

## Ritual Impurity

“To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled.” (Titus 1:15, ESV).



### Always Unclean!, by Doug Greenwold, From *Making Disciples Jesus' Way*

One day it struck me that day after day in the Gospel record Jesus was making Himself ritually impure. He was always doing those things that were forbidden by the paradigms of the Pharisees. He touched lepers, touched the casket of a dead young man, walked on Gentile land, let Himself be touched by a woman with a chronic issue of blood, all acts of ritual impurity. Yet in none of the Gospel accounts do we have any record of Jesus going to the ritual purification baths to cleanse Himself from these ritually impure encounters with people. It's as if Jesus deliberately set about to redefine ritual purity for His disciples. That is something no rabbi of His day would ever contemplate doing!

In seemingly always being “unclean” by those He either associated with or touched, Jesus was also pointing forward toward the Cross. As He repeatedly became unclean by interacting with and touching these outcasts, He left them healed, clean, and restored. In doing so, the purpose of the Cross is foreshadowed as Jesus became “impure” on our behalf so that we might be presented “clean” to His Father. What a remarkable rabbi! So different from all the others. No wonder the crowds began to seek Him out. (*Making Disciples Jesus Way*. P. 28 and 29., © Douglas J. Greenwold 2005, 2007, 2012).