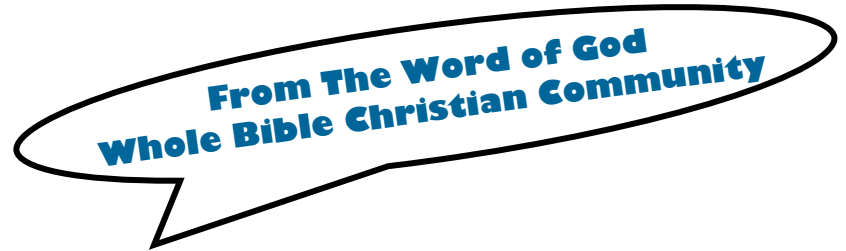




<sup>10</sup>By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. <sup>11</sup>For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; <sup>12</sup>not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous. (1 John 3:10-12 NASB95)

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# Christian Faith & Practice through Sex, Clean & Unclean

## Highlights of What's Inside

- Practical help from a Whole-Bible Christian perspective.
- Complete treatment in simple language.
- Biblical practice compared to some over-the-top traditional practices.

their kids are born with the genetic imprint of mom and dad. We are born unclean, in unclean conditions, and must look to God to get clean. We come into this world through water and blood, but we must be 'born again' by the Spirit in order to enter into the permanent form of God's family.

There is only One who was born clean and stayed that way, Jesus the Messiah, God in the flesh, and it is through the cleansing features of His blood that we can even hope to become clean and fellowship with our Father.

*It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Revelation 19:8 NASB*

Shalom  
Bruce Scott Bertram

## Christian Faith and Practice Through...Sex

He becomes aware of his lack of cleanliness after he sets his eyes on God. To get clean he had to kiss a coal taken from the altar. Then his 'iniquity is taken away' and his 'sin is forgiven.' Thank the Father we don't have to kiss a real coal now in order to get clean. Ouch! But the illustration is a good one. It goes along with the comments of Jesus in Matthew 15:11 (NASB).

*"It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man."*

No, this does not mean we can stick any garbage we want into our mouths and we will be fine. Try doing that sometime with poison hemlock (okay, don't *really* try it). Even if you think it's clean you will still be dead. Jesus is saying we are not made sinful by what we eat but we are *already sinful* because of what's inside. Isaiah was not saying that he had dirt on his lips either, but that he was defiled because of his sin.

Perhaps you can begin to see why God is so concerned with being clean. He uses the everyday examples of the presence or absence of dirt to illustrate for us the how and the why of being clean. From my study I saw how easy it is to get dirty (and how prevalent it is), and why there is a need for consistent and regular cleansing.

I also saw how humans are not clean, in and of themselves. Otherwise we would need no instruction on avoiding dirt and becoming clean. We are children of our parents Adam and Eve, who begat descendants "after their own kind." They were the only people ever created who became sinners by sinning, who departed from God's place and standards of perfection. All of

<sup>31</sup> *"Thus you shall keep the sons of Israel separated from their uncleanness, so that they will not die in their uncleanness by their defiling My tabernacle that is among them."* (Leviticus 15:31 NASB95)

<sup>24</sup> *'Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled. <sup>25</sup> 'For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants. <sup>26</sup> 'But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments and shall not do any of these abominations, neither the native, nor the alien who sojourns among you <sup>27</sup> (for the men of the land who have been before you have done all these abominations, and the land has become defiled); <sup>28</sup> so that the land will not spew you out, should you defile it, as it has spewed out the nation which has been before you. <sup>29</sup> 'For whoever does any of these abominations, those persons who do so shall be cut off from among their people. <sup>30</sup> 'Thus you are to keep My charge, that you do not practice any of the abominable customs which have been practiced before you, so as not to defile yourselves with them; I am the Lord your God.'* " (Leviticus 18:24-30 NASB95)

I thought I'd get your attention with the title. Okay, so sex as God intended is not a disgusting practice, it's disgusting if not done as He intended. This is another in a series of basic articles intended to be an introduction

and a help to those of us who are just beginning a whole-Bible walk with the Father. You might want to send the kids out of the room unless you are ready to explain the birds and the bees to them, especially as it pertains to this booklet. I will try to be as delicate as possible, but most of the time there is just no other way to say it. So if your sensibilities are easily offended perhaps you should put this away for another day.

