

# THE PRESENT WORD

ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

W O R S H I P   L E A F L E T S

## JESUS EATS WITH A PHARISEE

\*Responses are in **bold**.

SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

LESSON 1

### OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 118:24

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

### HYMN

This is the day the Lord hath made;  
the hours are all God's own.  
Let heaven rejoice; let earth be glad,  
and praise surround the throne.

"This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made" (*GtG*, #681)

Blest be the Lord, who comes in power  
with messages of grace,  
who comes in this accepted hour  
to save our sinful race.

### SCRIPTURE

Luke 11:37–44

**11:37** While he was speaking, a Pharisee invited him to dine with him, so he went in and took his place at the table. <sup>38</sup>The Pharisee was amazed to see that he did not first wash before dinner. <sup>39</sup>Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. <sup>40</sup>You fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? <sup>41</sup>So give as alms those things that are within and then everything will be clean for you.

<sup>42</sup>"But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and herbs of all kinds and neglect justice and the love of God; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others. <sup>43</sup>Woe to you Pharisees! For you love to have the seat of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces. <sup>44</sup>Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves on which people unknowingly walk."

### BIBLE STUDY

To be led using the Participant's Book, p. 2, and Leader's Guide, p. 3.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Gracious God,  
Like the Pharisees, we sometimes congratulate ourselves  
on meeting the letter of the law,  
while willfully ignoring the Spirit that animates and inspires it.  
In one hand, we hold a pinch of cumin,  
some sprigs of mint, and a bit of crushed dill.  
In the other hand, all the weighty matters of the law:  
Justice for vulnerable people denied power.  
Inequalities that imprison others in systems of poverty and need.  
Indifference to policies that ignore the lack of access to health and well-being.  
Forgive our attention to issues of outward appearance  
even as we ignore our inward failings.  
Open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts, we pray.  
Move us past the carefully measured tithes of our smallest platitudes.  
Galvanize us to heap up our offerings with our  
best, most creative, most generous efforts to join in God's work.  
In the name of Jesus, we pray.<sup>1</sup>

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Pray the Lord's Prayer found on page iii.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go forth, weighing your commitment to the work  
for peace and justice,  
and offering them to the Holy One  
with a full measure of love.

1. Adapted from "Tithes for Equality," by Richard Williams, in *Sustainable Development Goals: Study and Devotional Guide* (New York: Presbyterian Ministry at the U.N., 2019), 33.