

# Clean or Unclean?

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON



**Theme:** Our relationship with God is a matter of the heart.

**Scripture:** Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

**Memory Verse:** "Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them." Mark 7:15

**Get Ready:** Click [here](#) to get your complete supply list for this lesson.

## The Children's Sermon

### You'll Need:

- Antibacterial wipes
- Hand sanitizer

### Do This:

**SAY:** People today are very concerned about having clean hands. Many people carry packages of wipes (show wipes) or hand sanitizer (show hand sanitizer).

**Keeping your hands clean is good, right?** (Invite kids to quickly clean their hands using one of the products.)

**The Bible tells about some Pharisees who came to Jesus. They liked to be bossy about the rules. "We've noticed that some of your disciples are eating without washing their hands," they told Jesus. "Why don't they follow our tradition of washing their hands before they eat?"**

**"You bunch of phonies!" Jesus responded. "Isaiah must have been talking about you when he said, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'"**

**Then Jesus called the people to gather around. "All of you listen. It's not what goes into your body that makes you unclean, it is the bad words that come out of your mouth. Out of your hearts come evil thoughts, greed, cheating, and envy. This is what makes you unclean."**

**The Pharisees were more worried about having clean hands than they were about having a clean heart. Are we any different? We work hard to keep our hands clean, but do we guard our hearts against evil thoughts? What kinds of books do we read? What kinds of TV shows and movies do we watch? What kind of language comes out of our mouth?**

**Clean hands or a clean heart, which is more important?**

**PRAY:** God, forgive us for our unclean thoughts. Create in us clean hearts to honor You. In Jesus' name, amen.

## **Bible Memory Verse**

**"Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them."**

**Mark 7:15**

### **You'll Need:**

- **Bibles - one per child**
- **Non-latex disposable gloves**

- **Paper**
- **Scissors**
- **A marker**

**Get Ready:** Before class, cut several slips of paper and write a word or phrase from today's memory verse on each one. Put each slip of paper into a disposable glove, inflate the gloves, and tie them closed. Mix them up on the floor.

### **Do This:**

Lead kids in these steps:

- Invite kids to open their Bibles to Mark 7:15.
- Invite several kids to read aloud the verse.
- Explain to kids that without using their Bibles, they'll pop the gloves and put the slips of paper inside in order of the memory verse.
- Once the kids have the verse in order, take away one slip at a time as the class continues to say the verse.

**SAY:** Today we're going to learn that the Pharisees were all super concerned with dirty hands, but Jesus had a big lesson for them about their hearts. Jesus teaches the disciples that our relationship with God is a matter of the heart.

### **Virtual Lesson Tip**

*You can do this activity with the entire family.*

## **Bible Interactive Experience**

### **You'll Need:**

- **Bibles - one per child**

- **[“Clean or Unclean Heart”](#) handout - one per child**
- **Pens - one per child**

## **Do This:**

- Invite kids to open their Bibles to Mark 7.
- Give each child a handout and a pen.
- Explain that you’re going to read today’s passage and kids will need to listen carefully for things that represent a clean heart and an unclean heart, then write or draw those things in the appropriate column on their handout.
- Slowly read aloud Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23, pausing to allow kids time to write or draw on their handouts.
- Allow kids to read the passage again on their own and add any clean or unclean actions they missed.

## **ASK:**

- **What unclean things did you notice that kids like you sometimes struggle with?**
- **What meant the most to you from today’s passage?**

## Deep Clean

### **You’ll Need:**

- **[“Deep Clean”](#) video**
- **Something to play the video**

### **Do This:**

Show them the video.

**ASK:**

- What stood out to you about what Garrett and his dad talked about?
- What might you do this week to keep your heart clean?

## Heart Treats

**You'll Need:**

- Paper plates - one per child
- Napkins - one per child
- Homemade, gooey Rice Crispy treats - one per child
- Gel icing

**Get Ready:** Before class, bake some extra-gooey and moldable Rice Crispy treats.

**Do This:**

Follow these steps for the "Heart Treats" snack:

- Give each child a paper plate, a napkin, and a Rice Crispy treat.
- Invite kids to mold their Rice Crispy treats into the shape of a heart.
- Instruct kids to use the gel icing to write CLEAN HEART on their treats.
- Enjoy.

**SAY:** Our relationship with God is a matter of the heart. We can have clean hands, but what matters most to God is our hearts.