The Hebrew word for “knowing intimately” is *yadah*. This is also the word for the sex act. In Genesis, Adam “knew” his wife Eve (Gen. 4:1,25) and many other places we are told we should “know” the Lord.

<sup>23</sup>*Thus says the Lord, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; <sup>24</sup>but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the Lord.*

(Jeremiah 9:23-24 NASB95)

See also places like Jeremiah 31:35 and Hosea 2:30 and 6:3.

The Lord “knows” those who are His.

<sup>7</sup>*The Lord is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him.*

(Nahum 1:7 NASB95)

In Matthew 7:21-23 Jesus says that He didn’t “know” (Greek *ginosko*) those who talked a lot about what they did for Him, but He does know those who rely on what He did for them. Physical intimacy be-

*ments and abide in His love.* (John 15:10 NASB95)

Apparently we need to keep getting washed with the Word, and this includes doing what He says. By practicing His Word we wash the parts of ourselves, both outside and inside, that become unclean. This is further illustrated for us by Jesus in Matthew 25:26,27 (NASB).

*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.”*

If I read this correctly, then Jesus is telling us to do both interior and exterior cleaning. One without the other is impossible. You see, the critical idea behind attempting to practice as many of His instructions as we can, is not so much that we are mechanically following some rules or looking really holy. It is more that it proves the attitude or motivation which is moving us to do what God says. Even if the rules themselves are immaterial (pun intended), our *attitude* about those rules says volumes about what we really think of God. If we run around trying to find loopholes in the rules He gives us, what does that say about how clean our interior really is?

**Having clean lips.** Isaiah tells us in chapter six (verse 5) of his book,

*“Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.”* (Isaiah 6:5 NASB)

*fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.” John 15:1-4 NASB*

This could apply only to the apostles, or it could apply to any of God’s people because we are clean through the application of His Word (written and Flesh). Hebrews (10:19-22 NASB), much like the reference at the head of this article, helps illuminate this too.

*Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

Our High Priest Yeshua haMashiach (Jesus the anointed) sprinkles our hearts clean and washes our bodies with pure water, by the ‘full assurance of faith.’ If we abide in Him then we are clean. Does this mean we can ignore all the other physical cleaning? Probably not, because as it says in John 13:10 *Jesus said to him, “He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.”* Again in John 15:10 Jesus gives the meaning of ‘abide’ as ‘keeping His (and God’s) commandments.’

<sup>10</sup>*“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s command-*

tween husband and wife can be a picture of Spiritual intimacy between the body of the Messiah and the Messiah. Because of this we should keep the marriage bed pure (Heb. 13:4).

<sup>4</sup>*Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. (Hebrews 13:4 NASB95)*

There really are no laws pertaining to the sex act itself as practiced between two married people, except for the rule on not sharing sex during the flow of menstruation (Lev. 18:19, 20:18). As far as I know nothing else is prohibited, so sensitivity and compassion should be the rule for figuring out what’s an acceptable activity and what is not. If you want to swing from the chandelier in a Tarzan outfit, go right ahead. If you use a trampoline, more power to you. If batteries are included, I don’t want to know about it. Just remember to communicate and treat the other person as you would want to be treated. And guys, this means making a real effort to slow down and understand your woman. They frequently need a little more “mental” involvement than we do.

There are books out there that are better at these details than I am. I don’t claim to be an expert; my wife and I have had to do a lot of talking and thinking and experimenting. Not that I mind the experimenting, that part’s kind of fun. But sometimes the talking was kind of frustrating because of the differences between the genders and the difficulty we have trying to understand each other. We try to stay open and receptive to each other, and if we make mistakes we forgive and try it again. Can I get a big “amen” to the trying again. The only

other suggestion I have is to guard your thought life, and let other parts of the Torah guide you in your treatment of your spouse.

