

This is a simple exercise that looks at scriptural evidence and puts it in a logical framework based on these three principles:

God Never Changes! – Mal 3:6, Jas 1:17, Heb 1:12

God's Word is True! – Joh 17:17, Psa 33:4, Psa 119:142, 151, 160

God's Word Cannot Contradict itself! – 1Co 14:33, Titus1:2

I don't want to preach, I only want to lay out what I've seen in the scripture. I would like to examine the scripture that is probably used most often to justify people eating whatever they want.

"Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.") (Mar 7:18-19 NIV)

Ok this is a great place to start... At a plain reading of this passage it's a slam dunk! Pass me another pulled pork sandwich with a side of seafood gumbo!

First let's back up a little, and get some context and concepts. I have to keep the "big picture" in mind for things to make sense to me. Too many times I've overlooked or ignored foundational concepts.

This is what I view as "The Big Picture" context about Jesus, his relationship to the Father, the Law, and life in the 1st Century.

Jesus was teaching differently from the teachers of the day.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, **the people were astonished at his doctrine:** For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes. (Mat 7:28-29 KJV)

And when the multitude heard *this*, **they were astonished at his doctrine.** (Mat 22:33 KJV)

And **they were astonished at his doctrine:** for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. (Mar 1:22 KJV)

And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? **what new doctrine is this?** for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. (Mar 1:27 KJV)

And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was **astonished at his doctrine.** (Mar 11:18 KJV)

Where did Jesus get this astonishing doctrine? Did he come up with it on his own? His astonishing doctrine came directly from the Father. It was based on Scripture-only NOT the man-made traditions of men.

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. **If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.** (Joh 5:30-31 KJV)

Jesus answered them, and said, **My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.** If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. (Joh 7:16-17 KJV)

If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father *is* in me, and I in him. (Joh 10:37-38 KJV)

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? **the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me,** he doeth the works. (Joh 14:10 KJV)

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (Joh 12:49-50 KJV)

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; **even as I have kept my Father's commandments,** and abide in his love. (Joh 15:10 KJV)

*Jesus' Doctrine came from the unchangeable Father. Whose doctrine **was for Israel and the Gentiles** that also believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*

One law and one manner shall be for you, and **for the stranger** that sojourneth with you. (Num 15:16 KJV)

For **I am the LORD, I change not;** therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. (Mal 3:6 KJV)

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the **Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.** (Jas 1:17 KJV)

To Jews in the 1st century – pork, catfish and shellfish were not even considered food! Even today they still aren't considered food – just like we don't consider eating roaches as food. Catfish and shellfish were an abomination, and not to be consumed.

And the **pig,** because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, **is unclean to you.** You **shall not eat any of their flesh,** and you shall **not touch their carcasses;** they are unclean to you. (Lev 11:7-8 ESV)

But anything in the seas or the rivers that has not fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and of the living creatures that are in the waters, **is detestable to you.** You shall regard them as detestable; **you shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall detest their carcasses.** (Lev 11:10-11 ESV)

Anything that's from the LORD will be prophesied.

Surely **the Sovereign LORD does nothing** without **revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.** (Amo 3:7 NIV)

The definition of Sin:

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. (1Jn 3:4-5 NIV)

We are to follow the example of Christ:

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. (1Co 11:1 NIV)

The False accusations against Stephen:

They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. For **we have heard him say** that this **Jesus of Nazareth** will destroy this place **and change the customs Moses handed down to us.**" (Act 6:13-14 NIV)

Approximately 10 years after the resurrection of Jesus: Peter would have been with Jesus when the events of Mark 7:18-19 took place, and he would have understood Christ's intentions.

But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. (Act 10:14 KJV)

Back to the original passage:

"Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.") (Mar 7:18-19 NIV)

What is the context of Mark 7:18-19?

The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw **some of his disciples eating food with hands that were "unclean," that is, unwashed.** (The Pharisees and all the Jews **do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing,** holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace **they do not eat unless they wash.** And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.) So the Pharisees and

teachers of the law asked Jesus, **"Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?"** (Mar 7:1-5 NIV)

The preceding verses reveal that the immediate context is his disciples eating food with unwashed hands, nothing about making unclean animals clean and fit to be food. There would have been a riot among the Scribes and Pharisees if that was what Jesus was teaching!

Jesus' teaching about washed hands couldn't be argued with – because it was based on the Law alone. The Pharisees' doctrine of washing hands before eating was one of the added "commandments of men."

Here is the "Big Picture" of Mark 7:18-19 as I see it:

Jesus' doctrine was astonishing to the people.

Jesus' doctrine wasn't his.

Jesus' doctrine was his Father's doctrine.

The Father declared pork unclean, and unclean seafood an abomination.

Pork, catfish and shellfish were still not considered food in the 1st century.

Sin is breaking the law.

Jesus was sinless. He never broke any of his Father's commandments.

There was one law for all believers.

We are to follow the example of Christ.

Declaring all foods clean would have been a major change to the "customs of Moses."

10 years after the resurrection Peter (an eyewitness to Mark 7:18-19) hadn't eaten any unclean thing.

It isn't prophesied that unclean items will ever become food.

The Father never changes.

IF the Father commanded his children what foods were clean in Leviticus 11,

AND there is one Law for all that believes in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

AND Jesus' doctrine comes from the Father

AND the Father doesn't change.

AND the changing of unclean to clean was never prophesied.

THEN *Could Jesus really "declare all foods clean?"*

AND the false accusations against Stephen remain false?

AND Jesus still never have broken one of his Father's commandments?

AND why would Peter, an eyewitness, have not ever eaten anything unclean – 10 years after the resurrection, if they were in fact made clean?

I can't see how this logical sequence can be ignored. Without examining the "Big Picture" probably 99.9% of Christians would disagree with this view. But they must ignore major portions of scripture. At this time, I can't see how another view can be logically and scripturally supported.

What am I missing? I'm not looking for an argument, only the truth. This was one passage, there are other scriptures that are used to make the same argument, but this same logical sequence applies to them too.

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