# Will You Eat It?

## You'll Need:

- **Old and new paper bags**
- **Different snacks like:**
  - **Popcorn**
  - **Baby food**
  - **Black licorice**
  - **Potted meat**
  - **Canned sardines**
  - **Chips**
  - **Spam meat product**
  - **Starburst candies**
- **Disposable silverware**
- **Antibacterial wipes**

**Get Ready:** Place the “good” snacks in old, gross bags and “gross” food in new, clean paper bags. Make sure some bags look “dirty.”

## Do This:

To play the “Will you eat it?” game, have kids follow these steps:

- Divide the class into two teams.
- The first person from each team has to pick a bag and attempt to eat whatever is inside. If they eat it, they get a point. If they do not eat it, they do not get a point.
- The team with the most points wins.

**ASK:**

- **What did you notice about what was inside the nice, new bags? The old, gross-looking bags?**
- **Tell about some ways people worry more about their outside appearance than what's in their heart.**

**SAY:** This was a fun way to see that what's on the outside doesn't always match what's inside. Jesus said, "Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them." It's important for us to really look at what is coming out of us and if it helps people see Jesus.

## Paper Lanterns

### You'll Need:

- **Brightly colored paper**
- **["Paper Lanterns"](#) handout - one per child**
- **Markers**
- **Scissors - one per child**
- **A stapler**

**Get Ready:** Before class, print the "Paper Lanterns" handout on brightly colored paper.

### Do This:

Follow these steps to make the "Paper Lanterns" craft:

- Give each child a "Paper Lanterns" handout.
- Invite kids to write words in between the lines on the handout that represent a clean heart, such as: honest, patient, kind, caring, courteous, gentle, etc.

- Instruct kids to fold the handout in half, longways. Then cut along each of the dotted lines from the fold. (Be sure to not cut all the way to the edge of the paper).
- Have kids cut all the way through the solid black line. (This will become the handle for their lantern.)
- Open the page back up and connect the two short ends of the handout.
- Help kids staple the lantern in place, securing it at the top and bottom.
- Finish by stapling the remaining strip of colored paper to the top of the lantern to create a handle.

### **ASK:**

- **Tell about someone in your life who is a great example of having a clean heart.**
- **If you think about your life as the lantern, what kinds of things do you think shine through for others to see?**

**SAY:** Take your lanterns home to remind you what is most important for a clean heart and life.

### **Virtual Lesson Tip**

*Have kids hold up and share their lanterns with the class.*

## **Heart Prayers**

### **You'll Need:**

- **Construction paper**
- **Pens - one per child**
- **Scissors**



**Get Ready:** Before class, cut large hearts out of construction paper, one for each child.

### **Do This:**

- Give each child a heart and a pen.
- Invite them to write an honest prayer to God about their heart.

**PRAY:** Dear God, sometimes we're like the Pharisees. We can become more concerned about going through the motions than what is coming out of our lives. We ask You to search our hearts and help us have pure hearts in Your sight. In Jesus' name, amen.

## Time to Praise God

### **You'll Need:**

- Song: "Cleanse Me"  
[Words and Music](#)  
[Accompaniment Track](#)
- Song: "Into My Heart"  
[Words and Music](#)  
[Accompaniment Track](#)

**SAY:** Today we learned that a clean heart is more important than clean hands. As we worship God through song, let's sing these words as a prayer. May God create in us clean hearts.

Lead children in singing "Cleanse Me" and "Into My Heart."

If You Have Extra Time...

Use these activity sheets to fill in any time and keep kids learning.

- [Coloring page](#)
- [Crossword](#)
- [Decoder](#)
- [Fill in the Blank](#)
- [Word Search](#)

## Complete Supply List:

- [Antibacterial wipes](#)
- [Hand sanitizer](#)
- Bibles - one per child
- [Non-latex disposable gloves](#)
- Paper
- Scissors
- Markers
- "Clean or Unclean Heart" handout - one per child
- Pens - one per child

- “Deep Clean” video
- Something to play the video
- [Paper plates](#) - one per child
- [Napkins](#) - one per child
- Homemade, gooey Rice Crispy treats - one per child
- Gel icing
- Old and new paper bags
- Different snacks like:
  - Popcorn
  - Baby food
  - Black licorice
  - Potted meat
  - Canned sardines
  - Chips
  - Spam meat product
  - Starburst candies
- Disposable silverware
- Brightly colored paper
- “Paper Lanterns” handout - one per child
- A stapler
- Construction paper

[Back to the top](#)

---

# Clean or Unclean?

AT HOME LESSON

**Theme:** Our relationship with God is a matter of the heart.

**Scripture:** Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

**Get Ready:** Click [here](#) to get your complete supply list for this lesson.

## The Children's Sermon

### You'll Need:

- Antibacterial wipes
- Hand sanitizer

### Do This:

**SAY:** People today are very concerned about having clean hands. Many people carry packages of wipes (show wipes) or hand sanitizer (show hand sanitizer).