This is a difficult area. Supposedly the two leading reasons for fights between couples are money (first) and sex. Many marriages have foundered because of the inability to reconcile differences in quality, frequency, timing and particulars. Personally I think people expect way too much from sex. We hear a tremendous amount of talk about it from others, or from sources such as magazines and movies, and to hear these others talk we are supposed to experience an alternate reality or set a new land speed record every time we share physical intimacy with our spouses.

So we think that if we don't feel heaven and earth move something must be wrong. Well, give yourself a break and forget all the talk. In my opinion, sex is simply an extension of your relationship, and sometimes it will be good while other times merely adequate or even boring. Every once in a while you may actually feel heaven and earth move. So it varies a little. So what. If your needs are not being met talk with your spouse. See if you can't come to a more equitable arrangement based on your wants and the wants of your spouse. But try to maintain a balance, add a dash of self-restraint where necessary, and above all practice, practice, practice till you get it right. Can I get another amen?

This article isn't all about the sex act, however. I know, I know, you thought it was just getting interesting. But you don't need me to lecture you about these kinds of details. There are also a few other things that we proba-

*wash his clothes and be unclean until evening; and it shall be a perpetual statute to the sons of Israel and to the alien who sojourns among them.*<sup>11</sup> *The one who touches the corpse of any person shall be unclean for seven days.*<sup>12</sup> *That one shall purify himself from uncleanness with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and then he will be clean; but if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean.*<sup>13</sup> *Anyone who touches a corpse, the body of a man who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from Israel. Because the water for impurity was not sprinkled on him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is still on him.* (Numbers 19:10-13 NASB95)

Since we don't have this red-heifer solution (and haven't had for a long time), and since anyone who is unclean through touching a dead body can make others unclean just by touching, what are we to do? I have touched a dead body unwittingly – I checked for the pulse of a man in a hotel room whom we couldn't tell had been murdered and was lying on the floor face down. Therefore everything and everybody I touch is unclean. Other people have done the same thing, and if the verses are correct then probably everyone and everything is unclean! So how do we get clean away from this entanglement?

**Being clean through the Word.** The answer, I think, lies in the Word of God.

*"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears*

There is also an inordinate emphasis in some circles on the female's uncleanness, while virtually ignoring the male's. Obviously, a man makes his wife unclean by body discharge when having sex (this happens way more often than when she becomes unclean through her cycle, at least, if your sex life is as it should be), and nobody takes this to mean we should never have sex. Does a male's uncleanness mean the man should isolate himself in his own bed and even sleep in a separate bedroom? Of course not. I think the Father is just trying to communicate the prevalence of uncleanness, helping us make distinctions so we know the difference. Then we can take steps to remedy the situation by (in this case) making sure we take a bath and wash our clothes.

**Being clean through separation.** Separation is, however, called for in the case of death. Not from each other, but from the dead thing. Our Father also wants us to be clean by avoiding contact with death if at all possible. One of the distinctions connected with our diet is that we are not supposed to eat any animal that is dead before you find the carcass (possibly because we don't know why it died). Another distinction is that we are not to eat of an animal that itself eats carrion (dead animals). God created scavengers for His reasons, but this didn't include sticking their flesh in our mouths.

I was surprised to see, in my studies of these things, that if a person comes into contact with a dead person the only way to become clean is through the ashes of the red heifer solution (if I understand the verses in Numbers 19:10-13 properly).

<sup>10</sup>*The one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall*

bly don't have to cover here, such as the instructions concerning the prohibition of same-gender relations (Lev. 18:22), or sex with close relatives (Lev. 18:7-18), or with animals (Lev. 18:23). Can you imagine why in the world God would ever have to make a rule on sex and animals?

