

INTRODUCTION

1. Traditions are

- a) A part of culture
- b) A part of life

2. Positive Influence

- a) Traditions can provide stability
- b) It can be enriching and uplifting

3. Negative Influence

- a) It can have negative impact
- b) When it is used wrongly it can cause misunderstanding and misery

THE TRADITION OF RITUAL HAND-WASHING

¹Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying,

²“Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.”

Matthew 15:1-2

1. The scribes and Pharisees

- a) They saw themselves as custodians of their religion
- b) They had many traditions that were enforced

2. The tradition of the elders

- a) These traditions did not originate from the Scriptures
- b) They came from “the elders”

3. They had strict rules about hand-washing

- a) This is not a reference of hand hygiene
- b) This is a reference to a ritual of hand-washing before a meal

4. The charge of the scribes and Pharisees

- a) They accused the Disciples of breaking traditional rules
- b) They were fault-finding
- c) It was tantamount to sinning against the LORD if hand-washing was not observed strictly

THE DEFENCE OF THE LORD JESUS

³ *He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?"*

⁴ *For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'*

⁵ *But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God"—*

⁶ *then he need not honour his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.*

Matthew 15:3-6

1. The matter of "Transgression"

- a) The scribes and Pharisees had passed judgment
 - i) On the Disciples directly
 - ii) On the Lord Jesus indirectly
- b) The accusation is that of "transgression"
 - i) Breaking of the commandments
 - ii) But whose commandments?

2. The guilt of the scribes and Pharisees

- a) They were guilty of transgressing God's commandments
- b) Human traditions had supplanted God's commandments

3. God's laws

- a) To honour father and mother
- b) To never curse father and mother

4. Where the tradition of the elders contradicts the Law of God

- a) To offer "a gift to God"
- b) To bypass meeting the needs of parents
- c) This is great transgression!

OUR CHALLENGE

- 1. To appreciate the worth of some traditions
- 2. But all traditions must be evaluated against the Law of God
- 3. To make sure that no tradition must be in conflict with the Law of God