

# THE COURAGE TO SPEAK

## THE BIBLE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY





# Jesus' Call to Purity (pt.1)

Mk.5:24-34





Female trafficking

# Image of God

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God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them. Gen.1

What SHOULD BE  
versus what IS.

‘God has made us male and female,  
and marriage is his gift, a holy  
mystery in which man and woman  
become one flesh, united in love,  
and called to be faithful to each  
other throughout their lives’.

## Three propositions

Our response has been wholly inadequate

We have been over obsessed with sexual sins and some of our responses in the past have just been plane wrong.

We need to consider what is an appropriate response within our given cultural context.

# Engagement with scripture

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Observe

Interpret

Apply



# The changing nature of Sex

Procreation

Pleasure

Personhood

# Jesus makes an unequivocal call to purity

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- What is purity?
- The purity code (Leviticus)
- Ritual, ceremonial and moral.

If the family is to be pure you need to exclude the menstruating woman.

Fundamental part of her reproductive self, her sexual identity.

Incest and Idolatry  
(Ezk 18.5-9; 22.10)

Family Purity – Leviticus 15.16-27

Periods are very much part of the way women experience the world as embodied creatures. God has made us with minds and souls and bodies... and for 50% of the population, for around 2280 days of her life, that body is bleeding.

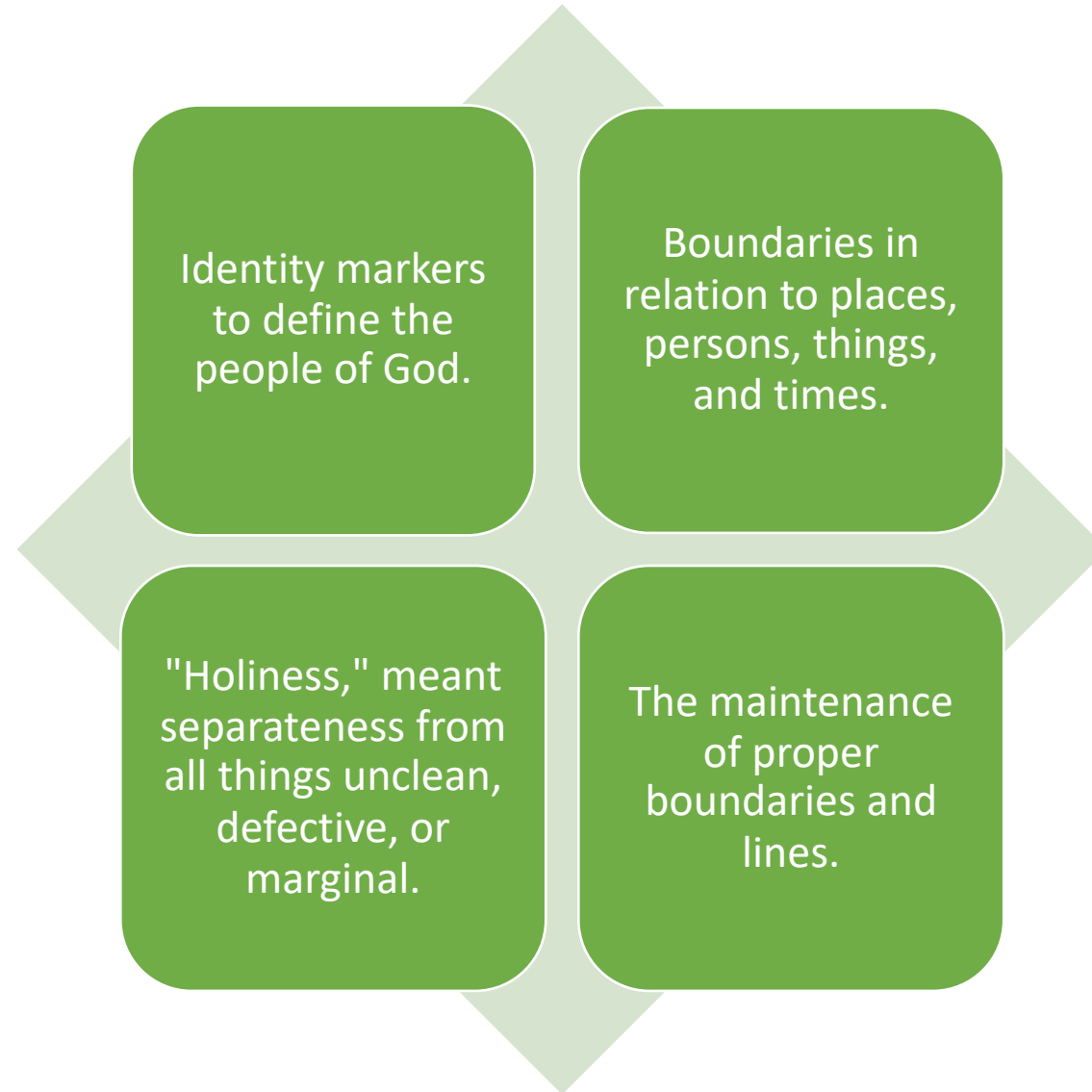
Why this law?

