

Mark 7:1-13

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[0:00] Reminder. Take your Bible and go with me to the Gospel according to Mark! Mark chapter 7 is where we will be at this morning. We've made our way thus far, so we're in Mark chapter 7. We'll be in verses 1 through 13.

Mark chapter 7, verses 1 through 13. It is good to be able to get back into some normalcy of a routine.

I know it will be good for us. We've had a lot going on. There's a lot of things that are happening in and around the church, and I'll express again my appreciation for the work that has been done to make sure that we can kind of get back in that normal routine.

But we will gather together this Wednesday night again for a meal and go right into our Bible studies and business meeting things. But so appreciative of the work that has been done to get us back to where we can be a little bit more normal.

We missed you if you weren't with us last week. We understand it was an inconvenience, but it was a joy to be gathered together. If you're physically able, let's stand together as we read the Word of God found in Mark chapter 7, starting in verse 1.

[1:01] And we'll read down to verse 13, and then we will pray. The Word of God says, 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.

For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders. And when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves.

And there are many other things which they received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots. 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? 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. He was also saying to them, You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.

[2:17] For Moses says, Honor your father and your mother, and he who speaks evil father or mother is to be put to death. But you say, If a man says to his father or mother, whatever I have that will 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.

Thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition, which you have handed down. And you do many things such as that. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you that we've been able to be encouraged by our fellowship with one another. Lord, we've heard testimony of how important that fellowship is. We thank you that we've been able to worship and song and be reminded of the rightful position, Lord Jesus, that you hold among us as our Messiah.

We thank you for the opportunity to give and to worship you through our giving to you and to the church. Father, we praise you that we now come to the portion where we read the word and we see the word.

And now we pray that you would speak to us from the word. May it be the word of God that penetrates our hearts and minds, not the thoughts or the opinion of man. And may the word of God do its work as you see fit for your glory and honor and yours alone.

[3 : 30] We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. As you see before me at the conclusion of our service, we will take the Lord's Supper together.

I am thankful for the group that put that together. Father, I'm thankful also for Jamie and P.J. Simmons that they led that sixth grade boys group. I didn't just let them do it on their own in case any of you were concerned.

They were back there and made sure that they did it. But they were also using it as a discipleship time. Because what better way to express the importance of communion in the Lord's Supper than to giving hands-on application and to be putting that together so that the boys would understand that that's not just juice in a cup or not just bread in a plate.

But to be able to express the importance of that. It is important that we tell our young people these things. That it is not just a tradition. It's not just something we do.

Even Jesus himself speaks to this reality as he is declaring to these people before them. If you have to have a title, it is the appeal and the danger of tradition.

[4 : 38] The appeal and danger of tradition. Now we have to be careful when we look at this. Because even Paul says in writing of his letters, I am glad to hear that you are keeping the traditions which I handed down to you.

So we need to say in the front that traditions are not necessarily bad. They can point to good things and they can even be beneficial.

But there is an appeal to tradition. There are dangers of traditions which we must be aware of. Not every tradition is evil. Not every tradition is wicked or has grand danger attributed to it.

We know that from the writings of Paul there are some God-given and God-ordained traditions. One of those traditions is the observation of the Lord's Supper. As a matter of fact, when Paul wrote that, he was writing to the church at Corinth.

Immediately before, he declared to them the weight of the taking of the Lord's Supper. But then he tells in 1 Corinthians chapter 11 that while they are maintaining the tradition which he has handed down to them, they need to be careful how they maintain that tradition because they were coming and doing it in an impure and unwise way.

[5 : 45] And therefore, he said, many of them were asleep. Now you say, well, people were falling asleep in church. No, they were dying. Many of them were dying because in their observation of their tradition, they were taking it in an unclean and unholy manner and therefore were invalidating their tradition.

So not every tradition is bad, but we need to be reminded of the reality that there is an appeal to them, but there is also a grand danger. Jesus here addresses that head on.

Now I understand, and I'm very wise in my conception of this. The longer I'm in pastoral ministry, many of you know this is my 20th year in pastoral ministry.

