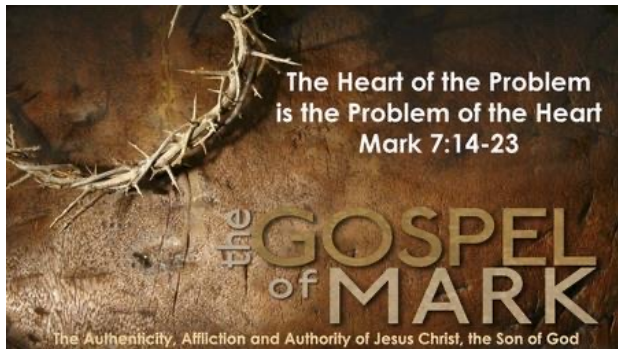




St Matthew's
Holland Park
Weekly Bulletin 1st
September 2024

Anglican
Church Southern Queensland

Happy Father's Day to all the Dads from all of us at St Matts!



*This week's Revd. Morris' message: **Is it time for a heart check -up?***

In today's Gospel, Jesus is confronted by a legalistic challenge from some Jewish religious leaders who came to 'investigate Him'. Their challenge... **Why don't your followers obey the Jewish Traditions [and do all of the 'right things']?**

Jesus responded by turning this challenge on its head.. **and investigated them!**

In essence, Jesus is saying if your *religion or faith* is based simply upon whether you are obeying the rules of your hallowed 'Tradition' and ensuring that your acts are as prescribed, **watch out! Firstly**, seek to deepen your heart relationship with God and grow in His love .. otherwise, you risk becoming a *hypocrite* [literally, an 'actors mask' meaning a person who is pretending to be someone they aren't]. Accordingly, in your inauthenticity, *your heart can move far from His heart*. **Secondly**, make sure that you are following God's will, promptings and 'rules' ... and not someone else's or your own.

If we had met the Pharisees and teachers of the Law who challenged Jesus, I'm fairly sure that we would most probably categorise them as '*righteous men*' [and they were men only] who sought to live exemplary lives that complied with their understanding of God's laws as contained in the Torah [literally '*The Instruction*' or God's laws as contained in the first 5 books of the Old Testament]. In order to ensure that these laws would not be broken, the Torah was sometimes supplemented by a range of stricter rules and laws in order to '*hedge the Torah*' , known as 'Chumra'. Over time they may become well established 'Minhag' - literally meaning 'Tradition']. The aim was to ensure '*Torah compliance*' if you only but followed these extra stricter laws.

So what does this all mean for us today?

Our pious, and impious, acts may be driven by a range of other considerations. For example, they could be driven by our pride, seeking power and ego aggrandisement, a need to self promote, a wish to 'fit in' and be accepted or to seek 'success' (however defined) so as to cover over feelings of inadequacy and lack of self esteem and, of course, there may be many other drivers at work.

Jesus calls us to **examine these underlying drivers and motives** for our actions, service and ministries .. and then He poses some probing questions:

What are we really seeking in our heart as the outcomes from our actions? Or to put it in other words ... what are our true 'heart's desires'?

Are our hearts 'right with God' at the moment?

Are our goals and actions sublimated to the One Sole Desire to seeking His Will and Glory? .. rather than our own?

When we 'follow the rules' do we end up acting towards ourselves and others in judgement ? ... or in Love? .. Do we try to see ourselves and others as God sees us and them?

I wonder if any of our habits or life patterns may be mere 'Chumra' .. that could hinder us from following our own unique Divine call to Love God, ourselves and others?

*I wonder what your heart check up may reveal? **Gospel reading: Mark 7:1-8; 14-23.***

Some resources to dig deeper: <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/ordinary-22-2/commentary-on-mark-7-1-8-14-15-21-23-4> ; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chumra_\(Judaism\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chumra_(Judaism)); <https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/artboards/theladyandtheunicorn/the-tapestries/item/jnw0h4/>; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/wordplay/hypocrite-meaning-origin#:~:text=The word hypocrite ultimately came,sense when you know that>

Upcoming Parish Activities: Midweek service : Wednesday 10:30 a.m; Regis Service @11:30; Every Sunday Guitars and Ukulele lessons at 3 p.m; Bible Study Wednesday at 7 pm and Friday at 10:30 am; Mens Breakfast: Thursday 7 am; Op Shop Mega Sale Saturday 7th September 8am to 1 p.m [set up 3/9 and pack down 10/9 - Men needed to assist .. see Patricia]

Next weeks readings: Proverbs 22: 1+2; 8+9; 22+23; Ps 125; James 2:1-17; Mark 7:24-37

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Bank Details: Holland Park Anglican Church Anfin BSB 704 901; Acct: 00000760.

Parish website : <https://www.stmatthewshollandpark.com/>

Parish Private Facebook site : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/292308270851142> ; **Public**

Site: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556418523933> ; **Tipper's Treasure's**

Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559040358754>

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY:

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Turrbal and Jagera Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather today. We acknowledge their continued spiritual connection to country and surrounding land, sky and water. We pay our respect to their Elders, past present and emerging and pray that we may continue to learn from and nurture one another in the spirit of Reconciliation.

