

Bible Study—Clean & Unclean Meats

Fred R. Coulter—June 16, 2012

What is the greatest sin? Idolatry? *No!* That's up pretty high on the scale. Selfishness? *No!* Blaspheming the Holy Spirit? *That would be after you have the knowledge of the Truth!* But before that point of mankind in general? Rejection of God? *No!* Preaching the Gospel the wrong way? *That's almost right!*

Man's greatest sin is that *he feels that he can add to or take away from the Word of God*, especially when you get into talking with people who don't know the Bible and you start explaining things. We have added in there everybody's opinion. Today everybody's opinion is equal to everybody else's opinion. That's why we have so much confusion all around.

Let's ask some questions about God and why men think that they can add to/take away from and also change the Bible. Who is Creator? *God!* Made everything—heaven and earth, everything. We all exist today because of what we received. We continue to exist because of what God gives and He gives this to all mankind.

- God's no respecter of persons
- God is a God of love
- God is a God of Truth
- God cannot lie.

Let's see this and we will look at the Word of God. Titus 1:1: "Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the **knowledge of the Truth...**" [Understand Truth, because Truth is what we are after in everything relating to the Bible, everything relating to our lives, everything relating to what the plan of God is.

"...that is according to Godliness. In the hope of eternal life... [everyone wants to live forever but they want to do it *their* way] ...which God Who **cannot lie** promised before the ages of time" (vs 1-2). God cannot lie. God is a God of Truth. His Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth.

Come back here to Psalm 119 so we can see what it tells us about God's Word. If you are just new to studying the Bible and confused concerning the laws of God because of Protestant teachings, here is *the great sin of Protestantism*: They say that the Law has been done away. How would you like it if God did away with the law of gravity and everything just started flowing off into space? That's only one law.

If God is true and cannot lie, why then would men feel as though they can add *their* traditions? Psalm 119 is a very interesting Psalm. You will notice right above v 1 there is the Hebrew letter *aleph*. Each one of these sections all the way through, we have *aleph, beth, gimel, dalet*, etc. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Ps. 119 is broken down into 22 8-verse sections. This was to be memorized by the singers at the temple. In Hebrew every verse begins with *aleph*. When you come to *beth*, every verse begins with *beth*—all the way through. That is what is called or known in the Bible as acrostics, the use of numbers.

If God cannot lie and His Word is true and this is part of the Word of God, let's read a few verses here, Psalm 119:1: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD." I suggest that a lot of Protestants better read that, because they say if you try and walk in the Law of the Lord you're under a curse. God brought curses for disobedience. He brings blessings for obedience.

I was talking to Harry Curley and he came to church with a big metal guard over his thumb all taped up. I said, 'Harry, what did you do to your thumb?' He says, 'I was cutting some wood and I ran it into the saw.' He pulled it out after it had gone in about 1/4 of an inch. That happened because he was not careful. So, when moving steel with teeth meet soft flesh unprotected, guess what it does? *It's a law!* I told him about the time that when I was hammering and it was doing framing so I had a framing hammer. A framing hammer's a real big one. I'm putting this in and I'm seeing how fast I can go. I was working with the carpenter and building our home so he was showing me how to really put the nail there, pound it in, you get the whole 16-inch nail in three hits. So I was going along and said that I had better not hit my thumb. Guess what? BOOM! An example of a broken law, just a physical law.

"...who walk... [a way of life] ...in the Law of the LORD" (v 1). The basic outline of that would then be the Ten Commandments. You read the Ten Commandments and ask yourself, is there anything wrong with that? It may bring some correction if you worship other gods, definitely. Might not like that. If you have idols, that's going to get you upset. If you take the name of the Lord in vain, you say, 'I've got to clean up my mouth.' You might agree with that. Then the Sabbath—and 'yeah but,' comes everywhere. Every Protestant will admit that the Sabbath is the only day the Bible enforces as the day of worship, declared by God

- Who is true
- Who cannot lie
- Who wants to bless us

What we're going to see in answering some of these questions, part of the problem is people come into the Bible with a fixed notion. They try and read into the Bible what pleases them.

Just think all the rest of the way through the Ten Commandments. Take honor father and mother, shall not murder, shall not commit adultery, shall not steal, shall not bear false witness, shall not covet—all of that. Think of how the society would be if everyone really did that; think how the world would be if the world did that. Too many people are scheming to beat the system.

If you want a very interesting education, watch CNBC's *American Greed*. How many have seen that? That is very interesting, appeals to human nature. You want something for nothing or very little investment—guess what? *That's how everybody loses everything!* Guess what the government has done with the money that we use? *Same thing!* It makes Bernie Madoff look like he was just born.

You want to be blessed by God? *Walk in the Law of the Lord!* Remember Jesus said, 'I didn't come to abolish the Law or the Prophets.' *Did not!* He was the Lord God of the Old Testament who gave the laws.

Verse 2: "Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who seek Him with the whole heart." Not a Sunday-morning God. 'Oh, yeah, Lord, I'm with you but I can hardly wait to get out of here because I want to go watch the sports. I want to do this, I want to go shopping.'

