



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 2: Real Devotion

Suggested Week of Use: March 8, 2026

Core Passage: Matthew 15: 1-11, 16-20

News Story Summary

Global Handwashing Day has been celebrated every year since 2008. It began with 120 million children in seventy countries washing their hands with soap and water. This do-it-yourself vaccine remains the most effective public health strategy. In a recent Healthy Handwashing Survey, 93 percent of Americans value the practice, but only 81 percent of respondents said they washed their hands regularly after using a public restroom. In addition, 45 percent said they only rinsed their hands with water. These statistics are even more troublesome when one considers that 80 percent of common infectious diseases spread through the hands. This includes the Norovirus, which can only be defended by washing hands with soap and water.

For more about this story, search “Global Handwashing Day.”

Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, ask: *What are some easy ways to protect your health?* Discuss responses. Note that while things like getting annual vaccinations and eating well are great steps, washing our hands may be the most basic step we can take toward staying healthy. Share the information related to Global Handwashing Day. Ask: *Which is more important, the condition of our hands or the posture of our hearts?* Point out that today’s session focuses on a dispute between Jesus and some Jewish leaders. Share that they were concerned with clean hands while Jesus focused on clean hearts. Challenge adults to evaluate and adjust their focus to align with the perspective of Jesus as they study these verses.

Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, remind the group about the statistics from Global Handwashing Day. Ask: *If 93 percent of Americans say they value handwashing, why do only 81 percent of people practice it? Why do 45 percent do it halfway?* Guide the group to understand that God’s commands should never be replaced with our own opinions, traditions, or agendas. Emphasize that believers need to have their hearts renewed and to make that transformation evident in words and actions. Pray for adults to seek God’s Word and God’s approval instead of other influences in their lives.