



The King and His Kingdom *Matthew 15*

Clean Hands vs. Clean Heart

Pharisees: The dominant religious sect among the Jews, they were authoritative and strict observers and teachers of the Torah.

Scribes: A special category of scholarly priests who copied, studied and interpreted the scriptures. Ezra was the first priest named as a scribe in the OT.

The arrival of Pharisees and Scribes from Jerusalem suggests they were conducting an "official" inquiry in regard to Jesus and his followers.

The Situation: Jesus' disciples did not follow the tradition of the elders of ritual handwashing before (and after) meals.

The Law: See Exodus 30:17-21. The original ritual was commanded by God for priests only. Over time, ritual washing was extended to all as a tradition by the religious rulers. The Mishnah had an entire chapter on such washing.

The Issue: When is it proper to follow manmade traditions, and when may/must such traditions be ignored?

The Resolution: When such traditions serve the proper worship of God they may be followed. When these traditions overrule the will and command of God and serve the sinful will of man they may be/must be ignored.

Do not be led by "blind guides" who, with logs in their own eyes, tell you to remove the speck in your eye. They will lead you into a pit (a place of entrapment from which one cannot escape). The blind cannot lead the blind.

The King and His Kingdom

Examining the heart of Jesus:

A daughter is released from torment

V. 28—"Great is your faith. May it be done as you desire."

Many are healed

V. 31—"They glorified the God of Israel."

Four thousand are fed

V. 32—"I am unwilling to send them away hungry."

V. 37—"They all ate and were satisfied."

1 Corinthians 6:11 "You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

Christ produces change in human hearts. A desire to follow God and please HIM rather than to devise rules and traditions aimed at pleasing OURSELVES.

Walking in Matthew's Sandals

Further study and discussion:

Read 21-28 **The prayer of a persistent woman.**
How did Jesus react to her initially? What was her next move? How did Jesus's disciples respond? With what attitude did she approach Jesus the second time? Jesus commended this Gentile woman for her faith. Discuss how the Canaanite woman serves as an example for our prayers.

Read 32-38 **Jesus feeds four thousand**

Describe Jesus' feelings toward the people who were following him. Relate this to the petition in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) "Give us this day our daily bread." How does this help us as his followers to view the needs of one another?