Think about this. There's also the adversary out there, Satan the devil. What does he want to do? *He wants to convince you*—because he's the father of liars and there is no truth in him—and say, 'I'll bring you a benefit.' How's that? If you want to know where benefits lead to eventually, just in the physical realm, look at Greece.

In the spiritual realm a benefit is a mask of allowing for sin. 'We'll give you a benefit. Everybody goes to church on Sunday and besides you've got all those sales on Saturday. You sure wouldn't miss those, would you? Just think of the benefit that you'd get, and all the sports and all the things.' This helps us get a perspective.

"...who seek Him with the whole heart" (v 2). How are we to approach God?

- to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being
- love our neighbor as ourselves

- love each other as Christ loved us
- even love our enemies

Doesn't sound much like the world—does it?

Now notice why they are blessed, v 3: "They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways." If you keep the Law you're not sinning. If you're sinning, you're transgressing the Law. It's not quite as evident as hitting your thumb, or running your thumb into the saw, or falling down the stairs, or getting in an automobile wreck.

Verse 4: "You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently.... [then he laments, 'I'm looking at my carnal nature'] ...O that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes!" (vs 4-5)—because all of this is a matter of choice because God gives to everyone. My latest letter, where I cover what does it mean to be *under law*, I define that very clearly. Everyone in the whole world is *under law* for blessing or cursing.

We have to be trained in the way of God. Only way that can be is if we know the Word of God and if we have the attitude of seeking God. Not just whenever you're in trouble, 'Oh, Lord.' Remember what happened on 9/11? The next day everybody was in church, synagogue. God bless America. You turn on the radio and here's the song, *I'm Proud to Be an American*. It was on every radio station. The President was out there, flags were waving. Three weeks later after church attendance bumped way up to record levels, in three weeks it was right back to normal, because people have to consistently yield to God and His way.

Let's cover just a few more verses here and then we'll look at some defining the law and then we will take questions.

Verse 5: "O that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes! Then I shall not be ashamed when I have respect unto... [the commandments that I like, that I agree with] ...all Your commandments.... [What does *all* mean? *Each and every one!*] ...I will praise You with uprightness of heart when I have learned... [It's a process. It's not a hip-pocket God to rescue you in trouble If you repent, will He forgive you? *Yes, He will!* But now what are you going to do?] ...when I have learned Your righteous judgments. I will keep Your statutes; O forsake me not utterly" (vs 5-8).

How am I going to get my life squared around? You know and I know, and you have done it and I have done it, when you're a teenager growing up first thing you do is get out and do stuff you know you shouldn't do—right? *Yes, I did!*

I remember one man told me that he was about 12-years-old, before teenage, because bound

up in the heart of children is foolishness. He wanted to know what would happen, because he had a gas can and he took the top off. He wanted to know what would happen if he dropped a lighted match in it. Luckily the flame went out. At 30 he looks back and says, 'Thank you, Lord.'

So, we all have things we regret. We all have sins that we have committed. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' Everyone remembers 'I'm a sinner, but, Lord, bless me in my sins,' is the way everyone wants it. But that's not how God is going to deal with us.

Verse 9: "With what shall a young man cleanse his way?... [How are you going to straighten out your life?] ...By taking heed according to Your Word. With all my heart I have sought You; O let me not wander from Your commandments" (vs 9-10).

What I want you to do is read and think on each verse as you read it. This will help you understand why God's laws are good; why we need to keep them.

Verse 97: "O how love I Your Law!... [I wonder if you would hear that in the local Sunday-keeping church?] ...It is my meditation all the day." Why? *Because it straightens out your screwy brain*, every one of us. We all need our brains straightened out—don't we? Stop and think! Up to this point what programmed my mind? Everything I've done, watched, listened to, or been taught. BINGO!

Verse 98: "Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me." You want the best education in the world? *Start with the Word of God!* Very simple! But you look at all the religions in the world. I thought about doing an article entitled, I Agree With the Atheists 98%. Because what it is, they look at 'religion' and they see that that can't be of God. What good is it going to do to have a rosary with a cross hanging on your rear view mirror as you drive your car? I wonder how many accidents have taken place with that hanging there that didn't protect them?

Those are stupid things that people do. Bow down to idols. You read Isa. 40-45 and that talks about idols where it says—it doesn't quite put it this way: 'Oh, isn't man stupid. He makes a god, overlays it with gold and silver, bows down to it and says save me, but he made it.' Or someone who doesn't have enough money he gets a tree that won't rot and he carves an idol and he bows down to it to worship it and says, 'Save me,' and with all the scraps left over from the carving he builds a fire and cooks himself some food. So, read Isa. 40-45.

Verse 98: "Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers..." (vs 98-99).

Isn't it interesting in talking to those who have been Protestants, I ask them: 'How can they say that the Law is done away when they can read right here—and I use the example of Psa. 119 and other places—how can they read that?' They say, 'Oh, we don't read it.' *Really?* They say, 'Oh, yeah, as long as we have Jesus, everything is fine. Nothing else matters.'

What does that do? That's *blinders!* What do they tell you whenever you buy a product that you have to assemble or you get a new appliance? First of all if you have to assemble it they give the instructions on how to assemble it. I've done it and you've done it, you look at the picture on the box, you look at the parts that you have, and you ignore the instructions on how to make it. When you're almost done you wonder why it doesn't fit, *because you didn't read the instructions!*

Same way with the Word of God! If they never read it, they don't know what's in it. That's the same as being blind—*isn't it?* The Bible talks about that.

