

## **Corruption**

### **Ready:**

“Summoning the crowd again, He told them, ‘Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: Nothing that goes into a person from outside can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him. [If anyone has ears to hear, he should listen!]’” – Mark 7:14–16

### **Set**

Have you ever experienced the effects of cheap shots by teammates or by coaches using unethical tactics? In Mark chapter seven, Jesus speaks with some of the most legalistic people of His time who spent too much time worrying about who was clean enough for a proper relationship with God.

Cutting through the nonsense, Jesus goes straight to the heart of the matter. He teaches that rather than being polluted by our surroundings, our greater problem is corruption of our hearts. From hatred in our hearts come mean-spirited words. From envy comes motivation to steal and cheat.

Jesus’ words make us pause when we are quick to point fingers and shift blame when we ourselves are guilty or shameful. Rather than point out the errors of others, we should look closely at our hearts and confess our own faults.

In competition, compete in a way that leaves no room for anyone to point a finger or place blame. Make your competition one of great excellence and purity.

### **Go**

1. Have you ever felt like you shared the guilt for a teammate’s cheap shot against an opponent?
2. How do you feel when you know your coach is cheating?
3. Do you ever feel personally affected by the polluted atmosphere of your sporting world?
4. What are the attitudes in your heart that adversely affect your life in sport?

### **Workout**

- Matthew 15:19–21
- Titus 1:14–16

### **Overtime**

Father, thank You for purifying my heart by the blood of Jesus. I trust that nothing outside me

can hurt my relationship with You—that I am not polluted by the foolish actions of teammates, coaches, or opponents. Help me guard my heart from attitudes and actions that dishonor You. I pray and I compete in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Bible Reference:**

Matthew 15:19-21

Titus 1:14-16



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