At about year 10, I would not have had the wisdom that I have now. At about year 10, I told your pastor's wife this morning in the pastor's office, I said, well, I feel like I'm going to get up and kick everyone in the shin and tell them to have a good day.

She said, well, that's great. Now at about year 10, I probably would have done that. Stood up and kicked you in the shin and said, now have a great day. I said, but in wisdom and understanding, I am not so unwise to know that we are standing in a church constructed in 1887, first service held in February 1888, that there are a grand amount of traditions, some of which have been wonderfully beneficial to the growth of the church.

[7 : 00] And there are traditions that really have resided not only within the walls of this building, but also in the building adjacent to it. We've just recently renovated the bathrooms, and some say, well, how old are they?

1994, right? The codes in 1994 are a little bit different than they are in 2024. And we know there are a lot of things that have taken place, both good and great, but we also need to also remind ourselves that maybe some of those traditions were just traditions.

And it is something that as a pastor and as a believer that I ask myself all the time, why am I doing what I am doing? Why am I a Southern Baptist pastor?

That's a question that's worth asking. He said, well, it's because that's what you've always been.

Many of you know that I have not always been Southern Baptist. I've not even always been Baptist. I wasn't even always a believer. Neither were you, if you're a believer. There were a time when you wasn't a believer. But why here? Why do Southern Baptists do what Southern Baptists do?

[8 : 08] That's a good question to ask. Because recently, and I know this is a long introduction, but I want you to understand it, recently we have seen people leave our seminaries, the last seminary, which I attended as a Southern Baptist pastor.

One of the professors left and went to a totally different denomination, for he said that I can no longer adhere to this teaching of Baptist doctrine. And it was a major doctrine.

Some of my own friends who are pastors have left, not only the ministry, but they've left the Baptist church and are no longer even fellowshiping with Baptist denomination.

Some of the people that I know that are pastoring are pastoring churches that may be Baptist in name only, but they're not very Baptist in their practice and ordinances. And so we ask ourselves, well, who's right and who's wrong?

And we're not here to point fingers and declare that, but it is really becoming of us to ask, why do we do what we do? I can assure you with 100% conviction that I'm not a Southern Baptist pastor just because I've always been Southern Baptist.

[9 : 17] I can assure you that I'm not Baptist because that's my tradition that I base that upon. I have, and I pray that you would do this as well, I have investigated every doctrine that I know that is worthy of investigation within the Baptist faith, and I have found that there are some that I disagree with, and therefore we do not do them, and there are some that I say, now that's something I can stand beside.

Biblical. And we have to do that because if we're not careful, and I know this is, again, a long introduction, because we would just fall into the same condemnation here that Christ declares of just doing it because that's what we've always done.

Is it really important? Is there an appeal to it, or is there a danger to it? And we need to understand that.

So as Christ here teaches about traditions, because he's challenged regarding them, let us bring that application even to our own life.

Number one, I want you to notice the origination of traditions. Where do they come from anyway? Their origination. It says, Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around him when they had come from Jerusalem.

[10 : 38] So we know that Christ has been teaching now in the Galilean region for some time. He has done many miraculous signs. There are many dealings. There are many things which he has done which has validated his declaration that he is indeed the Son of God.

We know that it is declared very plainly to us in the first chapter of Mark, and then at the end of Mark, that Jesus is the Son of God. His teaching of the kingdom of heaven being near has been validated by the miraculous works.

We have seen the fulfillment of the prophetic word, that he has come to set the captives free, to cause the blind to see, the lame to walk, and the deaf to speak and the mute to hear. All of those things. Even the dead have come back to life with the ministry of Christ.

And word has gotten out about him and his disciples. We've noticed that. That when he sent the twelve out in two by two, and they went forward declaring Christ, that everyone began to hear about Jesus.

They weren't hearing about him. They went away to a secluded place, but the multitudes followed them, and he fed the 5,000 men with a small amount of food, somewhere between probably 15,000 to 20,000 individuals.

[11 : 43] You don't do something that supernatural without word getting out. And so now more than likely this delegation, if you will, of Pharisees and scribes who came for the intended purpose of gathering around Christ, and we notice that many people are attracted to Christ, but it is not the attraction to Christ that is important.

