

## CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER BIBLE READING DEVOTIONAL

Scripture:	<b>Matthew 15</b>	Title:	<b>The Heart of the Matter</b>
Author	Ps Rebecca Yong		
Summary of Chapter	Matthew chapter 15 concludes the narrative about Jesus' ministry in Galilee over four accounts: A discourse on defilement, exorcism over a Canaanite woman's daughter, the healing of many on a mountain and the feeding of four thousand.		
Key Verse(s) NLT	<p><b>How does it speak to me?</b></p> <p>17 "Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. 18 But the words you speak come from the heart—that's what defiles you. 19 For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. 20 These are what defile you. Eating with unwashed hands will never defile you."</p> <p>The Pharisees and teachers of the Law were upset with Jesus' disciples for not honoring the tradition of ceremonial hand washing before they eat and questioned Jesus on this. Jesus took the opportunity to address the hypocrisy of these leaders of their legalistic fixation on keeping these man-made external rituals while missing the point of focusing on their inner spirituality. Jesus concludes the conversation by saying that eating with unwashed hands does not make a man unclean, but what comes out from the heart. Someone once said that the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart.</p> <p>I remembered one conversation I had with my leader, I started to share my disagreement with him in a heated manner, feeling justified about what I said and that my leader was wrong. After I left that meeting, the Lord very swiftly convicted my heart that I had spoken out of anger. The Holy Spirit showed me that my heated conversation with my leader was an accumulation of frustration towards him in my heart that wasn't resolved with God or him. I had continued to serve in church actively like I was okay even though my heart was not right. Eventually what came out of my heart that day was unclean. The Lord led me to approach my leader to apologize to him for the manner I'd spoken to him which I did.</p>		

### APPLICATION REFLECTIONS

Adult:	What has your speech been revealing about the condition of your heart? Will you start by allowing God to check your heart condition every day in your time alone with Him?
Youth:	What words do you often use? Coarse language, cynical remarks, demeaning speech, gossip, dirty jokes, etc. What does your speech reveal about the condition of your heart? Will you ask God to search your heart daily to get right with Him?
Child:	What do you learn about the 'words we speak, (v18.)', where do they come from? Why do we say mean and unpleasant words sometimes? Ask God to search your heart and change it so that you can speak encouraging words to

### PRAYER

Praying Scripture:	Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for reminding us that the heart of the matter is really a matter of the heart. Help us to get our hearts right before you daily so that our outward speech and behavior will be an overflow and true reflection of our inward spirituality. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.
Thanksgiving Prayer:	I/We thank You for _____ (e.g. delicious food we ate, places we went, prayer that was answered, etc)
Intercessory Prayer:	I/We want to pray for _____ (e.g. healing of sickness, family members, work or study, leaders, nation, etc)
Salvation Prayer:	I/We pray for the salvation of my/our unsaved loved ones _____ (add one name per day). In Jesus' Name I/we pray. Amen.