- people see, *but don't understand*
- they hear, *but don't comprehend*

Verse 142. Think about this in relationship to abolishing the Laws of God. "**Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your Law is the Truth.**" That tells us a lot—doesn't it? If all the commandments of God are righteousness, which they are, this tells us nothing has been done away. How do you differentiate Truth from error, especially when it comes to the Word of God and religion? *You go to the Word of God!*

Verse 151: "You are near, O LORD, and all Your commandments are Truth." His Word is the Truth, His everlasting righteousness is there.

Verse 160: "Your Word is true from the beginning... [going right back to Adam and Eve] ...and every one of Your righteous ordinances endures forever."

Here's what we can learn from the Old Testament. The Old Testament gives us the basic information and we need every bit of it. Te this is fundamental:

- If there is to be a change in the laws of God, who is the only one that can change it? *God, because He gave it!*
- When He changes the law, does He eliminate it?

or

- Replace it with a higher standard?

That's important to understand, because when people come along and read the Bible and begin interpreting it and they know nothing about the Bible, lo and behold, it's like putting together something that you bought from the hardware store and you don't read the plans. It's not going to come out right.

Matthew 5:17. We'll cover just a couple things here and I'll show you how God raised the standard. "Do not think... [As you study the Bible it's good to stop and look at what is said. What does it mean, 'Do not think'? *It means don't let it enter your mind!*] ...that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." The Protestants say when He fulfills it He's done away with it. The meaning here in fulfill there are two meanings:

1. to fill to the fill
2. to complete

What was it that Jesus did? *He said He wasn't going to abolish it*, so this means He had to fulfill it and complete it. Here's a verse very rarely read from a Sunday pulpit.

Verse 18: "For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled." Here's another thing you need to do when you're reading and studying. Ask yourself some basic questions. Is heaven and earth still here? If you want an interesting Bible study, look up all the places where God brings witness heaven and earth against us. Yes, heaven and earth is still here.

"...until heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled." Has everything been fulfilled? Some things have been fulfilled, but has everything been fulfilled? When you understand the Bible, the answer is definitely *no!* Whenever you study, you need to be devoted to the Truth of God. Remember, since Scriptures do not contradict Scriptures, then what is the answer? *You need to look for the Truth!*

Verse 19: "Therefore, whoever... [anybody] ...shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall practice and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven."

Isn't that the goal to be in the Kingdom of heaven? *There you go!* Now then, He makes this astounding statement. This is why you need the

book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?*

Verse 20: "For I say to you, unless your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way *that* you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Most people cannot comprehend what He's saying here because they don't realize that the Pharisees were not keeping the Laws of God. They had the framework of the Sabbath and Holy Days and Ten Commandments, but then they did everything else according to *their own traditions*. How are you going to exceed their righteousness? *By doing what God says*, because they say and do not.

Let's see what He says here concerning murder, v 21: "You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not commit murder...'" That's what it should read. Most translations say *you shall not kill*.

How many here have watched Fox News? Every once in a while they get a Catholic priest on there because it's mainly financed by Catholics. They get on there and they have a discussion of the death penalty. Why shouldn't we execute the death penalty on those people who have done things worthy of death? *'Oh, well, the Ten Commandments say you shall not kill so therefore we shouldn't execute them.'* That's the presentation by the Catholic priest. People look at that and say, 'That must be right after all the priest said it.' Lesson #1: ***Always check it with the Word of God!*** Don't believe a man; *believe your Bible*. Don't start with difficult Scriptures; *start with easy ones*.

Verse 21: "...'You shall not commit murder; but whoever commits murder shall be subject to judgment.'" The judgment was if you did it with malice you would give your life. If it turned out to be manslaughter you would make compensation. Notice the higher standard. So right here is an example of elevating the standard because now the laws are not those that are just outside of you that you follow, but part of how you think.

Verse 22: "But I say to you... [What gave Him the authority to say that? *He was the Lord God of the Old Testament Who came in the flesh!*] ...everyone who is angry with his brother without cause shall be subject to judgment." In this case who's judgment? *God's judgment!* Ever lost your temper? How did that work out? Make friends? Hugs and kisses? Kind, sweet thoughts? *No!* Notice how He raises it even more.

"...Now *you have heard it said*, Whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be subject to *the judgment* of the council. But *I say to you*, whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be subject to the

fire of Gehenna” (v 22). Is that a higher standard or not? *Yes, indeed!* He doesn’t tell you here, but that’s the rest of the story of the New Testament, which is this: you must have the Holy Spirit of God *within* you to give you the strength so that you can keep the commandments of God from *within*.

Let me give you another example, v 27: “You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you, everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (vs 27-28). That eliminates every man on earth—right?

Here is the solution, but He doesn’t tell you that it would be necessary without the Spirit of God, v 29: “So then, if your right eye shall cause you to offend, pluck it out and cast it from you...” You can tell all Christian men, they’ve gouged out both their eyes! Not true! What is He doing? He’s giving an impossible statement to make a point to be taught later. What He’s saying, ‘Of yourself, you cannot meet the criteria of the righteousness of God without the Holy Spirit of God.’ He gives one hint to it.