It is the motive about being around him that matters. There were many who came to him because they had a physical need, which they needed to be addressed. Many that were sick, coming, wanting healing, but they didn't want to stay for the teaching.

We know that the multitude followed him after they were fed. The 5,000, they followed him because they were hungry again. You get hungry the next day in case you haven't realized it. So the next day they come around.

Jesus says, you've come to me because I fed you, not because of what I said to you. And he didn't feed them the second day. As a matter of fact, he said, the true bread is my body. The true flesh is,

you must eat of my flesh.

You must drink of my blood. And they said, well, we don't really want to do that. And they left. He began to teach them hard things. So we know that people were drawn to him because of their physical needs. Some were drawn to him because of political alignment.

[12:50] They were hoping, if you remember, that he would be the one who would overthrow the Roman Empire. And then we have some who come for the sole purpose of wanting to challenge and question and ridicule him.

Jesus is an attractive individual. We see that throughout history, even today. You can have a great conversation with anyone by just simply bringing him up. Everyone wants to talk about him. They might not always want to talk favorably about him, but everyone wants to talk about him. And yet we see that this delegation of Pharisees and scribes come and they gather around Christ for the sole purpose of challenging him. And they came from Jerusalem, the very seat of Jewish tradition. It is really amazing when we read the Old Testament and the New Testament and we see what things should have been and then what they become. One of the grandest displays of that is we are told in the Old Testament, the Lord's Passover, the Lord's Passover, the Lord's Passover. I've told you this before. Every time the Passover is brought up, the people are observing the Lord's Passover. But by the time we get to the New Testament, now we know there's a 400 plus year gap there. So in 400 years, you can build a lot of traditions, right?

[13:58] In 400 years, you can change a lot of things. And we're about to get to that. So by the time it's introduced to us in the New Testament, Jesus is not asked, is he going to go to Jerusalem to observe the Lord's Passover when his brothers go and his brothers are yet unbelievers?

Jesus is asked, are you going to Jerusalem to observe the Passover of the Jews? There's a big difference there because when we've taken what was the Lord's and we make it our own, then we've taken ownership of it and therefore it now points to us instead of pointing to him.

And it is in Jerusalem that should have been the residence of the name of the Lord now had become the seat of the people of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation.

And these people would come from there into the presence of Christ and gathered around him and look at what it says, and had seen that some of his disciples were eating their bread with impure hands.

Now, the word see there means to know or discern. So I say that because they didn't just casually notice. You know what I'm talking about, and I don't mean this to be rude or offensive in any way.

[15:05] So please don't be offended, but I just want you to understand. I make it a habit when I'm in public to notice those who leave restrooms without washing their hands.

Casually notice so that I don't shake their hands outside the bathroom. I'm just being honest. Okay? I just casually notice that.

I noticed it at a football game the other night. I was washing my hands, and the gentleman walked out right beside me. I'm thankful he's for the other team. I'm going to let him go over there, fellowship with all his brothers and sisters over there, and I'm going to go back to the people at Cascade where everybody washes their hands, right?

We do. Okay? Just teaching you principles here. I casually notice that. I'm not paying a lot of attention in the restroom. Neither are you, I hope.

But I do casually notice. But the word that we have of the Pharisees and the scribes is that they were intently watching to see. That is, they came for the purpose of wanting to know.

[16:18] Now, you know, if you look intently at someone long enough, you will find something wrong. I promise you.

And they went for the sole purpose of gathering around Christ to observe the disciples to see all that they did wrong. and we're looking at the origination of traditions.

And the thing that they noticed was that they came from the marketplace, that is, they were out in the community, and they came back and they just ate. Now, we don't know if they didn't wash their hands, but we do know that they didn't wash their hands according to the manner and the custom of the Pharisees and the scribes.

That is, to hold your hands like this and let someone pour water over them for so many seconds, and then to hold your hands like this and let someone pour water from your elbow down for so many seconds, and then to air dry them, and then you can go eat.

And you had to take your fist and pound it into your hand and ensure that you were deeply scrubbing off all the uncleanness of the Gentiles that you were coming into contact with.

