



## LIFE GROUP SPRING WEEK - From the Inside Out

**Big Idea:** *Sin comes from the heart, not from association with sinners.*

Read Mark 7: 1-23

1. The Pharisees were accusing Jesus' disciples of sinning because they had purchased food from Gentile vendors. Gentiles were considered sinners and the Pharisees taught that sin was transferred through interactions with Gentiles. What are modern day examples of churchgoers teaching that a person is guilty of sin by association?
2. God's original rule is sin makes us unclean. The Pharisees, in an effort to keep people clean taught individuals they should not interact with sinners. However, food at the market was cheap so they had to develop another rule to cover them when they broke their rule of interacting with sinners (that's the hand washing rule). Why is it attractive to build rules around God's original rule?
3. What is more difficult: To follow the "rules built around God's original rule" or authentically follow the heart behind the original rule? Explain.
4. What extra standards does church culture impose upon people that God does not require? How can we identify these extra standards and eliminate them?

5. **Jesus teaches in this passage that sin comes from the heart, not from association with sinners. Knowing that sin comes from our hearts and not from the people or circumstances that surround us. How can that change the way we relate to people outside of the Christian faith?**

**Prayer:** Spend time asking the Lord that we would be more faithful to the spirit of His law than the letter of the law. Ask God to purge the church of our extra “tribal” rules that we might push on people to observe as they search for belonging in our spiritual community.