We’ll cover just a few of the rules of Bible study before we take a break. Look at the very last verse. Here’s the goal of being a true Christian. The goal of why God has made us. Verse 48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect... [What is the standard?] ...even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.” Isn’t that the highest possible standard? *Yes!* What do you need to do that? *The Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of Christ, which is combined into the two parts of the Holy Spirit of God!*

I know we’ve covered a lot of things preparatory for this, but for those of you who have the Bible, let’s come to Appendix A, *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*. I’m not going to go over them except to point out a couple of very important things which we will put into practice when we come back here.

Appendix A shows there are definite Spiritual keys to understanding the Scriptures. It’s not like a novel, it’s not like a book that you just open it up and start reading it and you understand it. Some things you do, some things you don’t. If you want things that are easy to understand and you’re not grounded in the Bible, I always recommend start with the book of Proverbs. That gives you simple to understand: right/wrong, righteousness/unrighteousness, good/evil—comparisons. This gives you basic structure.

Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep the commandments, namely My commandments.’ The ‘fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and those who keep all His commandments have a good understanding.’ Here is the principle we find in the

Bible. The Bible is written in such a way that there are ‘precepts upon precepts.’ You’re not going to get it all in one place. ‘Line upon line; a little here, a little there.’ So then, you must rightly put it together just like the instructions on how to put together this apparatus that you got from the hardware store.

I’m just going to cover a few of the *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*.

1. Begin with Scriptures that are easy to understand
2. Let the Bible interpret and prove the Bible....

Most people come in and say, ‘I want to find what I believe in the Bible.’ Chances are you aren’t going to find it because it isn’t there. I know when I first thought about studying the Bible that’s what I did. I had some harebrained thing in my mind that I thought was really good. I started looking through the Bible to see if I could find, ‘God said so.’ That would make me so good because I did something without God’s help.

3. Understand the *context*—the verses before and after...
4. As much as possible, try to understand the original Hebrew or Greek. But never try to establish doctrine or teachings by using only *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*....

Here are some questions to ask:

- What does the Scripture clearly say?
- What does the Scripture not say?
- To whom was the book written?
- Who wrote it?
- Who said it?

Then you can go on with the historical background and things like that.

(go to the next track)

Clean and Unclean Meats—Mark 7

Our first question has to do with clean and unclean meats in Mark 7. Let’s apply the rules of Bible study. Mark 7:1: “Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes from Jerusalem came together to Him.” Who were the Pharisees and scribes? *They were the leaders of Judaism—correct? Where was this? It was in the Holy Land*, so that becomes important.

Verse 2: “And when they saw some of His disciples eating with defiled hands (that is, unwashed *hands*), they found fault.” What is the topic? *Washing hands!* They did not come and find them eating pork or shrimp or lobster, or any of that.

Just as an aside: Remember when Jesus cast out the demons out of the man who had legions of demons. The demons said, 'Cast us into the swine.' Where was that? *That was on the other side of the Sea of Galilee!* Why did they have swine there? Because they grew them to sell to the Romans and the Roman soldiers in Jerusalem were in Ft. Antonio. After Jesus cast them out they went into the swine and ran down into the sea and 2,000 of those hogs died. Then there was short rations for the Romans a while. But the Jews weren't eating them. At least they learned that lesson. They were eating with unwashed hands.

Here is what they were teaching, v3: "For the Pharisees and all the Jews, holding fast to the tradition of the elders... [What is the topic? *Washing hands, tradition of elders!*] ...do not eat unless they wash their hands thoroughly. Even *when coming from the market...* [while they're carrying their hogs; *no, not there*] ...they do not eat unless they *first* wash themselves. And there are many other things that they have received to observe, *such as the washing of cups and pots and brass utensils and tables*" (vs 3-4).

In the book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?*, we cover all of those things and we have some of the laws from *The Code of Jewish Law*. If you have never seen or heard of *The Code of Jewish Law*, that will blow your mind if you ever do. In the book, in the appendices, we have a lot of those laws.

So, they were teaching their tradition *as a Law of God*. Have you heard that before? What do the Catholics say about tradition? 'We can't believe the Bible alone, we've got to have tradition.' This does away with it—doesn't it?—when we understand it. As a matter of fact the Catholics even admit, 'We could preach the Catholic gospel without the Bible.' Really? And they can because it's not the Gospel of God.

Verse 5: "For this reason..." The reason of what? You've got the facts here. See how the translation in the

- NIV reads: "So, the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus..."
- KJV reads: "Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him..."

But the Greek reads: "For this reason..." So, this gives us context. See how just a little mistranslation changes what you read?

Verse 5: "For this reason... [The reason of *their* tradition: the washing of hands and many other things.] ...the Pharisees and the scribes questioned Him, *saying*, 'Why don't Your disciples walk

according to the tradition of the elders..." What did we read in Psa. 119? *To walk in the Law of God!* Most people when they read this they think this is talking about the law of God but it's the *tradition*.

