**The True Person Within**

**Sermon Based Discussion (June 11, 2017)**

**The Gospel of Mark**

**WARM UP**

1. If someone asked your parents or your employer this question about you, how would they answer, “What is one thing you wish you could change about this person if you could?”

*A potentially dicey question—asking our parents or bosses what they would change about us if they could. Maybe our parents wish we would work harder, call home more often, or change careers. Maybe our bosses would wish, well, the same thing! Probably all of us can relate to the idea of people changing, and how to become better individuals.*

*In this session we look at how people in Jesus’s day tried to change people to make them better. In this account we read the term “unclean” or “defiled” which means unpresentable or tainted. We will read how people back then (and how) believed that a person changed by modifying certain external behaviors. We’ll consider what Jesus says about how people change from the inside out.*

**INTO THE BIBLE (Mark 7:14-23)**

1. What is the basic incorrect belief which Jesus wanted to address?
2. What is the basic point Jesus wants people to understand from this passage?

**UNDERSTANDING**

1. Why does Jesus declare all foods clean? What does this tell us about all the dietary laws in the Old Testament (like in Leviticus 11 or Deuteronomy 14)
2. What do you believe about the basic nature of people? Are basically good? Basically bad? Or basically broken (good people tainted by bad)? Explain your answer.

**DIFFERENCE**

1. What is an area of your life that you may have tried to change with helpful, external practices, but you feel you keep struggling with the same struggle or temptation? How does this passage relate to your struggle?
2. How will it harm us if we believe that we can change our basic human nature by ourselves? How does it benefit us if it’s true that only Jesus can change a human at the core?

**APPLICATION**

1. What is one concrete action you can do about what we’ve discussed today?