**Keeping your hands clean is good, right?** (Invite kids to quickly clean their hands using one of the products.)

**The Bible tells about some Pharisees who came to Jesus. They were very bossy about the rules. "We've noticed that some of your disciples are eating without washing their hands," they told Jesus. "Why don't they follow our tradition of washing their hands before they eat?"**

**"You bunch of phonies!" Jesus responded. "Isaiah must have been talking about you when he said, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'"**

**Then Jesus called the people to gather around. "All of you listen. It's not what goes into your body that makes you unclean, it is the bad words that come out of your**

mouth. Out of your hearts come evil thoughts, greed, cheating, and envy. This is what makes you unclean."

The Pharisees were more worried about having clean hands than they were about having a clean heart. Are we any different? We work hard to keep our hands clean, but do we guard our hearts against evil thoughts? What kinds of books do we read? What kinds of TV shows and movies do we watch? What kind of language comes out of our mouth?

Clean hands or a clean heart, which is more important?

**PRAY:** God, forgive us for our unclean thoughts. Create in us clean hearts to honor You. In Jesus' name, amen.

## Deep Clean

### You'll Need:

- ["Deep Clean"](#) video
- Something to play the video

### Do This:

Show them the video.

### ASK:

- What stood out to you about what Garrett and his dad talked about?
- What might you do this week to keep your heart clean?

# Heart Cookies

## You'll Need:

- **Antibacterial wipes**
- **Paper plates - one per child**
- **Napkins - one per child**
- **Heart-shaped cookies - one per child**
- **Frosting**
- **Plastic knives - one per child**
- **Non-latex disposable gloves - one pair per child**
- **Sprinkles**

## Do This:

Follow these steps for the "Heart Cookies" snack:

- Have kids disinfect their hands with an antibacterial wipe.
- Give each child a pair of gloves to put on.
- Give each child a paper plate, a napkin, a plastic knife, and a heart cookie.
- Invite kids to use the frosting and sprinkles to decorate their heart cookie for someone else.
- When they've finished decorating, instruct kids to deliver the cookie to another person. Ensure every child gets a cookie to eat.
- Enjoy.

**SAY:** Our relationship with God is a matter of the heart. We can have clean hands, but what matters most to God is our hearts.

# Clean Jars

## You'll Need:

- [Clean or Unclean? How-to video](#)
- **Glass jars - one per child**
- **Colorful tissue paper**
- **Mod Podge**
- **Foam brushes - one per child**
- **Battery-powered tealight candles - one per child**
- **Pens - one per child**

**Get Ready:** Beforehand, tear up the colorful tissue paper into 1-2-inch scraps, and pile them in the center of the table.

## Do This:

Follow these steps to make the "Clean Jars" craft:

- Give each child a pen, and invite them to write words that represent a clean heart on the scraps of tissue paper, such as: honest, patient, kind, caring, courteous, gentle, etc.
- Invite kids to use their foam paint brushes to apply Mod Podge to the outside of their glass jars.
- Have kids place their tissue paper scraps on the glass jar.
- Add additional tissue paper to cover any gaps, and finish with another layer of Mod Podge on top of the tissue paper.
- Allow to dry.

- Turn on the tealight candles and place them in the jars.
- Turn off the overhead lights so kids can view their clean candles and notice how the words they wrote are illuminated.

**ASK:**

- **Tell about someone in your life who is a great example of a clean heart.**
- **If you think about your life as the jar, what kinds of things do you think shine through for others to see?**

**SAY:** The light in your jar really shines through and shows what is most important for a clean heart and life.

## Complete Supply List:

- [Antibacterial wipes](#)
- [Hand sanitizer](#)
- "Deep Clean" video
- Something to play the video
- [Paper plates](#) - one per child
- [Napkins](#) - one per child
- Heart-shaped cookies - one per child
- Frosting
- Plastic knives - one per child
- [Non-latex disposable gloves](#) - one pair per child
- Sprinkles
- Glass jars - one per child
- Colorful tissue paper



- [Mod Podge](#)
- [Foam brushes](#) - one per child
- [Battery-powered tealight candles](#) - one per child
- Pens - one per child

[Back to the top](#)