

Lent Day 20  
Thursday March 3, 2016

**Reading:** Mark 7.14-23

**Reflection**

Have you ever said something that has cause hurt, devastation even? I have. Seconds after my words leave my mouth I can see clearly the pain that I've caused. These are my worst moments. I play them over in my mind sometimes and every time it makes me faintly ill. It also brings me, myself, into question. How could I say something like that? What kind of a person am I?

I think that last question is why we are more comfortable with the notion that defilement comes from outside of us rather than inside of us. We can live with external things — that we can control; wash a cup before drinking, no problem. But what are we supposed to do when the defilement is in us?

First, we have to recognize it. The problem is in here not out there. We aren't as bad as we are afraid and we aren't as good as we could be. But recognizing the problem is the first step. Second, we need to exercise discipline. We need to master these lingering issues and through the power of the Spirit we can. Finally, when defilement does come out we need to repair the damage, admit our fault, determine to do better, and seek forgiveness. We all walk by grace all of the time. We are a mix of broken people who find power and forgiveness in Christ Jesus.

**Prayer**

Lord, we confess that our hearts are filled with evil, but through the power of your Spirit we can master these things as you give to us a new heart. Thank you for your loving grace and mercy. Amen.