

## Beaminster Area Team

God our Father, renew our hope. By the Holy Spirit's power, strengthen us to pray readily serve joyfully and grow abundantly rejoicing in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Week: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2021, thirteen Sunday after Trinity**

**Old Testament: Deuteronomy 4. 1-2, 6-9**

**Psalm: Psalm 15**

**New Testament: James 1. 17-27**

**Gospel: Mark 7. 1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

### **Reflection on the Gospel reading, by Revd. Alastair Wheeler**

Covid 19 has altered the way most people live - I am much more aware of cleansing my hands often and so on.

Mark 7 records how the Pharisees and scribes stood watching as Jesus' followers were eating. They saw them eating food with their fingers without the cleansing ritual their rules prescribed.

Now in that hot part of the world, hand cleanliness when eating food is practical and sensible. Just like cleansing and face masks in a pandemic. But some personalities want to apply the rules precisely, particularly, pedantically, and use the rules as power to say who is acceptable to God and who is unacceptable. But the rules became what mattered.

Jesus says to the crowd and us that what matters to God is who we are on the inside. Jesus, again, challenges human routine, rules, our ways of making God "safe" and comfortable and under our control. It's what comes out of you that matters he says. Instead of using rules to judge other people, control and limit God's love, Jesus calls us to know ourselves; to see what it is within each of us, and within all of us as a society, that demeans or even destroys us.

As, with Jesus' help, we come to know ourselves, willing to accept one another's differences and varieties, we discover that god's welcome and grace are bigger than any human rules; and far greater than human laws is the love and compassion of God.

### **Collect for the thirteen Sunday after Trinity.**

Almighty God,  
who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

### **Worship to enjoy at home**

BBC Radio 4, 8.10am, Sunday Worship; Songs of Praise BBC1 1.15pm

**A Useful Telephone Link from The Church of England.** This is a free number where you can listen to prayers, reflections and hymns and join in worship with others.



