

Outside, inside

 **Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23**

The Pharisees and scribes rebuke Jesus for allowing the disciples to eat with unwashed hands and without following the ancient ritual. Jesus replies by quoting Scripture which talks about those that pay lip service to God but whose hearts are filled with bad intentions. Jesus turns what the Pharisees are saying on its head by telling them that nothing outside of the body can defile it, but that which is on the inside can.

Now read **Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Here we see Jesus illustrate that it is not our outward actions but that which is in our heart that counts. If what is in our heart is good, then our outwards actions will be good. What do you allow your heart to dwell on and how is this shown in your outward actions?

Write

Write a piece of poetry, prose or a prayer in response to this passage. Start with the phrase 'It's what's on the inside that counts'. You could write it as a personal response, or from the perspective of Jesus, a Pharisee or a person in the crowd.

★ CHALLENGE ★

Although the Pharisees are observing their rules and rituals to keep them clean, Jesus points out that this means nothing if what is on the inside is unclean.



Have a go at some 'body brain teasers' to see if you can do two things at once.

<https://static.rasset.ie/documents/homepage/2020/05/en-worksheet-1-2-thurs07-pe.pdf>

The Pharisees were so focused on the rules about keeping clean that they forgot about looking after the inside – our hearts. Jesus draws our focus back to what's on the inside. It can be hard to concentrate on both – just like some of these physical challenges!

BAKE

Make some jam heart biscuits – as you make these, think about what is inside your heart.

You will need: 250g pack unsalted butter, softened, 140g caster sugar, 2tsp vanilla extract, 300g plain flour, jar seedless raspberry jam, cookie cutters, rolling pin, baking tray and parchment.

- Beat the butter and sugar together. Add the vanilla, then use a wooden spoon to stir in the flour.
- Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.
- Roll the dough and cut out 18 heart shapes, then cut out the middle of each one, using a small heart cookie cutter or a circular cookie cutter. Use the remaining dough to cut out another 18 heart shapes.
- Line two baking trays with baking parchment. Place the 18 full hearts onto the trays, then put the 18 hearts with the middle sections cut out on top of the 18 full heart shapes.
- Spoon the jam into the hollow of each biscuit.
- Bake for 10 mins or until pale golden. Then, leave to cool on the trays before sharing the biscuits with your loved ones.

ACTION

This week, show the intentions of your inner thoughts – or your heart – by doing one outward action a day, e.g. writing to your local MP in praise of something good they have done or about an issue you care about, sharing a good news story, litter picking in your local area, calling on a friend.



How can we make sure our values shape our choices and decisions?

Bible Journaling

Have a go at Bible journaling as a way of bringing out the message of the passage. Write or print out today's verses and draw your response over the words. Do an internet search for Bible journaling to get you started with some creative ideas.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Some Pharisees and scribes gathered round Jesus. Angrily, they asked him, 'Why do your disciples eat without following the ancient ritual of washing before eating? It's disrespectful to God!' They thought this made the disciples bad people.

Jesus replied, 'The prophet Isaiah was talking about people like you, when he said: "God says this: some people just pretend to respect me. They are only worried about rules and what people will think of them. Their lips honour me, but their hearts are far away from me."'

Jesus continued: 'Listen carefully. Nothing that goes into a person's body from the outside can make them a bad person. But the words and actions that come out can be bad. Goodness comes from the inside. What's important is what's in your heart.'

Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23



Did you know?

- The Pharisees were a group who tried to keep every part of the Jewish law very strictly. Most of them felt that Jesus was not strict enough.
- The Pharisees were very concerned with rituals. Rituals are a series of actions that you do in a certain order, often to do with washing.

Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23 (NRSV)

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?'

He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honours me with their lips,

but their hearts are far from me;

in vain do they worship me,

teaching human precepts as doctrines."

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.'

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.'

For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'