"...but eat bread with unwashed hands?' And He [Jesus] answered and said to them, 'Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written... [This is what happened. Every church that follows the traditions of men does exactly this.] ..."This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me.... [Lip-service religion. Have you heard that before? *Yes, indeed!*] ...But in vain... [What does in vain mean? *Means of no worth or profit!*] ...do they worship Me, teaching *for doctrine the commandments of men.*" (vs 5-7).

What is the subject here? *Replacing the Word of God for your tradition!* It expands beyond just washing hands and the tradition alone. Now it expands because when you do that in the place of the Word of God you become a *hypocrite*. That can also mean *sanctimonious pretender*, which means you appear righteous, but you are a pretender, nothing authentic about it.

"...as it is written, "This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me"" (v 6). How are we to love God? *With all our hearts, minds and soul and being*. What is God interested in? *Your heart and your mind—conversion*.

Verse 7: "But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for doctrine the commandments of men.*" What does this tell you about traditions for worshiping God? *It's vain!* Think of this. Where does this bring us? This brings us right to where we started that the worst sin of men is to replace the Word of God with *their tradition*.

Think of this for just a minute. Think of a big ornate Catholic Church, one where they're having the 'high mass.' They've got all these idols and statues along the side. They have all of these little candle altars where if you want to make a prayer you light a candle and the prayer goes up. How is that different than the Buddhists? The priest is there with his long robes and you've got the little bar that keeps the people from coming up to the sanctuary. There are about 3 or 4 steps to the sanctuary. The priest is up there doing his thing. If it's in Latin, it's all mumbo-jumbo, you can't understand what he's saying.

Then he takes this round wafer—how can that be broken bread?—and he holds it up like this and if it is 'high mass' and the cathedral is just right in the right place at the set times during the year, the sun coming through the round window above the front door comes right up to the altar. When the

priest waves the bread the sun shines on it. Very interesting—isn't it?

Then they take the bread and they have these little cups full of these little round wafers. After they've done all of their sanctimonious prayers and everything, then people come up and start taking the wafer. I've often wondered if a little kid thought he could bite the thumb of the priest or something like that. But anyway they all go up there and they dutifully take the bread. They all feel so good. Everybody is sanctimonious. They have nice music going. Maybe they even have had incense because it's a high mass. Everybody has taken communion and they are told that 'you are right with God.' Not one speck of what they had done comes straight from the Bible.

So, what they did was, v 7: "But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men.... [Because here's what they've done]: ...For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men... [This can be any tradition: Sunday-keeping, Easter, Christmas, New Years, etc.] ...*such as* the washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like this.' Then He said to them, 'Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your *own* tradition.'" (vs 7-9)

- *KJV*—kind of a mild translation: "For laying aside..."
- *NIV*: "...setting aside..."

Then He gives the example here, v 10: "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'The one who speaks evil of father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say..." (vs 10-11). Instead of what God says. Just like that Catholic priest I talked of earlier who says, 'The Bible says you shall not kill; therefore, we should not execute anyone but give them life in prison.' God says, 'If they do a crime worthy of death, execute them.'

"...If a man shall say to *his* father or mother, 'Whatever benefit you might receive from me is *corban*' (that is, *set aside as a gift to God*), he is not obligated to help his parents'" (v 11). They say, 'Look, if you come and dedicate this and give it to us, it's *corban*. So therefore, you're off the hook.' *No way!* Is that not saying the Law of God has been done away? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 12: "And you excuse him from doing anything for his father or his mother, nullifying the authority of the Word of God by your tradition which you have passed down; and you practice many *traditions* such as this.... [Is it a discussion about clean and unclean meats any point up to this point? *No!*] ...And after calling all the multitude to *Him*, He said to them, 'Hear Me, all of you, and

understand. There is nothing that enters into a man from outside which is able to defile him; but the things that come out from *within* him, those are the things which defile a man'" (vs 12-15).

What happens when people who believe in eating unclean meats and your question was that they always come here and say 'there's nothing entering into a man from outside is able to defile him.'

- Were they pork-eaters? *No!*
- Were they in a country where the population ate unclean foods? *No!*

It wasn't a question of what they were eating. The disciples were eating what, obviously, would all be *clean* food. Think of the uproar if He would have had the disciples roast out a whole hog. They would have come with stones. You have to keep in context. Poison will defile you. Bad mushrooms will defile you. If you eat a lot of salmonella, it will defile you. Dave brought out when he went to this dinner at a fancy restaurant. Everybody ate all of the shelled seafood and he didn't eat any of it and all the rest of them ended up in the hospital because of eating it.

- Did they die? *No!*
- Did they feel like they were dead? *Yes!*
- Were they defiled for a time until they got it all out of their system? *Yes!*

But this kind of defiling is talking about *spiritual* defiling. So, it's not a question that they were eating things unclean. In this case, defile means spiritually. But this does not give permission to eat unclean foods.

"...but the things that come out from *within* those are the things which defile a man. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.' "Now when He went into a house away from the multitude, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. And He said to them, 'Are you likewise without understanding? Don't you perceive that anything that enters into a man from outside is not able to defile him? For it does not enter into his heart..." (vs 15-19).

