

# The Gospel of Mark

Part 11: Holding on to Traditions

Mark 7:1-13 • Pastor Dean Lancaster • October 21, 2018

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This passage contains a humbling picture of what human nature is capable of doing to the Gospel.

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees by noting three warnings his followers must heed.

## **Warning #1: Don't confuse your Christianity with trifles.** (vv. 1-5)

This is the idea of majoring on minor issues.

We have to be very alert so we do not allow ourselves to slip into a "form of godliness", that is nothing more than empty, trivial preferences.

Human values teach us the internal is less important than the external.

Grace lets us remember that Jesus fulfilled the law, and while the law is still valuable as a reminder of how far we fall short, it can never save us.

**Romans 8:3** For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son

## **Warning #2: Don't counterfeit your Christianity with hypocrisy.** (vv. 6-7)

Hypocrisy comes when we fall away from the study of God's word and replace it with human wisdom.

Our hearts are who we really are, everything else about us are manifestations of our hearts.

Human values teach us what we do with our hearts is less important than what we do with our bodies.

Grace reminds us that Jesus is interested in why we obey, as much as he is that we obey.

**John 14:15, 24** "If you love me, keep my commands. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

## **Warning #3: Don't corrupt your Christianity with tradition.** (vv.8-13)

Traditions aren't bad things, unless we make them the main thing.

The failings of the Pharisees:

The first step of the Pharisees, was to add their traditions to the Scriptures.

The second was to give their traditions equal authority to the Scriptures.

The last was to honor their traditions above the Scriptures.

Humans tend to value the less important over the most important.

Grace reminds us that God's word is a delight to the followers of Jesus, not a book of rules that burden us.

**Psalm 119:105** Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

## **Take this with you...**

What God commands is necessary for salvation.

What man commands is not.

What man devises may be useful for the times; but salvation does not hinge on obedience to it.

Draw a bright line of distinction between those things which have been devised by mankind, and those which are plainly commanded in God's word.