

***Nurturing Faith...
Every Day in Every Way***

August 30, 2015

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

Psalms 15 (1)

James 1:17-27

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23



Skin Deep or from the Heart? Object: An Apple.

Isn't this a beautiful apple? The skin is so red and shiny. Just look how smooth it is. It has a beautiful shape and I don't see any spots that look like the bugs or worms have eaten into it. Yes, this is a really good apple.

Oh, I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, "You can't tell if an apple is good by looking at the outside. You have to look on the inside to know if it is a good apple. Well, perhaps you are right. Let me tell you a story.

One day, while walking through an orchard, a man stopped under an apple tree. It was loaded with big beautiful apples just waiting to be eaten. The man picked what he thought looked like the best apple on the tree. He couldn't wait to eat it. He took out his pocket knife and cut it open for a taste. To his surprise, the apple was rotten to the core.

Unfortunately it is sometimes the same with people. Some people go to church every Sunday. They carry their Bibles, they bring their offering, they sing every hymn, they listen to every word the preacher says, but it doesn't change anything in their heart. They look good on the outside, but their goodness is only skin deep. Their worship is for appearance only and not from the heart.

This isn't anything new. Jesus faced the same problem in his day. One day some religious leaders complained to Jesus that they had seen some of his disciples eating without first washing their hands. Religious laws and traditions were very strict about washing your hands before eating. The religious leaders asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples follow our customs? They eat without first performing the hand-washing ceremony."

Jesus answered, "You are nothing but a bunch of hypocrites. The prophet Isaiah must have been talking about you when he said, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship has no meaning because they have replaced God's laws with their own traditions.'"

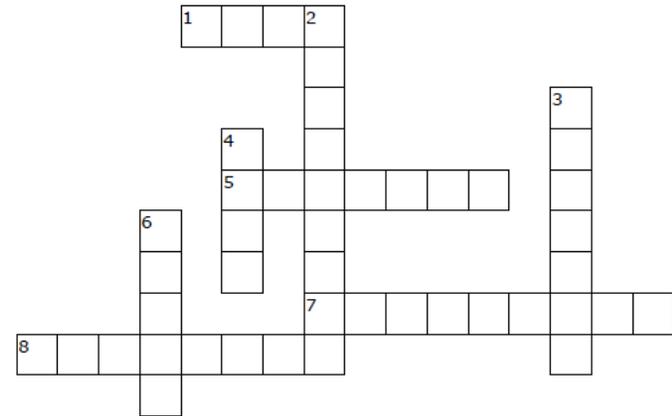
Those religious leaders were very concerned about clean hands, but Jesus was more concerned about a clean heart. We should be too!

Dear Father, help us to be as concerned about being clean on the inside as we are about being clean on the outside. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

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Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. God gave us birth by the word of truth so that we would become a kind of first fruits of creation. Alleluia (James 1:18)

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 1. To clean something, usually with soap and water
- 5. Foul or dirty; ritually impure
- 7. An established custom or habit
- 8. A member of a Jewish sect that emphasized strict observance of the Mosaic law

