I’m sorry to have to admit this, but sometimes I find a real disconnect between the readings set for a particular Sunday. It may be because I don’t look hard enough to see how the readings are linked, but I fear that on other occasions our liturgists who compile the readings have simply got it wrong. That said, today’s readings from James and Mark do fit together – at least I think so.

James, ever practical, contrasts that which comes down from heaven and is therefore good, with how we sometimes behave especially with a loose tongue. When we talk too much and listen too little, we communicate to others that we think our ideas are more important than theirs. James, in effect, suggest we should keep track on how much we talk and how much we listen. He then goes on to suggest (v.21) that we get rid of all that is wrong in our lives and humbly accept the salvation message ‘the word planted in you’ because it alone can save us.

Mark goes much further, quoting Jesus calling the Pharisees and teachers of the law as hypocrites, for ‘letting go of God’s commands and holding on to the traditions of men’ (v.6). Jesus goes on to say that what comes out of a person is what makes him unclean – and gives us a number of examples of this (v.20f)

It’s good, I think to be reminded of this truth at the end of this season (called ‘summer’?!). When not much is going on – if only to set us thinking, and prepare us for the new year when the pressures of life once again confront us. Each of us needs to decide where we stand in the eyes of God: to what extent we take Him at his word, or where we allow worldly standards to get in the way of His truth.

Francis
Collect
Almighty God, you search us and know us: may we rely on you in strength and rest on you in weakness, now and in all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Reading  Deuteronomy 4.1-2,6-9
So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you. You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!' For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children’s children.

Psalm  Psalm 15
O Lord, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill? Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from their heart; who do not slander with their tongue, and do no evil to their friends, nor take up a reproach against their neighbours; in whose eyes the wicked are despised, but who honour those who fear the Lord; who stand by their oath even to their hurt; who do not lend money at interest, and do not take a bribe against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be moved.

Reading  James 1.17-27
Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God’s righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act - they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Gospel  Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23
Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some
of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, ‘Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?’ He said to them, ‘Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.” You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’ Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.’ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’

Post Communion
God our creator, you feed your children with the true manna, the living bread from heaven: let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage until we come to that place where hunger and thirst are no more; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Pastoral Centre Café
The Café is open for Coffee and Cake on Wed and Sat from 10:00. Donations of homemade cakes are welcomed – please contact Revd Sarah.

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<th>SERVICES THIS WEEK</th>
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<td>Tues 31 Aug</td>
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<td>Thur 2 Sept</td>
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<td>14:00 Wedding</td>
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Sunday 5 September 2021
Trinity 14
Isaiah 35.4-7a Psalm 146
James 2.1-10,14-17 Mark 7.24-37

Festivals this week
| Mon 30 Aug | John Bunyan, Spiritual Writer 1688 (LF) |
| Tues 31 Aug | Aidan, Bishop of Lindisfarne, Missionary 651 (LF) |
| Wed 1 Sept | Giles of Provence, Hermit c.710 (C) |
| Thur 2 Sept | The Martyrs of Papua New Guinea, 1901 and 1942 (C) |
| Fri 3 Sept | Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, Teacher 604 (LF) |
| Sat 4 Sept | Birinus, Bishop of Dorchester (Oxon), Apostle of Wessex 650 (C) |

(F) Festival; (LF) Lesser Festival; (C) Commemoration

The Hangout
Youth Club at St Barnabas’ is back on Fridays 19:00-20:30 (from 3 Sept)
Years 7-11. Entry free.
Weekly during term time.
DIARY NOTES & NOTICES

Covid Precautions in Church
Following the lifting of Government restrictions and taking into consideration the need to continue to protect the vulnerable from Covid-19 and ensuring that people feel safe to attend church, the Clergy and Wardens have agreed that:

• The congregation are asked to continue to wear masks (if not exempt) and use hand sanitizer when entering and moving about the church.
• Masks may be removed during the service.
• At this time, due to the increase in Covid-19 cases locally, congregational singing will not start immediately, but will be kept under review.

St Nicholas’ Circle
Meets via Zoom on Wed 1 Sept at 20.00. Neil Sadler will talk on ‘A Policeman’s Lot in Sussex’.

Friday Lunches
Lunch in the Pastoral Centre at 12:30 on 3 Sept. Two courses and a drink £6.50. To help with catering please book your place at the Pastoral Centre (café open Wed and Sat) or via the Parish Office, by Wed 1 Sept. All welcome.

St Nicholas’ Julian Group
The St Nicholas’ Julian Group continues to meet on the second Wednesday of each month. Please join us for half an hour of silent prayer Wed 8 Sept at 12.30pm in the side chapel.

100 Club August Draw
£100 Bill Puttick (17)
£50 Sheila Dring (14)
£25 Viv Tillyer (11)
£25 Richard Sidaway (25)

Saturday Markets
The Saturday Market on 21 August in aid of St Barnabas’ Refurbishment raised £118.09. Thank you to our supporters. The next Market takes place on St Barnabas’ patio, 10.00-12.00, on Sat 11 Sept.

St Barnabas’ Julian Group
Julian Meeting at St Barnabas’ on Mon 13 Sept at 14:00 in the church. Old and new friends very welcome.

Magazine Deadline
The deadline for copy for the next Parish Magazine is Sun 12 Sept. Please send to the Office or Viv Tillyer.

CONTACTS

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