



Sermon Growth Guide

September 21, 2025

Purity

Mark 7:14-23

Key Verse: Mark 7:15 “Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”

Big Idea: Purity is a matter of the heart and there is only one who can make us pure.

Foundations

There’s something universally satisfying about restoration. Whether it’s a YouTube video of a rusted car being renewed, an overgrown lawn trimmed back, or a house deep-cleaned, we’re drawn to “before and after” transformations. That longing for wholeness runs deeper than we realize—it points to the ache in our souls to be made clean.

In Mark 7, Jesus faces criticism from religious leaders about ceremonial purity. They worried about outside behaviors—washing, eating, appearances. But Jesus flips the script: the problem isn’t what goes into the body, but what comes out of the heart. He names envy, greed, arrogance, lust, slander, and more—not just actions, but attitudes that defile us. His point? The real contamination runs deeper than the surface.

Our culture still lives with categories of clean and unclean: corruption is “dirty,” politics can feel “toxic,” people get “canceled” for being morally tainted. We try to cleanse ourselves through diets, achievements, image management, beauty, even religion—but none of it restores us at the core. The good news is that Jesus came not just to clean up our behavior but to purify our hearts. Like a master restorer, He takes what is blemished and makes it whole. We can’t remove the stain of sin on our hearts, but He can—and has. At the cross, Jesus bore our impurity so we could be renewed, forgiven, and set free. Our invitation is simple yet profound: to confess, to receive His cleansing, and to live restored.

Understanding God’s Word

Read Mark 7:14–23 together. What do you notice about Jesus’ teaching that surprises or challenges you?

Jesus says what defiles us is not from the outside but from our hearts. How does this inform how you view purity and holiness?

Applying God’s Word

Share about a time when you tried to “clean yourself up” (spiritually, morally, emotionally, or even physically). What did you learn from that experience?

We often carry “chains” of shame, guilt, or sin (like Jacob Marley in *A Christmas Carol*). What “chains” do people in our community feel weighed down by?

How can this group help remind each other of Christ’s restoring power?

Read Psalm 51:10. What would it look like for God to “create a pure heart” in you this week?

Witnessing God’s Word

Our culture still uses purity language—things are “toxic,” “dirty,” or “sleazy.” Where do you see people around you longing for cleansing or renewal?

How might we talk about Jesus as the one who restores and makes us whole in a way that connects with those cultural longings?