And speaking of why certain commands are needed, have you ever read through a list of the commands, especially in the area of sex? It reads like a father talking to a teenager. The Father says, "No sex outside of marriage to the opposite gender of sufficiently distant relation." (Perhaps even "No adultery" should be sufficient.) You'd think that would be all He had to say, wouldn't you? But no. We have to say something like, "What about sex with an aunt?" "How about a sister?" "Does that include step-mothers?" "But what about in-laws?" "Who counts as a relative?" I can imagine our Father saying, "GOOD GRIEF! How many times, and how many different ways, do I have to tell you, NO IMPROPER SEX, PERIOD?" Read the list sometime and you'll see what I mean. There is one on the Whole Bible website ([www.wholebible.com](http://www.wholebible.com)) under the Study Helps button.

There are other commands that would be beneficial to talk about here. Most of these are listed in Leviticus 15 and have to do with the subject of how a person becomes unclean (Hebrew tame (taw-may) or tumah (too-maw)). It is amazing just how many different ways there are for us to become unclean. Maybe one of the things God is telling us through these Laws is how easy it is to get unclean, and how extensive and contagious sin really is.

In regards to sex, women are unclean for a period of seven days (Lev. 15:19) from the start of their monthly cycle (Hebrew *nidah* (knee-daw)). If the flow doesn't stop, they continue to be unclean. Women are also unclean after childbirth (one week plus 33 days for male children; Lev. 12:2-4, two weeks plus 66 days for females; Lev. 12:5). Men become unclean, and make a woman unclean, by an emission of semen (Lev. 15:16-18), or other discharges. If the discharge doesn't stop, he continues to be unclean until it stops (Lev. 15:2-15). Fortunately, it's pretty easy to get clean. Most of the time all we have to do is wash our bodies and our clothes, and we are only unclean until evening. Thank the Father for his mercy.

In some ways being unclean only limited a person's access to the Temple (for instance see Lev. 12:4), so they could not offer a sacrifice. But I am not entirely convinced that uncleanness applied only to sacrifices and offerings at the Tabernacle or Temple. It seems to me, in view of the verses at the head of this article, that uncleanness might just be directly related to our relationship with Him. For instance, Lev. 18:27 says that the people living in the land before Israel took over had done these things and defiled the land, so that the land vomited them out. If uncleanness only related to sacrifices, how could this be, seeing as how they did not have a Temple?

What I mean is that perhaps any uncleanness can interfere with the intimacy between me and my Father. For instance, maybe one of the reasons a lot of healing is not taking place within our communities is due to unclean-

*land of Egypt to be your God; thus you shall be holy, for I am holy." This is the law regarding the animal and the bird, and every living thing that moves in the waters and everything that swarms on the earth, to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, and between the edible creature and the creature which is not to be eaten. Leviticus 11:45-47*

**Being clean through washing.** Washing is described in places like Leviticus 12 through 15. God tells us that we need to bathe after becoming unclean, whether through the birth of a child, a contagious skin disease, or body discharges. A body discharge can be blood or semen. Isolation is prescribed while diagnosing skin diseases, but it is not prescribed for body discharges or giving birth. True, all who come in contact with an unclean person also become unclean. Being unclean means that we can't go into the Sanctuary (Leviticus 12:4) or eat the meat of the peace offerings (Leviticus 7:20). But the cure or remedy for this physical type of uncleanness (as well as contact with the unclean person or thing) is simply to wash the clothes and body and wait for evening. There are no detailed instructions for how to wash, and the words used for bathing in most instances just means 'to wash.' It seems to me a regular shower or bath would suffice.

In my opinion, a huge mistake is made in the interpretation of the commands for bodily discharges (such as blood or semen). Nowhere does the Bible say to isolate ourselves from one another, or suspend the sharing of intimacy in marriage. The text does not say that we should live in separate houses or sleep in separate beds.



above, Judas was shown to be unclean by his actions. His beliefs and his actions converged at death. A person can wear the right clothing, eat the right foods, avoid touching a dead body, or any other physical command or series of commands, and if they ‘have not love’ as Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 13, the works are worthless. In order for obedience to external commands to be acceptable, or ‘clean,’ before the Father, it must be accompanied by love for Him (clean internally). Truly, this is why following a command is worthwhile – because of love for the Father. Any other motivation means we are not clean, no matter how many baths we take. Right thinking along with right doing is faith. So, this brings us to some of the specific commands that not only help us to get and stay clean but also help us teach others about the distinction.

