

The Gospel According to Mark

Truth or Tradition

Mark 7:1-13



6/26/2022 AM

Introduction:

I. THE CRITICS QUESTION THE DISCIPLES' STANDARDS (vs. 1-5)

A. The Lawyers' Dispute (vs. 1-2)

"The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem..."

"and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed."

B. The Law's Demands (vs. 3-4)

"(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; ⁴and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves..."

"and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.)"

C. The Lord's Disciples (vs. 5)

"The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, 'Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?' "

II. CHRIST CONFRONTS THE HYPOCRITES' TRADITION (vs. 6-13)

A. He Appeals to Isaiah (vs. 6-8)

"And He said to them, 'Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written...' "

"THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN."

"Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men."

Note the progression: neglecting (vs. 8) → setting aside (vs. 9) → invalidating (vs. 13)

B. He Appeals to Moses (vs. 9-12)

“He was also saying to them, ‘You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.’ ”

“For Moses said, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER; and, HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER, IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH”

“but you say, ‘If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban’ (that is to say, given to God)”

“you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother”

C. He Denounces Their System (vs. 13)

“thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.”

Man’s Traditions

outward forms
bondage
trifling rules
outward piety
neglect and replacement of the Word

God’s Truth

inward faith
liberty
fundamental principles
true inward holiness
exalts the Word of God

Conclusion:

- 1) “We must have a care that we never allow rules and regulations to paralyze the claims of charity and love.”
– William Barclay
- 2) “The bowed head and the bended knee, the serious face and the rigid posture, the regular response and the formal amen, all these together do not make up a spiritual worshiper. The eyes of God look further and deeper.” – J.C. Ryle
- 3) “Although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”
– Paul (Philippians 3:4-11)

Food for Thought:

- 1) What extra-biblical traditions do we have? What dangers do we face with them?
- 2) Why would the scribes and Pharisees come all the way from Jerusalem to observe Jesus and His disciples?
- 3) How would you describe “vain worship”?
- 4) What commandments of Scripture might we be guilty of “setting aside” or otherwise invalidating?