

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Feb 10th 2021

Today's Gospel, Mark 7:14-23 concludes the episode of yesterday's Gospel where Jesus challenged the manner of observance of the law of purity. In today's passage, Jesus pushes his argument to the logical conclusion which appears natural to his views. The question of purity with regard to worship should not relate only to the external but rather to the inmost recesses of our being because this is where the most privileged contact with God happens. Of old, whenever God spoke to humans like Abraham, David etc., they heard him, understood him and then acted. If their relationship with God involved the faculties of hearing, understanding and reflection, it means that this relationship with God involves the heart of man where introspective reflection and understanding takes place. Why then would the law of God be totally determined by how frequently one washed his hands? For Jesus, this did not make sense. That washing should only be a symbolic representation of something much more profound. For this reason, he posits the principle: "it is what comes out of a man's heart that makes a man unclean".

This principle is as profound as it can be. A good person, a kind person is separated from the wicked person simply by the content of their heart. Jesus charges us today, to constantly evaluate, assess and reconfigure the content of our heart in order to orient them towards good and not evil. If we serve a good God, then we should endeavor to be like him, after all, the heart is the content most important in our service of God and our fellow humans.

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