



Posted on August 11, 2018  
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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for Sunday, September 2, 2018

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year B

**Scripture:** [Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23](#) [ **Summary:** *Filling Up On God's Love* ]

### Supplies Needed:

- An EMPTY smooth, clear plastic water bottle (like a 12 oz one from the grocery store works -- but you'll want to remove the label)
- A pitcher with water that you will pour into the empty bottle
- Some sort of larger container to catch whatever water spills when pouring
- OR—
- A funnel and a towel to assist with the pouring.

### ASK (a.k.a *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- Can you tell me what this is? [*Hold up empty water bottle*]
- That's right, it *is* a bottle.
- Can you tell me what is in it? (Nothing! Air!)
- For those of you who said or thought "Air" – you are correct!
- Which is why, when I point this bottle at someone and then squeeze the bottle, you can feel the air coming out of the bottle.
- [ "*squirt*" air on to some of the students ]
- The reason you feel air coming out of the bottle is because that's what the bottle is filled with.
- [ *start filling bottle with water* ] So what do you think will happen if I fill the bottle with water and then squeeze the bottle at someone – what do you think will come out of the bottle, then? (Water!)
- You are right! Does anyone need me to prove this to them? [ *Though the temptation might be present – don't do it!!!!* ]

- [ *Put cap on bottle and put everything behind you to lessen any distraction* ]

## **TELL** (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- What I just showed you is a lot like what the Pharisees and Jesus are talking about in today's scripture story -- they are talking about this idea that whatever fills you is what then comes out of you.
- The story starts out with the Pharisees, who are the religious leaders in Jesus' time and place, scolding Jesus because his disciples are eating unwashed food.
- The Pharisees are concerned that if a person eats a lot of unwashed and unclean things, then they'd be FILLED UP with unclean food and then only unclean actions, like lying and cheating, would come out of that person.
- But Jesus disagrees with part of what the Pharisees' are saying.
- Jesus tells the Pharisees that eating clean foods does NOT stop people from doing unclean things, like lying, stealing and cheating.
- Jesus then says that people lie, steal, and cheat not because of what they eat, but because their hearts are "far from [God]."

## **SHARE the Good News** (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- It *is* true that filling our bodies with healthy food helps our bodies to be healthier.
- But it is *also* true that filling our **hearts and minds** with God's Holy Spirit and love helps our hearts be loving and our minds be just.
- And it is this understanding that Jesus is teaching the Pharisees in today's scripture story
- Jesus is saying our hearts are meant to be filled up with and overflow with God's Holy spirit and perfect love.
- And, when we're overflowing with God's perfect love, then that is what we have to share with others.
- Just like with the bottle – once I filled it up with water, water is what came out of the bottle, right?
- Which is also exactly what we see happen with Jesus – we see him fill up with God's love and then he shares God's love.
- The same is true for us. When we fill up with God's love, that's what we then have to share with others..
- That's the good news for today. Let's pray.

### **CLOSING Prayer**

**Dear God,**

**Dear God,**

**Thank you for Jesus...**

**Thank you for Jesus...**

**...who teaches us...**

**...who teaches us...**

**...how to fill up our hearts with your love...**

**...how to fill up our hearts with your love...**

**...and then share your love with others.**

**...and then share your love with others.**

**Thank you and amen**