Jesus Breaking the Rules

When the Table Becomes a Wall

Talk It Over

Message Summary

Jesus challenged religious rules that turned differences into barriers. What makes us unclean isn't what's around us but what comes from within us. Because Jesus cleanses us from the inside out, we're free to tear down walls and move toward people with His love.

Key Scriptures

Mark 7:6–8 (NIV)
"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me... You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions."

Mark 7:14–15 (NIV)
"Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them."

Mark 7:20–23 (NIV)
"What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come..."

Acts 10:28 (NIV)
"God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean."

Start Talking

Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What's a food you love that other people think is weird, or a food everyone else loves that you refuse to eat?
- Watch this week's Sermon Refresh: Here (Available Monday's)

Start Thinking

Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Please read the Key Scriptures on the left.
- What new perspective was Jesus modeling in these passages?

Start Sharing

Choose a question(s) to create openness.

- Why is it easier to focus on what's wrong with the people around us than what God wants to change inside us?
- What are some traditions, preferences, or opinions Christians can unintentionally treat like commands from God?
- Jesus said what comes out of us reveals what's inside us. What tends to come out of you when you're frustrated, offended, or around people who are different from you?
- What differences have become walls between you and someone else, and what step could you take this week to welcome them?

Start Praying

Jesus, cleanse our hearts of pride, fear, and judgment. Tear down our walls and give us courage to welcome others, see them as You do, and love like You. Amen.

Start Doing

This week, share a meal with someone you might not normally spend time with. Jesus calls us to pull up a chair instead of putting up a wall.