In other words, even if you eat pork, it doesn't enter into your heart. But the question is can people rightly assume then that it's okay to eat unclean foods? *No*, because that's not the topic here.

"...but into the belly, and then passes out into the sewer..." (v 19).

- The *KJV* reads: "Because it enters not into his heart but into the belly and goes out into the draught..."
- The *NIV* reads: "...Jesus declared all foods clean."

I remember hearing a young Protestant minister speaking on this. He had an *NIV*. This was years ago, probably when it first came out. He read that and said, 'See, where's that been all these years?' *It wasn't there, that's why!*

"...purging all food" (v 19). That comes from the word 'katharismos' from which we get the English word 'catharsis' that can refer to:

- emotional catharsis, *cleaning your emotions*
- mental catharsis, *cleaning your mind*
- physical catharsis, *cleaning out the intestines*

Purging has to mean *passing it through the system*. Has nothing to do with declaring all foods clean. If you work in a restaurant and they serve unclean foods. You're not eating it. That's their choice and you're not responsible for it. You're just hired to serve the food.

The topic is unwashed hands. If you eat with unwashed hands, and there's some dirt on your hands and it goes into your system, does that defile your heart? *No!* But if you eat that which God calls an abomination, Deut. 14 and Lev. 11, then the very thought of eating what God calls unclean as acceptable to God then defiles your mind, because you're believing a lie. Would you not say a lie defiles the mind? *Yes, indeed!*

This was written for those back there in Jerusalem and the environs of Judea and Galilee. This is not where there was a lot of unclean food that people were eating. It wasn't the question. It is the dirt on the hands that has not been washed out, which is on the food that you eat, and it goes into you and through the process of digestion and so forth it's eliminated.

Those things which change the heart and mind, v 20: "And He said, 'That which springs forth from *within* a man, that defiles the man. For from within, out of the hearts of man, go forth evil thoughts..." (vs 20-21). What they did there with the *NIV* was exactly what v 21 is talking about—evil thoughts. They added an evil thought to it saying 'He purged all meats or made all meats clean.' ***That very teaching can defile the heart!*** Dirt from unwashed hands doesn't do it.

Ever been out working in the yard and your wife brings you out a sandwich and you just kind of clap your hands together and pick up the sandwich and eat it and have some nice ice tea. If it's a hot day then you cool off, you sit in the shade, you eat the whole thing; everything was good. Doesn't go into the heart. You come along and here's a real good example of right in the middle of what this is teaching they do what defiles the heart by changing

the Word of God, making it say something it doesn't. It doesn't declare all foods clean, it is purging, *catharsis*, getting rid of, eliminating food that has been eaten, which is a daily process—correct? If you don't do that. Suppose everything is plugged up which can happen occasionally. How do you feel? *Miserable, sick!* Can it defile *you* physically? *Yes!* You have to ask all these other questions as you go along.

"...out of the hearts of men go forth evil thoughts..." (v 21). So, they thought, 'This is a good idea. Here is a place where we can make it sound like that all foods have now been cleansed by Jesus.'

{Interesting, we just got the booklet, *Clean and Unclean Meats: What the Bible Teaches*.

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, is the house that you build for Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD..." (vs 1-2). What are you going to do for God? You going to build Him a great building out what He's already created? *No*, God wants to create in you with His Spirit.

"... 'But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word. He who kills an ox... [with a wrong attitude] *...is as if* he killed man; he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog's neck; he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine's blood; he who burns incense *is as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations'" [Then what happens? We're seeing this happen on a vast scale in the world today.] ...I also will choose their delusions... [You want to believe a lie? Go ahead, take it to the full end.] ...I will bring their fears upon them because when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not hear. But they did evil before My eyes and chose *that* in which I did not delight" (vs 2-4).

This is at the return of Christ, v 17. "Those who sanctify themselves... [Who are we to be sanctified by? *By God, by His Spirit, by His Word!*] ...and purify themselves *to go* into the gardens, after the rites of Achad... [another name for Baal] ...eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, will be cut off together,' says the LORD." So, at the return of Christ, it's still a sin because God doesn't change.

I'm glad we covered that one because that's an important one to understand. We have the booklet what the Bible teaches on clean and unclean meats so you can read that.

Peter sees the vision, he went up on the rooftop to pray, Acts 10: “And he became very hungry and desired to eat. But while they were preparing *the meal*, a trance fell upon him; And he saw the heaven opened; and a certain vessel descended upon him, like a great sheet, bound by *the* four corners and let down upon the earth. In which were all the four-footed beasts of the earth, including the wild beasts, and the creeping things and the birds of heaven. Then a voice came to him, *saying*, ‘Arise, Peter, kill and eat.... [his answer is much stronger in the Greek than translated there] ...But Peter said, ‘In no way, Lord; for I have never eaten anything *that is common or unclean*’” (vs 10-14).

What is *common*, a term used by Judaism? I can explain it this way: The law of Judaism for having Gentiles—those who are not Jews—work in the kitchen at home. If the Gentile was kneading the bread and making the bread, under the supervision of the Jewish woman in the house, that was considered *common*. That would be allowable to eat on any day but the Sabbath. The same bread, if it were kneaded and baked by a Gentile without being supervised by a Jew, it was *unclean*. Nowhere in the Bible does God say that it’s unclean. What we’re looking at here is some of the laws of Judaism which we’ll see in just a little bit.

