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The Parables of Jesus Christ: Not the Entrance, but Rather the Exit

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THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST

PARABLE TWENTY-ONE: Not the Entrance, but Rather the Exit: A Diagnosis of Defilement (Mt. 15:10-20; Mk. 7:14-23)

SURVEY

Eating food with ceremonially unwashed hands, or from unwashed vessels does not constitute defilement. It is thus not that which enters the mouth and stomach, but rather what comes out of the mouth and heart, such as evil thoughts, murder, adultery, theft, false testimony, etc.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the final of three parables where, at the request of His disciples, Jesus provided for them its interpretation. These are:
 1. The Sower, Seed, and Soil (Mt. 13:3-9, 18-23)
 2. The Tares and Wheat (Mt. 13:24-30; 36-43)
 3. The Parable on Defilement

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- The theme reflected by this parable is the evil of legalism, which can be defined as follows:
 1. Emphasizing the outward action to the exclusion of the inward attitude
 2. Forcing my personal convictions upon someone else
 3. Judging and condemning all those who dare disagree with me regarding even those minor and petty issues
 4. Substituting the liberty in Christ with the bondage of the law
 5. Living one's life in the flesh and not in the Spirit
- Note the following passages regarding real defilement:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Mt. 23:25, 27).

"Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? . . . For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that

continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith" (Gal. 3:3, 10, 11).

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (5:17).

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (6:8).

"For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thess. 2:14-16).

- Paul aptly summarizes all this by one concise verse:

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. 14:17)