

Mark 7:14-23 – Matters of the Heart

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- Ephesians 6:12–13 (ESV)¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

Mark 7:14–23 (ESV)¹⁴And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.” ¹⁷And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) ²⁰And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. ²¹For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

- 1 Samuel 16:6–7 (ESV)⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is before him.” ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”
- Isaiah 29:13 (ESV)¹³And the Lord said: “Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men,
- Matthew 12:33–37 (ESV)³³“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. ³⁶I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” ²⁷“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.
- Luke 6:45 (ESV)⁴⁵The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.
- Romans 14:17 (ESV)¹⁷For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
- Psalm 51:10 (ESV)¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

- Ezekiel 36:26–27 (ESV)²⁶And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
- James 1:14–15 (ESV)¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Points to Ponder

1. What do your recent thoughts, words and behavior reveal about the condition of your heart?
2. Invite Jesus into these responses asking him to forgive those responses that are not pleasing to him.
3. Ask him to transform and make new your heart so that it might better reflect His. Remember God is patient and loving and has the power to change old habits and responses.