

# Where's Your Chair?

Mark 7 1-13



‘Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, or who can rise up in his holy place?’  
Those who have clean hands and a pure heart.  
Psalm 24:4

## **Praising:**

Jesus calls us here to meet him as, through word and song and prayer, we affirm God’s promised presence where his people live and care.

Praise the God who keeps his promise;  
praise the Son who calls us friends;  
praise the Spirit who, among us, to our hopes and fears attends.

## **Reading:**

Mark 7:1-13  
Jesus challenges religious hypocrisy

Whereas the common people were moved by elemental, physical needs and Jesus in turn was moved to respond to those, the Jewish religious leaders are

concerned with rules, regulations and details of ritual. It begins with the Pharisees and scribes hauling Jesus over the coals. It ends with Jesus fearlessly turning the tables on them. They want to know why the disciples don’t wash their hands in accordance with the law. In reply, Jesus condemns their double standards with words from the prophet Isaiah. He accuses them of undermining the fifth commandment to honour their father and mother by their strict application of an obscure scribal law relating to ‘corban’ (whereby things were declared unclean). For Jesus, this is only one example where the divine demands of love are displaced by the human demands of religious box-ticking.

## **Listening:**

## **Praying:**

Save us Lord from any tendency to put religion before love

- lead us through from the formalities of faith to the chaos of compassion and caring
- bring us out from the comfort of church tradition to the uncertainty of Christian witness
- lift us up from the niceties of doctrine to the desperate human yearnings all around us

Father: I’ll suffer every false slur or empty accusation for following and worshipping Christ, but save me from any charge, real or imagined, that I would fail to exhibit his love. Amen

## **Doing:**

Tuesday, 10 November 2015