**Being clean through diet.** The Word of God teaches us that we are to make a distinction between clean and unclean through what we eat and what we do not eat. There are also health benefits that we gain through following these commands, but the focus seems to be more on making a distinction than health because health is not mentioned directly in the text. What are we saying when we avoid certain foods? Certainly that God is our God and whatever He says goes. But we are also saying that God cares about the smallest details of our lives, and that we are loving Him in return by striving to be holy as He is holy. We are not trying to ‘add’ to salvation and the righteousness given to us through the death of our Messiah, but trying to ‘walk’ worthy of the calling to which we are called. We are also trying to teach others through physical application.

*“For I am the LORD who brought you up from the*

ness. Should an elder who has been called to pray for the sick abstain from the sex act, wash himself and his clothes, confess his sins (make a sacrifice), and otherwise prepare more thoroughly for the task at hand? I am not saying this has to be true, but it gives one food for thought. I wonder how the following verse would work in here?

*<sup>16</sup>Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. (James 5:16 NASB95)*

Some of our Jewish brothers and sisters refrain from having sex for seven days from the start of a woman’s cycle. Others wait two weeks. Some of them even have separate beds so the husband doesn’t become “unclean.” I think this is a little extreme, myself. Why would it be so important to avoid contact with your wife, when as soon as you have sex the husband makes both people unclean by the emission of semen? It doesn’t make a lot of sense to me to get all uptight about the tumah (uncleanness) of a woman and totally ignore the tumah of a man. In another part of the Torah, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 7:1-6 that we should not deny sex to our spouse for an extended period of time.

*Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not*

*have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. But this I say by way of concession, not of command. (I Cor. 7:1-6 NASB)*

My wife and I refrain from sex for the week of her cycle because we choose to live the 'whole Bible' way. It tends to recharge the sex life and it seems to help with health. For instance, she says that she hasn't gotten a yeast infection in a long time (although there could be other reasons for that, too). I have also heard reports that among the Orthodox Jews there is an extremely low incidence of cervical cancer. Of course, this could be due to other things such as an improvement in the diet (no pork or shellfish) or other factors as well. And I think faith plays a huge roll in the benefits we receive from our Father for obedience to His instructions.

So relax, have fun, enjoy the intimacy with one another, and practice, practice, practice.

The Father bless the intimacy between you and your spouse in your marriage.

Bruce Scott Bertram

wasn't teaching because He didn't want to, or people knew the difference without being told. We know that "every intent of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually," (Genesis 6:5) which is why God destroyed the earth with a flood. So perhaps these words don't start showing up until about half-way through Exodus because in the beginning nobody had to be told what was clean and unclean, but later on they did.

*The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. (Psalm 19:9 NASB.)*

**Physical and Spiritual clean.** There are two parts to being clean. One part is physical (external) and one part is spiritual (internal). Both parts have to be in place in order to be truly clean. To become clean physically in most instances is simply a matter of bathing, but you can stay in a bathtub for a week and not even come close to being clean spiritually. Physical and spiritual cannot be separated, unless we die. True spirituality is both physical and spiritual. It is impossible to have 'right thinking' or 'right believing' without 'right doing.' Actions change beliefs, and beliefs change actions. If I say I am 'converted' and do not have any actions to reflect that claim, I am not truly converted.

*Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." John 13:10*

It is also true that we may follow all sorts of physical commands, and if our hearts are not in it then we cannot claim conversion either. As evidenced by the reference

## Christian Faith and Practice through Cleanliness (Clean and Unclean)

spond when He cracks the whip, and that many times only externally, not from the heart. At any rate, He has to spell out what clean and unclean means through His Word.

