



**“Create In Me A Clean Heart”**  
Matthew 15:1-20

New Baptist Church  
March 1, 2026

# The Growing Conflict between Jesus and the Religious Establishment

- After Jesus heals and forgives a paralyzed man, the scribes accuse him of Blasphemy (Matthew 9:1-8)
- Pharisees question Jesus as to why he eats with sinners and does not fast. (9:10-14).
- Jesus is accused of casting out demons by the ruler of demons (9:32-34)
- Religious rulers confronted Jesus for breaking the Sabbath after he healed a man (12:1-8)
- Pharisees want a sign (12:38-42)

## Matthew 15

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*An official inquiry and investigation have been started by the religious Authorities regarding Jesus.*



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2 “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.”



*Note: Exodus 30:17-21 tells priests to wash their hands when performing their religious duties. The Religious authorities have taken the law for priests and applied it to everyone.*

**THE REAL QUESTION: “Do you and your disciples respect and follow our authority?”**

## Matthew 15

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“3 He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ (Exodus 20:12) and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ (Exodus 21:17) 5 But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” 6 he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. 7 You hypocrites! **ἀκυρόω** - To invalidate, annul, remove all legal force and authority.

# Here is How the Religious Authorities Voided God's Commands

## *Two Commands*

**Honor Your Father and Mother (Exodus 20:12)**

Sorry, I am prohibited by law from helping you.

**Keep your Vows (Numbers 30:2)**

A Person can vow (Promise) to give something to God (Corban), BUT since the Bible does not give a time frame, the fulfillment of that vow can always be “tomorrow (indefinite).”

AND a dedicated item, even if it has not yet been given (*and sometimes never given*), can not be given to others, even to help one's own parents.



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*They have not just broken a commandment — they have built a legal system designed to make the commandments optional.*



## Matthew 15

10 And he called the people to him and said to them, “Hear and understand: 11 it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person. 12 Then the disciples came and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” 13 He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. 14 Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.” 15 But Peter said to him, “Explain the parable to us.” 16 And he said, “Are you also still without understanding? 17 Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? **18 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. 20** These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”



## What the Pharisees and Scribes Got Wrong (*Problems Identified by Jesus*)

**1st Problem: Corrupt Authority:** Tradition used to override God's Word. "you have made void the word of God (15:6)"

**2nd Problem: Performative religion:** "*You hypocrites! (15:7)* —external piety camouflaging inward corruption.

The word "hypocrite" is from Greek Theater and means "Actor," someone who appears one way, but in truth, is not.



**3rd Problem: The real source of defilement is the heart.** "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander (15:18-19)."

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The “Traditions of the Elders” and the Commands of God can not solve the problem of the human heart.

The externals of life magnify and enhance the corrupt nature of the human heart. BUT the externals of life do not make the heart corrupt, it already is. The Commands of God protect, guide, shepherd the human heart as well as reveal its need for a redeemer. But, as important and beautiful the commands of God are, they cannot make the human heart righteous (see Galatians 3 and Romans 3).

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10).

“Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind (the law is beautiful and good), but with my flesh I serve the law of sin (but it does not change the iniquity of the heart).” (Romans 7:24–25)

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**The Promise of God: God Himself Must Give You a New Heart**

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“And **I will** give you a new heart, and a new spirit **I will** put within you. And **I will** remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And **I will** put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes...” (Ezekiel 36:26–27)

“**I will** put my law within them, and **I will** write it on their hearts. And **I will** be their God, and they shall be my people.” (Jeremiah 31:33)



“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 16:24–25).

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

## *The Gospel Invitation to a New Heart*

- 1. Stop hiding.** Come to Him honestly—no mask, no performance, no excuses. “Lord, here is what’s really in me.”
- 2. Confess your sin plainly.** Name it. Agree with God about it. Don’t defend it, don’t rename it, don’t minimize it.
- 3. Turn to Christ in faith.** Don’t trust your resolve, your discipline, or your religion—trust Jesus: His cross for your sin, His resurrection for your new life.
- 4. Surrender control.** Open your hands and yield your life to Him: “Jesus, You are Lord. I’m not saving myself. I’m following You.”
- 5. Ask for the new heart God promised.** Pray Ezekiel 36: “Take out the heart of stone. Give me a heart of flesh. Put Your Spirit within me.”
- 6. Trust the Lord,** remembering that He has accomplished what you cannot. The new heart is not a reward for your effort — it is a gift secured by His blood. What God promised in Ezekiel, He fulfilled at Calvary. Rest in that. **"He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion."** (Philippians 1:6)

A painting of two hands being washed in water. The hands are rendered in warm, golden-brown tones, and the water is depicted with cool, blue and green hues. The brushstrokes are visible, giving the scene a textured, artistic quality. The hands are cupped together, and water is splashing around them, suggesting a baptism or a symbolic cleansing.

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# **A Responsive Reading: Create In Me a Clean Heart**

**Leader:** Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, and slander. These are what defile a person.

**People:** *Search us, O God, and know our hearts. We have no righteousness of our own.*

**Leader:** Create in me a clean heart, O God.

**People:** *And renew a right spirit within me.*

**Leader:** The Lord says, “I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit within you.”

**People:** *If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

**Leader:** This is the table of the new covenant — not for those who have made themselves clean, but for those who have come to Christ with empty hands.

**All:** *Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift. Amen.*