

Kingdom and Conflict: Such a Fuss over Clean Hands

Mark 7: 1-23

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Introduction:

Sigmund Freud – Father of modern psychotherapy.

- Freud was also a sociologist and religion commentator.
- The Future of an Illusion, by Sigmund Freud
- Freud says that gods were an early technology.
- A bow and arrow permits mankind to kill game, believe he can survive and feel confident.
- Similarly, a god can justify killing, improve chances of survival and feel a false confidence about the invented world.
- According to Freud mankind was more in control by believing in gods and creating moral absolutes.
- It is human nature to want to control.

I. The Set UP

- a. The Law of Moses was quite descriptive of things that caused ritual impurity.
- b. Ritual impurity disqualified people from worshipping at the Temple.
- c. In the day, community was integral to social, economic and secure well being.
- d. Socrates (4th century B.C.) chose death by suicide over exile – isolation from community.
- e. Among those things that caused ritual impurity:
 - i. Leprosy and other skin conditions
 - ii. Mildew
 - iii. Bodily discharges
 - iv. Stepping over a dead body
- f. Additional rules were created to “help.”
- g. Bread eaten with unwashed hands was considered filth.
- h. Washing before eating identified one as a Jew.

II. The Dialogue

- a. The religious elite was saying that Jesus was teaching things out of accord with the Law.
- b. Jesus used the thinly veiled accusation as an opportunity to point out their hypocrisy.
- c. Jesus quotes Isaiah in pointing out that the elite were quite good at making and keeping rules by the letter, but were poor in heart.
- d. In fact, the religious elite was guilty of idolatry.
- e. Corban for example.

III. The Sermon

- a. Food and that which you eat are of no consequence as it relates to the Kingdom.
- b. What is taken into the stomach is eliminated, but our problem is of the heart.
- c. “The line between good and evil passes – not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties – but right through every human heart and through all human hearts.

IV. Take Away

- a. You must be born again.