DOWN

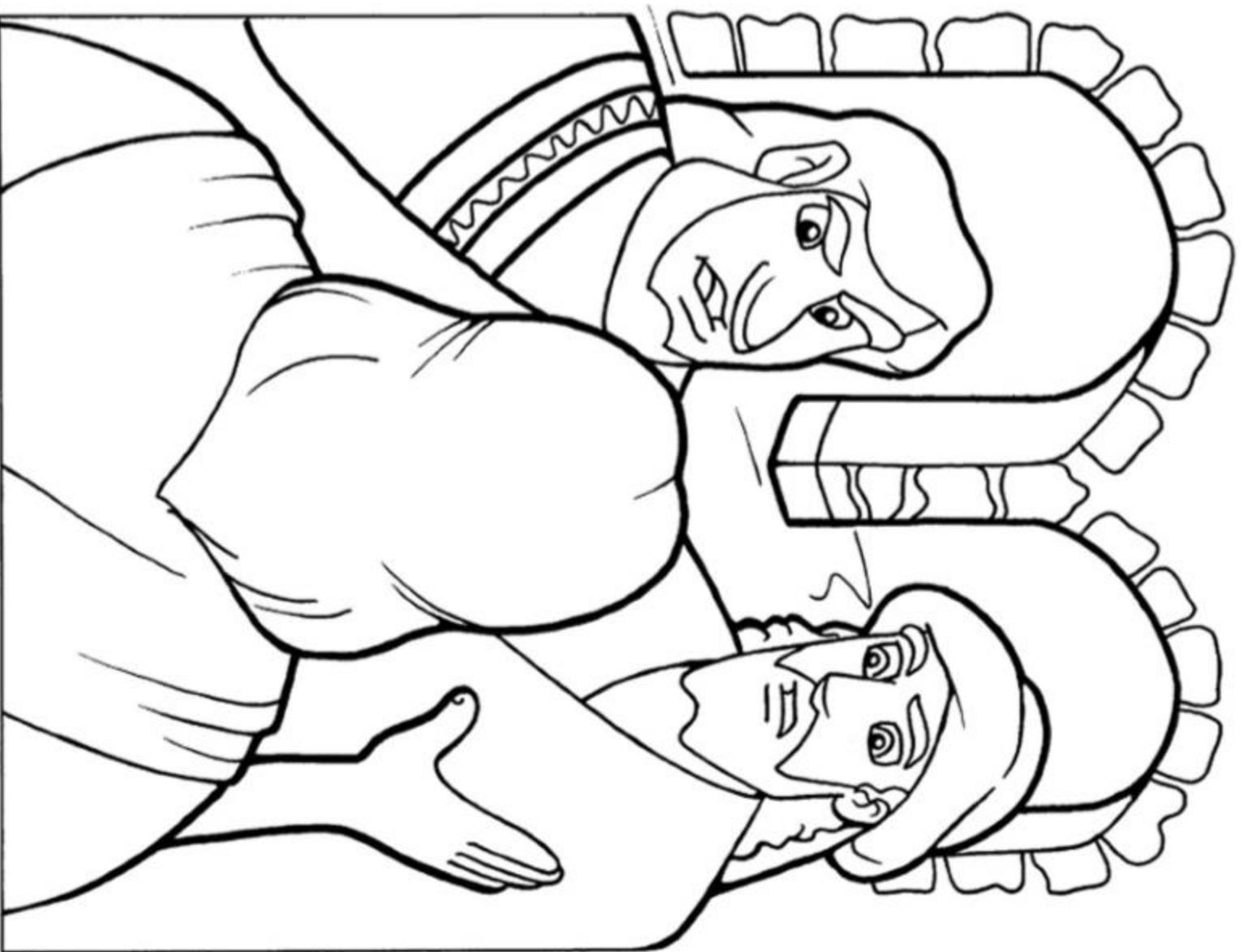
- 2. Someone who pretends to be something he is not
- 3. To honor and show love to God
- 4. A principle that guides our behavior
- 6. The organ that pumps blood throughout the body

TRADITION	HEART	UNCLEAN	WASH
PHARISEE	RULE	HYPOCRITE	WORSHIP

3 LAYERD HEART: Children can be given 3 hearts from bigger to smaller. They will glue one heart on top of another to make a 3 heart layer. On the top heart, write – WORSHIP FROM THE HEART. If children would rather have a “pop up layered heart”, they can glue an accordion-folded piece of a strip of paper between each heart layer.

LIPS AND HEARTS: Children can draw and color many lips and hearts all over their paper that the teacher has given them. Teacher can give a time limit for drawing as many lips and hearts as they can. When the time is up, children can write Mark 7:6 around the lips and hearts. Red glitter can be glued to the lips and hearts for sparkle.





“These people honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.”.

Mark 7:6