

Matthew 15:1-20

v1 – Pharisees	(proper noun)	members of a Jewish religious sect who emphasised strict obedience to the law and to tradition.
v1 – teachers of the law	(proper noun)	also known as scribes. Teachers of the law were people in the first century whose job it was to make copies of God's law and to teach it to God's people, the Jews. The elders, chief priests and teachers of the law formed the Sanhedrin (the Jewish ruling council) at the time of Jesus.
v1 – Jerusalem	(proper noun)	the capital of Israel
v2 – disciples	(noun)	followers of Jesus who lived and travelled with him and learned from him
v2 – traditions	(noun)	customs or practices that have existed for a long time
v3 – command	(noun)	an instruction that must be obeyed
v3 – for the sake of	(phrase)	for the benefit of
v4 – curses	(verb)	calls on God to harm someone
v5 – devoted	(adjective)	set apart for a particular use
v6 – nullify	(verb)	cancel out; make something to have no effect
v7 – hypocrites	(noun)	people who pretend to be one thing to others, but are really something else
v7 – Isaiah	(proper noun)	a prophet from the 8 th century BC
v7 – prophesied	(verb)	received a message from God and passed it on to God's people
v8 – with their lips	(expression)	with their words
v9 – in vain	(phrase)	unsuccessfully
v11 – unclean	(adjective)	ceremonially unclean; unacceptable to God
v12 – offended	(adjective)	angry and upset because you think you have been insulted
v13 – roots	(noun)	the part of a plant that is under the ground



v14 – blind	(adjective)	unable to see
v14 – pit	(noun)	a deep hole in the ground
v15 – parable	(noun)	a story from everyday life that also has a deeper spiritual meaning
v16 – dull	(adjective)	slow to understand
v19 – evil	(adjective)	against God
v19 – adultery	(noun)	having sex with someone who is not your husband/wife
v19 – sexual immorality	(noun)	any use of sex outside of marriage
v19 – theft	(noun)	the crime of stealing
v19 – false testimony	(noun)	telling lies when you give a formal statement about a situation you saw
v19 – slander	(noun)	telling lies about someone to ruin their reputation

Matthew 15:1-20 (New International Reader's Version)

¹Some Pharisees and some teachers of the law came from Jerusalem to see Jesus. They asked, ²"Why don't your disciples obey what the elders teach? Your disciples don't wash their hands before they eat!"

³Jesus replied, "And why don't you obey God's command? You would rather follow your own teachings! ⁴God said, 'Honor your father and mother.' He also said, 'Anyone who asks for bad things to happen to their father or mother must be put to death.' ⁵But suppose people have something that might be used to help their parents. You allow them to say it is instead 'a gift set apart for God.' ⁶So they do not need to honor their father or mother with their gift. You make the word of God useless in order to follow your own teachings. ⁷You pretenders! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you. He said,

⁸" 'These people honor me by what they say.
But their hearts are far away from me.

⁹Their worship doesn't mean anything to me.
They teach nothing but human rules.' "

¹⁰Jesus called the crowd to him. He said, "Listen and understand. ¹¹What goes into someone's mouth does not make them 'unclean.' It's what comes out of their mouth that makes them 'unclean.' "

¹²Then the disciples came to him. They asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees were angry when they heard this?"

¹³Jesus replied, "They are plants that my Father in heaven has not planted. They will be pulled up by the roots. ¹⁴Leave the Pharisees. They are blind guides. If one blind person leads another blind person, both of them will fall into a pit."

¹⁵Peter said, "Explain this to us."

¹⁶"Don't you understand yet?" Jesus asked them. ¹⁷"Don't you see? Everything that enters the mouth goes into the stomach. Then it goes out of the body. ¹⁸But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart. Those are the things that make someone 'unclean.' ¹⁹Evil thoughts come out of a person's heart. So do murder, adultery, and other sexual sins. And so do stealing, false witness, and telling lies about others. ²⁰Those are the things that make you 'unclean.' But eating without washing your hands does not make you 'unclean.' "