Hygiene

Procreation

Equality

# Boundaries





# Jesus and purity

- The story of someone crossing lines he ought not to cross and allowing people to cross into his space who ought to be kept at a distance.
- ‘What would purity-minded people object to about Jesus in Mark's gospel? *Just about everything Jesus did!*”



# Jesus redefined the nature of purity

- Acts 10 – ‘God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean’.
- Internal not external (pure outside – impure inside)
- What is going on in their heart, not their body.



## Mark 7

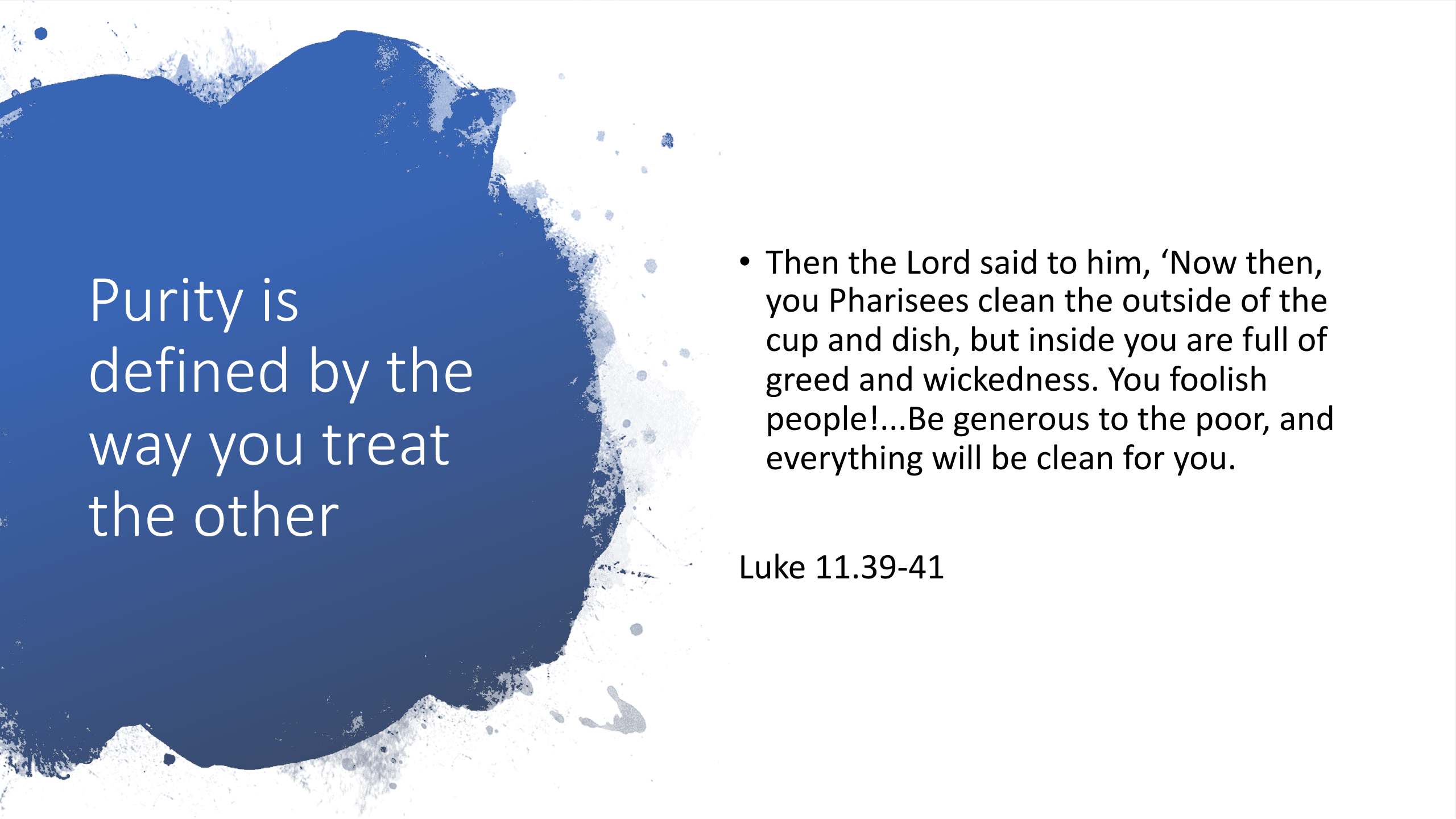
- “You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”
- “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”

## Mark 7

- After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. <sup>18</sup> “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? <sup>19</sup> For it doesn’t go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)

## Mark 7

- <sup>20</sup> He went on: “What comes out of a person is what defiles them. <sup>21</sup> For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup> adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. <sup>23</sup> All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”



Purity is  
defined by the  
way you treat  
the other

- Then the Lord said to him, 'Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people!...Be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.'

Luke 11.39-41

# Sexual ethics of New Testament

What is going on in your heart and how are you acting towards someone made in the image of God?

Are you using, abusing or denigrating the other?

In defending  
our purity are  
we in danger  
of becoming  
impure?

- Instead of looking at the heart, they just saw someone who was defiled, broken and sexually compromised.
- They failed to see a woman made in God's image

# Jesus and the woman

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- The power and presence of Jesus was seen to be greater than the woman's 'impurity'.
- Jesus did not become impure through her touch.
- The redefinition of purity brought wholeness.

