should limit our freedoms – If it makes us sin, we shouldn't do it (Mark 9:43; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:1-2).

  - C. Sinful thoughts, deeds and attitudes come from the wrong desires of our hearts (20-23).
    - *In my pursuit of holiness, do I address the desires of my heart, or just my behavior? Am I pursuing internal and external holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1)?*