Verse 14: “But Peter said, ‘In no way, Lord; for I have never eaten anything *that is common or unclean*.’” He didn’t say, ‘Hallelujah, Lord, I’ve been waiting all this time. Open the sheet up, let me eat.’ *No*, that wasn’t the message.

Verse 15: “And a voice *came* again the second time to him, *saying*, ‘What God has cleansed, you are not to call common.... [the word there is not *unclean*] ...Now this took place three times, and the vessel was taken up again into heaven. And as Peter was questioning within himself what the vision that he saw might mean, the men who were sent from Cornelius...” (vs 15-17). Here again, you have to back in the context. Who was Cornelius? *Cornelius was a centurion in the Roman army!* He was a Gentile. We’ll go along here a little bit and you will see what God was showing Peter.

Verse 19: “Then, as Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, ‘Behold, three men are seeking you; now arise *and* go down, and go forth with them, doubting nothing, because I have sent them’” (vs 19-20). Then they explained to him that Cornelius sent them. On the next day Peter went with them.

Verse 24: “And on the next day, they came to Caesarea. Now Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his kinsmen and his intimate friends.” He had a big house he lived in. He had lots

of servants, lots of friends, so this was a big deal that was about to happen here.

Verse 25: “And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him *and* fell at *his* feet, worshiping him.... [Peter held out his ring and said, ‘I’m glad you recognize that I’m the first pope, kiss my ring. *No, he didn’t say that.*] ...But Peter raised him up... [Grabbed hold of him himself. Now you’re going to learn that was an absolute no-no in Judaism.] ...saying, ‘Stand up, for I myself am also a man. And as he was talking with him, he went in and found many gathered together. And he said to them, ‘You know that it is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to associate with or come near to anyone of another race. But God has shown me *that no man should be called common or unclean*’” (vs 26-28). ***That was the purpose of the vision: Call no man common or unclean!***

Take those verses out and you say, ‘That’s good. Let’s run out and have a ham dinner right after church.’ *No, that’s not what it’s saying here.* Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the children of Israel could not have strangers—as they were called in the Old Testament—eat with them. They lived in the land, they were to have the same laws, everything.

Here’s the situation entirely different. The Jews finally came to the point—because they were so susceptible to leaving the ways of God—they added all of these traditions. They said all these traditions surround you so you won’t break the law. They had gone into so many of the Gentile religions that they said ‘you shall not even go in and keep company with anyone.’ What was God doing here? *He was showing, just as Peter was sent to call no one common or unclean!* Why was this to Peter?

1. he was the one that was to lead the Church at that particular time
2. now God was going to teach a lesson

It had to be permanently fixed that now God was opening up salvation to the Gentiles. Judaism is an exclusive religion even to this day. Anyone who is not a born and circumcised Jew is ‘inferior’ to everybody else, inferior to all Jews. This was breaking down the barrier.

Verse 29: “For this reason, I also came without objection when I was sent for. I ask therefore, for what purpose did you send for me?” Then he said he was praying. A Gentile prayed—not at the temple, not at the Wailing Wall. God answered the prayer and sent an angel, said to go get Peter; so he came.

Verse 34 tells you what God taught Peter. “Then Peter opened *his* mouth *and* said, ‘Of a truth I

perceive that God is not a respecter of persons.” And the Jews are even to this day. You’ll find that out when you read some of those in the book: *Code of Jewish Law*. Here’s a lesson:

1. What is the context?
2. What are the practices of the Jews?

If you don’t know about Judaism, you wouldn’t know how to understand what this is because that’s what they were dealing with—Judaism. Then he begins preaching the Gospel to them telling about Jesus Christ.

Verse 44: “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came upon all those who were listening to the message.” Why did God do that? This was before they were baptized. The answer is: *they would never have been baptized unless God did it first!* This is an act of God to teach Peter that yes, the Gentiles—who were uncircumcised—will receive the Holy Spirit, which we later learned is the circumcision of the heart.

Notice the response, v 45: “And the believers from the circumcision were astonished, as many as had come with Peter... [That’s why there were other Jews that went, witnesses.] ...that upon the Gentiles also the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out. For they heard them speak in other languages and magnify God. Then Peter responded *by saying*, ‘Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have also received the Holy Spirit as we *did*?’ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they besought him to remain *for* a number of days.” (vs 45-48).

Look at all of the things against Judaism that Peter did and that God did. God heard the prayer of a Gentile and answered it; sent him to Peter. God gave the vision to Peter so that he would know He’s going to do something entirely different from Judaism, the three sheets.

Peter comes in and says, ‘I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.’ That’s the message of the clean and unclean animals coming down, because the Jews view all Gentiles as mere animals—unclean. What God did in order to break that, He had to do it Himself and reveal what He was going to do to Peter. He couldn’t have done it to Thaddeus, He couldn’t have done it to any of the others, but to Peter. Let’s see what happened, because Jerusalem still was locked into the syndrome of Judaism and coming out of Judaism at that time. He stayed there; God gave the Holy Spirit first, baptized them, talked to them, ate food with them, stayed in the house for a number of days.

