

Matthew 15:10-20

The direction of defilement



Jesus has had sharp words with the group of scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem, taking an uncompromising stance against the accepted practice of ritual hand washing (1-9). He now risks provoking them further by calling the crowd, and later speaking to his disciples, expressly contradicting their teaching. So this has to be an important point: **“defilement” is a real problem, and a matter of our hearts.**

➤ Where *should* the spotlight shine?

“Heart” obviously includes our emotions. But what else?

So how is *each facet* of our “heart” corrupted by sin?
And what does that mean if we wish to follow Jesus?

John Calvin taught that “man's nature is a perpetual factory of idols”, and “the mind begets an idol, and the hand gives it birth”. How does this strike you?

➤ But *why* is it dark inside?

What happens to our telling of the Gospel if we neglect this (to the modern ear, scandalous) understanding of human nature? See, for example, Jeremiah 17:9, Matthew 7:11, Romans 1:21, 5:12.

➤ How can the rot be stopped?

So how can we (and how can we help *each other*) worship God with our *whole* heart?