[17 : 31] And they noticed that. And it wouldn't be hard to notice because you didn't have to look very long to see that they didn't go through all of this great display of works and effort to ensure that everyone knew what they were doing.

They weren't putting it out public. But notice their accusation. Why do they not keep the tradition of the elders?

There's the origination. And by the way, this is one of the appeals. It's because these things have come to them from the elders. Now the elders doesn't necessarily mean those within society that were older.

It means the people who went before them. It had been handed down. And handed down. And handed down. For hundreds of years, people had taught, this is what we do.

And I'm going to hand it to the next one. And they would teach the next one. And they would teach the next one. And these people that they had looked to, the ones who had went before them, the ones that history rarely declares are offenses.

[18 : 35] Now if we've done great wickedness, those offenses are recorded. But history tends to remember us better than we were. And so they say, well they did it right. And this is what they did. So we're going to do what they did.

And it had come to them from the elders, people they respected. People they were seeking to follow after. People that had lived through the 400 years of God's silence.

And had developed the oral law. And the oral law had been handed down and handed down and handed down later. After Christ, it would be recorded and written for them called the Mishnah. But they had taken 10 commandments and given 634 oral commandments on how to really quantify these 10 commandments that God said in 10 great sayings.

We're going to have to declare it and break it down into 634 of them so that you know how you should do it. And so they had done all these things and had been handed down from scholar after scholar after scholar after scholar after scholar.

And it was the tradition of the elders. They weren't just observing something that they had just heard flippantly or someone had casually mentioned to them this was something that had been ingrained in society.

[19 : 40] So it had meaning. Right? It meant something to them. When we look across the congregation it's amazing when we realize this but not all of us have the same background but some of you have the background that you grew up in this type of faith in this type of church in this type of setting and it has meaning to you everything you do because the people you dearly love and the people that had such a great impact upon your lives they were those who did the same thing and they did the same thing because the ones that they loved and had such an impact on their lives did the same thing.

So the traditions really matter and it really is ingrained within you for all of its being and I respect that and I understand that. And then there are some some of you new folks quote unquote I would be one of those too that come in and maybe you don't have that background and so you're like well why don't we do this and they're like why would you question something that matters so much to us?

And so we understand the origination it comes from people it is not wrong motives right? We need to declare that it is not like someone vindictively said let's do this and said everybody wrong but it does benefit us to stop and say well where did that come from?

And even the scribes and the Pharisees notice they declare it came from the elders not from the Lord. I have had people and again this is where I have to caution myself because I know I can be offensive when I say things and I really have tried to be more mindful of that I've had people tell me well I wish we could go back to the good old days and then I remind them well the good old days are what produced these days because these days are always the product of the days that went before it.

so whatever was taking place in whatever the supposedly good old days were this is the outcome of it. So we need to be careful because the further we get away from the garden there really are no good old days.

[21 : 46] We're looking for a new day right? when everything is made new and whole and perfect. So we see the origination of the tradition the tradition is taken from men meaningful men men that

had impact and made a lasting impact upon society and we need to we need to give them that credit because if we know anything about the Old Testament history of the Jewish people and we've again said this over and over again they went into the Babylonian captivity one of the most polytheistic nations on the face of the earth.

So they were worshipping many foreign gods they had altars everywhere they were putting altars even inside the temple and all these things we're studying that right now on Sunday nights and Wednesday nights as we go through the book of 2 Chronicles and we know that the people of Israel go into Babylonian captivity one of the most polytheistic that is worshipping many gods of any other people.

They were taking gods from every other country and every other nation and saying okay well that seems to work for them let's make it work for us. Kind of like modern day Hinduism they weren't necessarily saying anything's wrong let's just add it to what we have.

But they came out of the Babylonian captivity the even today's standard the most monotheistic people that have ever existed. That is they never went back to polytheism they came out worshipping the one God now do they worship him accurately?

No. Is it right? No. According to Christ? No. But the standards and the rules they put in place following the Babylonian captivity they said we don't want to go back there we don't want to do that so it was well intended but it was still the tradition of the elders.

[23 : 20] So here's the appeal it came to us from people we trust. Have we ever considered the possibility that even well meaning people can be wrong?

