Small Group Questions

Drawn from "God and Our Uncleanness," A Sermon on Deuteronomy 23:9-14 & 24:8-9

Pastor Nicoletti @ Faith Pres Tacoma

September 27, 2026 AM

1. The sermon text called Israel to resist the unique stresses, challenges, and temptations of war-time by maintaining a higher-than-normal standard of purity and holiness in the camp. Talk about a time and place in **your** life when you experienced unique stresses, challenges, and temptations to lower your moral standards.

2. Look again at verses 9, 10, and 14 and notice the three categories of "evil thing," "unclean," and "indecent." Compare and contrast these three categories as you talk about the three examples given (semen, excrement, and leprosy). Do you think these three examples are representative or exhaustive? Explain your answer.

3. In the sermon, Pastor Nicoletti referenced the three-fold theological framework which the Reformed have traditionally used to analyze and describe the Mosaic Law. Talk about those three categories. Which of them especially apply to this passage? Which aspects of this passage, if any, are still binding on us today and which aspects were unique to Israel of old?

4. Evaluate the old adage "Cleanliness is next to godliness."

5. The sermon text demonstrates that the Lord's concern, wisdom, and authority extend into **every** area and aspect of human life, not just the parts that we would typically describe as "religious" or "spiritual." In your opinion, does this text complicate, blur, or throw a monkey wrench into the categories "religious vs secular" or "spiritual vs physical?" Explain your answer.

6. You are talking with a skeptic about this passage. She says, "Here is one more example of how the Bible is backwards, repressed, anti-sex, and psychologically unhealthy. A man becomes unclean and excluded merely for coming into contact with his own semen, something which is totally naturally and normal. Laws like this create oppressive societies, cause people to be scared of their own sexuality, and lead to a sense of shame and self-loathing! How can you believe in a book like this?!?!" How would you respond?

7. An influential teacher in the second century named Valentinus made a serious argument that Jesus did not poop. He argued that Jesus "ate and drank in a special way, without excreting his solids." Evaluate his claim from a theological perspective.

8. Talk about a time in your life when you felt defiled by your sinfulness and how the Lord assured you of the forgiveness, cleansing, and acceptance we have in Christ.

9. In the sermon Pastor Nicoletti emphasized two complementary truths: on the one hand, even our best deeds are contaminated by our fallenness and fall short of God's standard; on the other hand, the Lord accepts and delights in our imperfect, but sincere, attempts at obedience because of our union with Christ. Which of these two do you most struggle to believe? Explain your answer.

10. The sermon text emphasizes that the presence of God should motivate us to holiness. What tangible difference would it make in your life if you more consistently remembered and acknowledged the presence of God in your life?