

Lent

devotions

READ:

Mark 7:1-23 ([click to open link](#))

REFLECT:

I'm all for washing hands. I do it a lot. Probably more than most people. I use hand sanitizer a lot too. Before hospital visits. Before serving communion. When water isn't available. I like a pair of clean hands. I'm not really into germs.

The Pharisees liked to wash their hands too. For a different reason. It was a religious tradition to wash hands before eating. They noticed that some of the disciples didn't do this. The Pharisees complained to Jesus. But Jesus wasn't taking any complaints from them. Here is pretty much what he said:

It's not a ceremonial act that God is impressed with.

A pure heart is what God loves.

Don't follow your silly human rules.

Follow God's holy and sacred Law.

Rather than speaking empty words or phrases.

Be a person who honors God with your actions.

Jesus concluded by saying that people don't need to be so concerned about the food that enters us but the actions, shaped by our heart, that leave us. So have a pure heart that empowers Christ-like character.

RESPOND:

Somebody once said:

Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;
watch your habits, they become character;
watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.

Make an extra effort to watch your thoughts today. To see people as God sees people. To be compassionate and not selfish; caring not competitive; and encouraging not critical. Observe the positive effect these Christ-like thoughts have on your words and actions.