And that's hard to swallow. but if we're going to stand honest and bare before the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we have to ask that question. What if well meaning people were wrong?

I remember when I taught youth I would always challenge the youth don't just take me at my word but go check and make sure that that's what the word of God tells you not just because of something and I challenge the church to do that as well read the word because there is at least the temptation for me to be wrong because I am but man so we see the origination of tradition number two look at the opportunity of tradition why is tradition so appealing to us?

Why do we like it? I like traditions by the way I love them there are some things that I do around the house and there are some things that I do on our land that I do it the old way some of you know that like I really think maybe I was born out of due season until I read scripture that tells me that I'm born at the right time so maybe God put an old soul in a new world I don't know but I just like things done in the traditional methods and ways I just do there's an appeal to it and I like it and it has a draw to me but why?

What opportunity do traditions find in our lives even in our church that we would say yes let's do that well we find it because it tells us there in verse 3 it's kind of this parenthetical introduction where Mark is going to describe to us what the Jewish people do by the way this is one of the grand clues in the gospel of Mark that tells us that Mark is writing to a non-Jewish audience he's writing to Gentiles when you have to describe what Jewish people do as their traditions to your audience then you're not writing to Jewish people right this letter was written to a Jewish audience they'd be like oh well they didn't do that we know exactly what they're talking about Mark has to give this parenthetical introduction say well this is what they do it says for the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands thus observing the tradition of the elders and when they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe by the way that's a phrase I'll give it to you in just a minute such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots they had a certain way to wash cups a certain way to wash pitchers certain way to wash copper pots and then if your clay pot got defiled you just broke it in pieces and made another one right but the key phrase is there what opportunity does tradition find it says that they have all these so that they have received them in order to observe there are many things they have received in order to observe let me give us just a great point of interest here we love it when someone tells us what to do and we can do it you say oh I don't like anybody telling me what to do well that tendency yourself is because you say well I'm going to do what everybody doesn't want me to do but you love it when you know what it is you're supposed to do because either one it drives you to prove people wrong or it drives you to give you some self validation that they should accept you and love you every one of us do we love it when people give us something to observe

[27 : 00] I don't like rules I'm not a rule follower I like to push against them well you like the rules for no other purpose so that you can know where the line is so you can cross it but if you don't know where the line is if nobody ever tells you what to do they're at a loss most people if they don't know what to do including me we just stand still but they were given these things so that they would have them in order to observe them it is human nature and our human tendency to want to know what is it that I should do and then after I do it I'll put a check mark there and I'll walk off rather than saying who is it that I should live with because even then when Jesus says that you should love your neighbor as yourself as brother Jamie shared with us we know that the question came from the crowd well then who is my neighbor that is God tell me who I should love and then after I love that person I can go hate whoever I want to hate right that's the statement inside the question if you can define my neighbor for me then I'll be able to put a check mark next to loving my neighbor and I won't have to worry about everybody else but if you don't tell me who my neighbor is and you just tell me my neighbor can be anybody that I happen to come upon in any street anywhere even if they're from a different region and I'm supposed to love them now all of a sudden I have no box to put a check in so I have to love everyone because that could be my neighbor see we want to know what should I do I get more questions as a pastor pastor should I or should

I not ask you do this and he just look at me go hmm I just get so mad at him does he not know the answers no he knew the answer he just go well what do you think well if I does the Bible tell you well the Bible is kind of gray in that area it doesn't really clearly say right but what does it tell you I don't know but what about where it says in there that if you did anything and it causes a brother to be offended then you're sinning well my brother can be who's my brother well that could be anybody you come into contact you mean if I do anything that anybody I come into contact with could be offended by that person then it becomes a sin in my life yes well that changes the game of whether I should or not do that right I don't like that it's not giving me anything to observe but that's why we like traditions that's the opportunity it finds in us is because it tells us do this and if you do this you're okay go back to the good old days if you went to church Sunday morning Sunday night Wednesday night you did Bible studies and Sunday school and you were part of the sword drills and all those other things and you gave your 10% and recorded you're okay now are those things important absolutely every one of them but why are they important why I can go back!

