

## **“Keeping Close to God”**

Mark 7:1-23 (NIV)

This is a sort of complicated passage with lots of background regarding purity/holiness laws. The basic idea is the Pharisees are hypocrites whose rules looked like godly rules, but had ungodly motivations. They were wolves in sheep's clothing as the saying goes, and they were trying to trap Jesus.

### **Read Mark 7:1-13**

1. A big clue to understanding this passage is that we are now in Gentile territory, what do you think that has to do with the Pharisee's and the hand washing discussion?
2. Who gets hurt by the pharisee's teaching? Who have they excluded from God?

### **Read Mark 7:14-23**

3. Verse 20 is quite the list, but at its core is lack of love for God or neighbor. The passage teaches us that these things come from within us. What do you think led the pharisees to what they did? Have you ever taken their path?
4. Perhaps this is a time for confession and repentance. Remember Jesus wants to walk with us like he wants to lead his disciples.
5. Finish by Reading Micah 6:1-8 slowly as a reaffirmation of what God wants for you, your group, and the church. Stop and pray aspects of it.