*“Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.”* Ezekiel 22:26

**Clean before the Law?** The first mention of the concept of clean in the Word is, oddly enough, applied to animals in Genesis 7 and 8. Just before the flood in chapter seven God tells Noah to take clean animals with him, and from this we know that clean and unclean were included in the worship of God before the flood. This is confirmed by Abel’s acceptable sacrifice. Just after the flood in chapter eight Noah makes another acceptable sacrifice. We can’t be certain, I suppose, just exactly what these things mean, but one thing to take note of is that sacrifices of clean animals happened long before the so-called Law was given at Mt. Sinai. It may also hint at the acceptability and resumption of sacrifices after Jesus returns and takes up His reign on the earth. Hebrews (10:3) tells us that the purpose of sacrifices is a reminder of sin, which further hints at the possible reason for resumption.

It is worth noting here also that outside of the Genesis 7 and 8 references, none of the words under consideration in this article show up in the text of Genesis. Either God

<sup>23</sup>“I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. <sup>24</sup>“For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. <sup>25</sup>“Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. <sup>26</sup>“Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. (Ezekiel 36:23-27 NASB95)

The subject of being clean is illustrated for us in the Word of God in many different ways, from simply washing dirt off of the body (taking a bath) to gaining a new heart as in the reference above. Being clean is obviously a topic high on the priority list of our God and Father, judging from the hundreds of verses describing it or its opposite. The English word clean, along with variations such as cleanse, cleanness, and cleaned, is mentioned over 200 times in the NASB (New American Standard Bible version). This does not count related words such as pure (102), purity (6), purify (19), and

other words like ‘holy’ (649). Uncleaness is mentioned about the same number of times as clean, again not including words such as filth (2), filthy (5), filthiness (6), impure (6), defile (37), profane (32) and the like. If you go through enough of the verses for clean and unclean, even if you don’t know Hebrew or Greek, you will see that a lot of them relate to the understandable, mundane concepts of the presence or lack of dirt. But they also relate to more difficult ideas such as perfect and imperfect, acceptable and unacceptable, righteous and unrighteous, or holy and unholy.

When I write an article such as this, I thank the Father for the tools that He has given me to use, especially the computer and a Bible search program. I believe that a person can compensate to a large extent for a lack of formal education in biblical subjects by examining as many texts as possible using a search program. If you plug in, as I did for this article, a word or series of words and have your search program tell you where they are found in the text, you’ll be surprised at the meaning that you will be able to draw out of the Word, just by comparing Scripture with Scripture. I don’t mean that you shouldn’t also take some higher education-type classes, but you can compensate for a lot of classes with just a generic search program and some time. Or use a book called a Strong’s Concordance.

**All good things come from the Father.** One of the first things to observe in the study of these words is that a lot of times the bad word is a modified form of the good word. For instance, look at ‘clean’ and ‘unclean.’ The bad word (unclean) takes its’ meaning from the good word (clean). To be unclean is to be the opposite of

clean, or ‘not clean.’ Yes, I know we can also describe ‘clean’ as ‘not dirty,’ but the point remains. ‘Not dirty’ still points to clean as the desired condition (think about it). This is an important concept. All ideas and practices that are bad depart from the pre-existing standards, which are a part of, and belong to, God. It’s a directional thing, in all cases pointing to God. Clean exists first, and unclean means to depart from that which is clean. Purity is first, and impurity is a departure from God’s purity. To be unrighteous is to depart from righteousness. God is perfect and holy, and anything that comes short of His standard is imperfect and unholy.

**Ignorance is not bliss.** Another huge point I have to make, before we get into talking about the subject of being clean, is the fact that *we have to be told what it is*. We don’t naturally know the difference between clean and unclean. If clean was a snake it could bite us on the nose and we still would have a hard time figuring it out. Like Moses in Exodus 3:5, God has to inform us of something as simple as taking off our shoes when on holy ground. We are supposed to have a knowledge of good and evil (from eating of the wrong tree), yet we have to be commanded to do the simplest things.

Or, more probably, we simply don’t want to make a distinction. Perhaps we just flat out refuse to acknowledge the distinction between clean and unclean, holy and unholy. This second idea makes more sense in light of the biblical teachings on the hard hearts of people. In general, unless He gives us a direct command and backs it up with force (‘do this or you’re toast’) we don’t respond to Him or His standards at all. This is a sad testimony to the human relationship with Him. We only re-