

Jesus Rebukes People who Replace God Laws with their own Rules
From Matt. 15: 1-20

Participants (*No need to memorize lines; the aim is to relive sacred events, not to perform*)

Peter

Abby

Pharisee

Voice (of Jesus)

Prompter

Echoes

Shout a brief line, and Echoes repeat it.

Children and all adults who want to take part. Echoes need no script.

Peter (Groan.) Lord, we've walked a long time, and we're hungry.

Prompter & Echoes Very hungry!

Voice Look, Peter. This field has ripe grain. Moses said not to harvest the corners of one's field, so that hungry travelers could glean from them.

Prompter & Echoes Eat a bit of grain!

Abby Hello, mister! You're eating grain from my father's field.
I'm glad that you don't have to go hungry.
My name is Abby. What is your name?

Peter I'm Peter. We've walked a long ways, and appreciate this bit of food.

Prompter & Echoes Crunch, crunch!

Abby Oh, look! Those men have been watching you, and are coming.
Wow, they look angry!

Pharisee Aha! You ate with unwashed hands!
Who is that law breaker that you are following?

Peter He is Jesus of Nazareth. You Pharisees should follow him, too.
Come join us. Let me introduce you to him.

Pharisee Stay there! Do not come near me.
We Pharisees do not associate with such as you.
I've heard about that Nazarene: he violates our sacred Law!

Peter Oh, really? What law has he broken?

Pharisee He lets you eat without ceremonially washing your hands.
You are doing it now!

Abby Oh, oh! You are defiled, Peter. I'm sorry.

Prompter & Echoes Defiled!

Voice Pharisee, you disobey God's command and follow your own tradition.
Your rules about washing came from men, not from God.
You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you:
"They honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

Abby Look. Those Pharisees are holding their hands over their ears,
but they still hear what Jesus is saying.

Voice Listen. It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles a person,
but what proceeds out of the mouth, this is what defiles a person.

Peter Lord, the Pharisees were offended by that statement.

Voice Never mind; they are blind guides of the blind.

Peter Please explain to us what you said about what defiles a man.

Voice What goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is eliminated;
but what leaves the mouth comes from the heart and defiles a person.
From the heart come evil ideas, murders, adulteries, thefts and lies.
These defile a person; but to eat with unwashed hands does not.

Prompter & Echoes Our own thoughts defile us!

Peter Lord, purify our hearts!