

Daily Bible Readings:

These readings are related to the Lectionary readings for this Sunday. Try to take time each day to read the assigned Bible passage.

Sunday	Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23	Authentic religion
Monday	Mark 7:9-20	What makes people unclean
Tuesday	Isaiah 29:13-16	The wisdom of the wise will perish
Wednesday	Isaiah 1:10-20	Stop doing wrong, learn to do right
Thursday	Isaiah 58:1-10	Worship that pleases God
Friday	Colossians 2:6-8,16-23	Christ, not human tradition
Saturday	Psalms 112:1-8	God will bless the just
Sunday	Mark 7:24-37	Christ heals the Gentiles

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Scripture Verse for the Week:

Don't just listen to the word. You fool yourselves if you do that. You must do what it says. – James 1:22 (NIRV)

- Cut out & carry with you.
- Say at each mealtime.
- Read at bedtime.
- Commit to memory.

Prayer for this Week:

Lord, help me to do more than hear your Word. Help me to act on it. Amen. (James 1:22)

For Throughout the Day:

Lord, please make me clean from the inside-out, so that what I think, say and do pleases you. Amen. (Mark 7:21-22)

A Blessing to Share:

May God give you a clean heart, so that all you say, think and do pleases him. Amen.

Mealtime Refrain:

All good and perfect gifts are from above:
They come from our Father in heaven. (James 1:17)

Mealtime Prayer:

Plates of food, gifts from above, signs of a Father's gracious love. Thank you, God! Amen.

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SCRIPTURE

Faith Talk:

Discuss in your household or small group:

- Imagine life without words or speech. What would it be like?
- The apostle James says that if we think we are following God but don't keep our tongues from speaking bad things, we are fooling ourselves (James 1:26). Why is it important to control our tongues?
- James 1:19 says we should be '*quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry*'. Is this good advice? Why? How can hearing God's Word help us to control our words?

Devotional Practices:

In your household devotion time this week, sing the song "Two Little Eyes":

Two little eyes to look to God	One little tongue to speak the truth
Two little ears to hear his Word	One little heart for him in youth
Two little feet to walk his ways	Take them Lord Jesus and let them be
Hands to serve him all our days	Always loving, true to thee

Service:

The apostle James tells us that true worship of God includes looking after '*orphans or widows who need help*' (James 1:27). Who do you know who is in need at this time? How can you support or assist them? Plan a practical course of action that will show you to be "doers" of God's word.

Rituals and Traditions:

We read in Mark 7 that Jesus accused the Pharisees of setting aside the commands of God to observe their own traditions (Mark 7:9). Take some time to discuss the traditions that characterize your household. Do they reflect God's place in your life? What is one tradition into which you introduce a faith element, or what is a new faith tradition you could make part of your life?

Parent Toolbox: Words that Build Up

Our tongues are powerful instruments. They can do great good, but they also can do great harm. As parents, we must be conscious of using our tongues in ways which bless our children.

- Use your tongue to pray for your children daily. This is the best possible use of your tongue.
- Be lavish with your praise. Look for opportunities to build up each child's confidence. Even little things that they do are worthy of compliments.
- Never belittle your child, especially in front of others.
- Make your home a "No Put Downs Zone". Discourage fun at another's expense.
- When you compliment your children do not follow it up with a "but". Adding a criticism to the end of a compliment can more than negate it.

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