there in the back there are financial registers back there and I was looking at the registry dated 1942 to 1945 there's some things historically that were happening pretty big right in the world at that time and I was just interesting because I knew the church had sent Bibles and I was just looking at the financial contributions of the church a whopping \$57 that week was given to the church another \$57 then they turned around and added that to something else and they gave every bit of it away as their missions offering that's pretty amazing right that's pretty amazing and you see they weren't just going through traditions they had a purpose there was because there's offering then there's missions offering and I noticed when missions offerings higher people weren't giving you know it's like if you do a love offering people don't give to you normal offering because they want to give a love offering so what do you do no they added their offering to the missions offering so everything was missions I said that's great that's great you know and recorded was people giving 75 cents or their name written beside it what a testimony praise

God for the 75 cents or 30 cents and they weren't doing it just because it was tradition they were doing it because God was moving them and leading them and they were giving as they should but the opportunity that tradition finds in us is that we love to be told what to do and it gives us something to observe so that's why we are appealed to them so often now let's get to the dangers there are two dangers that I want you to see too because here's the first one the outcome of traditions what is the outcome of tradition verse six says and he said that it's Christ he said to them rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites first of all that's that's kind of staggering right he said you're hypocrites so one of the outcomes of traditions that it can easily lead us to a hypocritical faith and therefore being hypocrites and it can happen to either one of us by the way the

[32 : 33] Pharisees are the only people group you will find as far as religious people groups found in the New Testament the only ones still in existence today today there were Pharisees Sadducees the Herodians and the Essenes the Pharisees are the only ones still in existence today the Herodians when the Herod dynasty fell the Herodians went with it the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection or angels or demons or anything like that as the guy who ordained me you say

that's why they were sad you see so they had no hope set before them and so the Sadducees kind of filtered out over time when the world didn't go right they kind of left the Essenes they died out pretty naturally the Essenes really were kind of Pharisee super saints so to say but the Essenes you may know the most prominent one of all of them John the Baptist was a part of the Essene community and if you want to know why they didn't last it's because the Essenes were primarily not primarily they were 100% males who segregated themselves and went and lived in the desert and never married and so they died out so that just kind of happens naturally because you have to have male and female and marriage is there for reproductive purposes and so they just didn't last but the Pharisees still last they were the rule keepers the rule followers had the best of intentions trying to please the Lord God Almighty by their obedience which by the way is one of the great temptations to think that we are just because of something not just Jewish people they exist among all people groups people who think that if they do everything right God will accept them I was a Pharisee one of the greatest dangers are people that grow up in churches too often we become the most Pharisee radical because we know all the do's and don'ts and rules and regulations and well if I do it all right then God has to accept me how do we do that look at what it says here is the outcome of it but this people honors me with their lips but their heart is far away from me tradition tells us what to say and tradition tells us what to do but one thing tradition can't do is change who we are in our heart tradition cannot change the heart of man you said pastor it's a very bold statement because many traditions can lead people to do things no tradition cannot change the heart of man because only the

Lord God Almighty can change the heart of man we will not be changed unless we have conviction it comes from the word of God the new heart is put inside of us because we are broken over what the word declares to us not because of what tradition because we can do that we can try we can say well I didn't meet that or next time I'll do it and it can give us the things to say we can say the right thing we can even act the right way but it will not change our heart and therefore it makes us hypocritical the heart is far away from me but in vain do they worship me here's another! of tradition is that tradition never leads us to sincere worship you know how many hymns I had memorized how many great hymns that I knew and I could probably whistle or hum or sing them to myself when nobody else was around but had no bearing of the weight of the message that was being declared in that you don't know anything about amazing grace until you've experienced amazing grace it can be a really cool hymn but until you've experienced it you really don't know how amazing it is right and just because it's a traditional song also doesn't always mean it is right there are some things that I used to sing all time and I'm like wait a minute maybe that's not what it ought to be so we understand here it will never lead us to sincere worship it may lead us teaching as doctrines the precepts of men here's one of the things that I've noticed and it's something that I have to try to guard myself over is I want to ensure that I never teach even if I think that a tradition is good and healthy and wholesome I don't want to teach it as a doctrine I want to be transparent about this is something we do and this is why we do it but it doesn't mean I'm going to break fellowship for what we elevate to the level of doctrine doctrine matters our traditions can go away but doctrine matters even if we observe them I mean it has become a tradition for us to eat a lot of fellowship meals together I like that tradition I really do I think fellowship is important but I find nothing in scripture that tells me we have to eat a meal every Wednesday night during school season so if all of a sudden that was cut out I could still worship I might worship with a belly growling but I could still worship right I mean so we but we understand that we have this discussion in deacon and elder meeting and even other planning we don't want to do things just because we've always done them right we don't want to teach it as a doctrine because we want to make sure what we're doing is sincerely worshiping and here's the another outcome of it you neglect neglecting the commandment of God you hold fast to the tradition of men neglecting the commandment of God you hold to the tradition of men history especially church history declares to us how many precepts and doctrines of men have been taught by the church capital

