

**Thursday, October 19, 2017**

**Mark 7:14-15 (Jesus said), “Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man.”**

The religious leaders had gotten so caught up in the dietary laws, what they should and shouldn't eat, that they lost sight of other areas of life. Jesus taught the people that their need for personal accountability and righteousness went far beyond observing food restrictions. Personal contamination was actually more a result of their words and deeds. It's not how we keep the rules that makes us righteous before God, it is the condition of our hearts. In fact, there are many people who spend their time focused on things that, in the end, don't matter at all.

Long ago, a deeply disappointed young man arrived at West Point. He came all the way from Wisconsin to enter the Military Academy. But when he arrived, he found that several documents were needed before he could enter. As you can imagine, His heart just sank. He had dreamed of being a soldier and attending West Point for a military education. He had spent two months walking and riding on freight trains in making the journey from Wisconsin. A guard stopped him when he tried to enter the barracks, and explained the necessary requirements to get in. The boy was heartbroken, and cried as he turned away.

The Savior says there will be many disappointed people at the last judgment. People who imagined they were going to get into heaven, and yet, having made no preparation for it, will be turned away at last. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Don't waste your time doing superficial things that have the appearance of godliness, but are actually just for show. Spend your energy developing the inner priorities of righteousness and a strong relationship with Christ.