Acts 11:1: “Now the apostles and the brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the Word of God; And when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those of *the* circumcision disputed with him... [he walked into a hostile inquisition] ...saying, ‘You went in to men who were uncircumcised and did eat with them’” (vs 1-3). {see Gal. 2} Now you know why Paul got after Peter when he separated himself from the Gentiles years later. Then Peter related the whole thing, told them the whole thing. He told them what had happened.

After they received the Holy Spirit Peter said, v 16: “Then I remembered the word of *the* Lord, how He had said, ‘John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit.’ Therefore, if God... [not Peter! He couldn’t do it on his own authority. Again we’re eliminating a law of Judaism.] ...also gave them the same gift that *was given* to us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I *to dissent*? Do I have the power to forbid God?’.... [*No!*] ...And after hearing these things, they were silent; and they glorified, saying. ‘Then to the Gentiles also has God indeed granted repentance unto life.’” (vs 16-18). That still didn’t penetrate very far into those in Jerusalem. It took other things a little later on.

Let’s come and answer the next lead which was Matt. 15:11. That’s a parallel account of Mark 7. This is very similar to Mark 7. Matthew 15:6: “And you have made void the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition. Hypocrites! Isaiah has prophesied well concerning you, saying, ‘This people draw near to Me with their mouths, and with their lips they honor Me; but their hearts are far away from Me. But they worship Me in vain, teaching *for* doctrine *the* commandments of men.’” And after calling the multitude to *Him*, He said to them, ‘Hear, and understand. That which goes into the mouth does not defile the man; but that which comes out of his mouth, this defiles the man’” (vs 6-11). That is just another parallel account of Mark 7.

In studying the Bible you’ve got to get everything. You’ve got to remember:

- the Word of God is Truth
- find the Truth
- if there appears to be a contradiction, what is the explanation?

God did not inspire the Bible to be written like men write books. He inspired them and He moved them to write what He wanted, though He used their own personality and everything. They wrote the Truth.

Men come along and they have preconceived ideas when they come to the Bible. They have preconceived things that they don’t want to give up.

‘What would it do if I stood here in the pulpit and said all right, all you people out there, I’m going to give a sermon on the Sabbath.’

It was related to me that in all the Protestant churches he attended in the past they never even mentioned the word Sabbath. What if he stood in the pulpit and said, ‘Okay, everyone, today we’re going to have a Bible study on the Sabbath.’ Gets all done, proves we need to keep the Sabbath. He says, ‘All right, next Sunday church services are cancelled but we’ll be here on Saturday.’

He would probably be fired, escorted out of the church by the deacons because they wouldn’t want to change. When coming brand new into the Bible you have to approach what is simple, easy to understand. If you find something that’s hard to understand, just make a note of it, write it down and go on. Come back to it later. Some things are not easy to understand.

Question: getting back to Acts 10. As we read through the Bible we ask ourselves questions. Here Peter was in the house of the Roman centurion and they were eating. If we ask what kind of food were the Romans eating, I don’t think they were eating the same type of food that Peter was accustomed to eating. So, I ask myself was Peter eating foods that the Romans ate that God said was unclean? It’s really not discussed here and it was on this gentlemen’s mind as he asked the questions.

Let’s go back to Acts 10:1: “Now *there* was in Caesarea a certain man named Cornelius, a centurion of a band that is called *the Italian band*.” Doesn’t tell us how long he had been there—does it? Notice how it describes him which then answers the question, what was he serving?

Verse 2: “**A devout man...** [meaning that he learned of the Laws of God] **...who also feared God...** [kept His commandments.] **...with all his house...**” We have to then say if he feared God, don’t you think one of the first things he would learn in fearing God living where the Jews were, not to eat unclean foods—right?

“...both in giving many alms to the people and in beseeching God continually *in prayer*” (v 2). He must have been in the land of Judea for a long time in order to be described this way. It didn’t say one who just came from Rome. That’s a good question because people will bring that. How then do you answer it? *You don’t make guesses, you come back and you look at things and get the whole context!* This helps us understand it.

One final thought brought up, that even after Peter saw they received the Holy Spirit, he did not do like the Protestants do today and say there’s no

need for baptism. He said, ‘Who can deny them water,’ and he commanded them to be baptized which goes back to our study in Rom. 6 and the covenant baptism. You must be in covenant with God.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Titus 1:1-2
- 2) Psalm 119:1-10, 97-99, 142, 151, 160
- 3) Matthew 5:17-22, 27-29 48
- 4) Mark 7:1-7, 6, 7-212
- 5) Isaiah 66:1-4, 17
- 6) Acts 10:10-17, 19-20, 24-29, 34, 44-48
- 7) Acts 11:1-2, 16-18
- 8) Matthew 15:6-11
- 9) Acts 10:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 40-45
- Deuteronomy 14
- Leviticus 11
- Galatians 2
- Romans 6

Also referenced:

Booklet: *Clean and Unclean Meats: What the Bible Teaches*

Books:

- *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?* by Philip Neal
- *The Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried and Goldin

Appendix A—*Fourteen Rules for Bible Study (The Holy Bible in its Original Order* by Fred R. Coulter)

FRC:lp

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