

# “The Heart Removed From God” (lesson #6)

Matthew 15:1-20

1. What accusations did the Pharisees make against the disciples of Jesus (15:2)? How did Jesus answer (15:3)?

**Transgress** the tradition of the elders by not washing hands before eating.

**Jesus** asked them a rhetorical question designed to show them that their precious traditions were causing them to transgress the commandments of God.

2. What Pharisaic tradition did Jesus use to expose their hypocrisy (15:4-6)?

**The tradition:** a releasing from obligation to parents by giving to the Temple (Mk 7:1-11-13). Part of the oral law: Mishna (said to be from Moses).

**The commandment of God** was quite clear (Exo 20:12; Deut 5:16; Exo 21:17).

3. How does Isaiah 29:13 address the traditions of the Pharisees?

**Isaiah 29:13** – Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.”

**Tradition:**

External  
Gain status with men  
Ritual  
Empty words  
Robs one of the power of truth

**Truth:**

Internal  
Pleases God  
Spiritual  
Fullness of God’s will  
Enables one to carry out truth

4. What parable did Jesus relate, and what was its effect on the Pharisees (15:11-12)?

**Jesus** spoke a parable showing what truly constitutes defilement. **He** contrasts foods taken into the body, which may have been eaten with unwashed hands (so-called external defilement) with evil words coming out of the heart (internal defilement).

**The defilement** that God is concerned with is of the internal type.

**The Pharisees** were offended because they had elevated their traditions to the level of divine proclamation (the word of God), and their traditions were founded on nothing more than human wisdom.

5. What was the explanation of the parable (15:17-18)?

**Foods & Cleanliness** affect only the human body. Everything we eat is ultimately eliminated from the body.

**However**, the “things” that come out of the mouth (words) indicate the condition of the mind or heart, which God will judge.

6. Relate the importance of a “pure heart” to our study (15:18-20; cf. Psa 24:3-5; Matt 5:8).

**Psa 24:3-5** – Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

**Matt 5:8** – Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

**The eyes & ears** aid in the formulation of what is in the heart.

## 7. What did Peter learn from this encounter with the Lord (15:15)?

**Peter** learned, or was learning, that laws relating to the kingdom of God were concerned with renewing or regenerating the spirit of man, changing him from the inside out (Jer 31:31-34; Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:8-11). External acts were important only to the extent that they are a direct result of obedience to the word of God.

**Peter** also learned how to handle the opposition:

1. Make sure no charges from God's word can be brought against you.
2. Answer insincere inquiries with questions designed to force honesty.
3. Be certain that your question & the argument you make is scriptural.

**Did Peter learn this lesson?**

(Acts 4:18-20 – 1<sup>st</sup> arrest; Acts 5:27-29 – 2<sup>nd</sup> arrest)

**Did the Lord have to repeat this lesson to Peter?**

(Acts 10; Gal 2:11-21)

**Paul dealt with this issue?**

(1 Tim 4:1-6; Rom 14:3)

## APPLICATION:

8. As disciples, do we have a duty in exposing human doctrine (15:13-14)?

(Phil 3:17-19; Rom 16:17-18; 2 Tim 2:14-18)

9. If we as disciples of Jesus teach as He taught, what should we expect on occasion?

**Discuss** the context of these verses & make application to our present situation:  
(Matt 11:4-6; 13:54-57; 24:9-10; John 15:18-25)