2026-11-08 Summary

What does it really mean to be clean? Not in the physical sense, but in the way that actually matters to God. In Mark 7, Jesus confronts a group of religious leaders who have become experts at looking holy on the outside while their hearts have drifted far from God. The exchange is striking: they challenge his followers over ceremonial handwashing, and he responds by quoting Isaiah, pointing out that honoring God with our lips while our hearts remain distant is not worship at all. It is performance. This is the tug-of-war at the center of this message. We are all pulled between the traditions and habits we have built our lives around and the commands God has clearly laid out for us. Jesus does not mince words when he says we have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to hold on to our own traditions. That is a confronting statement, and it is meant to be. The invitation here is not guilt but honest inventory. Where have we let go of what God has asked of us because it did not fit the life we wanted to keep living? The good news is that recognition is the beginning of restoration, and Christ is ready to meet us there.