[38 : 22] C and how many commandments of God have been neglected how they have laid them aside in order to do exactly what the reformation is a grand picture of that because the precepts and doctrines of men had been elevated and the commandments of God had been neglected and therefore one of the pushes against the established church was the fact that much of what they were doing were the teachings of men not the teachings of the word of God it was a return to the

word of God the outcome of tradition is it leads to a hypocritical faith that elevates the tradition of man and deescalates the importance of God the offense of tradition fourth and finally why is it so offensive it is offensive because of what we do when traditions become so important to us it says in verse nine he was also saying to them you are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition we cannot be fully committed to one thing at a time that's true and if we allow traditions to be so important then we will justify them to all ends even to invalidating the word of

God but the word of God says I should do this but if it goes against my tradition we will say well there has to be another way and we will begin to belittle the word and elevate the tradition because we really like this thing over here it really is important to us and it carries weight and it's how we've always done it and if we're not careful even when that's challenged by the clear teaching of scripture we will hold up what we're comfortable with what we've always done what the elders taught us what people have taught us we wonder how can people get caught up in wrong theology and wrong doctrine and how can their eyes be closed it's because what they've and the temptation is there for each and every one of us and it's something we have to be careful of that we don't do things just because it's what we've always done or just because it's what we're comfortable doing but rather we do things because we find a clear scriptural mandate that we should do them why do we do these things we try to at least personally and corporately we try to ensure that everything that we do has a scriptural principle connected to it and if

I cannot connect a scriptural principle to it then we don't really need to do it you remember the five E's right I want to equip the saints I want to expand the kingdom I want to enhance the home I want to empower men I want to engage the youth and children it's the five E's each one of those everything that we do as a church I try to run it through there does it fit one of those you said well those are just things you came up with right but the equipping the saints for the work of the ministry is a scriptural mandate each one of those I can tie back to a scriptural mandate that is given to us that you ought to be equipping saints expanding the kingdom you ought to be enhancing the home we ought to call as a church to be enhancing the home we ought to be empowering the men you say what about women right but the scripture calls us to call out the men right so we ought to be empowering the men to be the men that God has called them to be the leaders of their home and the leaders within the church so society is really good at pushing down men and taking power away from men and calling it toxic and all these other things but it ought to be the church calling out the men to be the men that

God has called and equipped them to be because men the onus is on us and it rests upon our shoulders and as someone once told me that's why God gave you broad shoulders so why are we doing it I am not saying that those five E's are it but those are why I put them in place in my own mind because I will offend the Lord God if I say but I like doing this more than I like obeying your word because he says you've become experts at setting aside my word he says in verse 13 you are invalidating the word of God by your tradition we don't have to look very far throughout church history and even in church current events to see that some traditions invalidate the word of God because we know the tradition reigns and you do many things such as that he says there's an appeal and there's a grand danger for every tradition that stands before us we ask the Lord to give us wisdom as we seek them out let's pray father thank you for the day thank you for your goodness and faithfulness towards us thank you for this time we've been able to look at your word we pray now father as we prepare to come before you during this time of invitation you would search our hearts and minds lord that you would prepare us help us that you would bring it to light that you would help us to confess it you would help us to lay it down to be reconciled with brothers and sisters in Christ may it be for your glory and honor we ask it all in

[44 : 27] Christ's name amen