



The Heart Of Your Problem

Mark 7:1-23

Why do we do the things that we do? Sometimes we do them because we've always done them the same way, and we never question the reason. It's called tradition. Jesus tangled with some Jewish leaders who cherished tradition more than the Word of God.

The Jews had the Old Testament Law called the Torah. The most important laws were the Ten Commandments, but there were many other rules added. Over the centuries the Jewish Rabbis added thousands more rules and regulations. This was called the Oral Law, and it was passed down from generation to generation. It was eventually written down into a book called the Mishnah. Jesus did not recognize or obey these oral laws, and this became a setting for Him to give us some important truths about tradition, righteousness, and sin.

There is a danger in replacing God's truth with man's traditions. Jesus pointed out a religious loophole to the Jews that they had created and called Corban. The Ten Commandments taught us that we must honor our father and mother. That means as long as our parents are alive, we are to honor them and take care of them. The Jews had created a loophole by which they could say, "I'm giving all my assets to the Temple." What they did was make a small down payment to the priests. Then they continued to live on their income. If their elderly parents said, "Son, we need some financial help, then he could say, 'Sorry, mom and dad, all of my money is devoted to the Temple.'" Jesus said this tradition made a mockery of the Word of God.

The Jews aren't the only ones who have replaced the Word of God with traditions. Christians have done this too. In the first 1500 years of the Christian church, there were thousands of rules and regulations that developed in the Roman Catholic Church and later in the Eastern Orthodox Church. It's important to understand that a very important doctrine developed in the Catholic Church called Papal Infallibility. This doctrine taught that when the Pope spoke from his chair his proclama-

tion was held as authoritative as the Bible itself. In the 1500s a group of Christians protested the authority of the Pope. They were called Protestants, and their defining doctrine was scripture alone. Even the Protestants developed their traditions. For instance, John Calvin was the founder of the Presbyterian Church. John Calvin always wore a hat to church and only removed it to pray. For several hundred years men in the Presbyterian Church wore hats in church and removed them only to pray. According to biographers, the reason John Calvin wore a hat was that his church was open and cold. Pigeons roosted in the church, and there was always a danger of being bombed by the pigeons. To be safe, he wore a hat.

Baptists have some unbiblical traditions as well. I grew up hearing that it was sinful for a Baptist to dance. I also grew up hearing that Baptists don't play cards. I am sure you also remember the day it was not appropriate for a woman to wear slacks in church. Men were always to wear a suit and tie. This is a tradition. It is not the Word of God.

Religious practices will never make us acceptable to God. The reason we like traditions, whether it is washing your hands or dressing up for church is because it's something we can do outwardly, and makes us feel good about ourselves. Jesus taught that righteousness wasn't a matter of outward religious practice; it is a matter of inward affection towards God. Jesus called the Jews hypocrites. They honored God with their lips, but their hearts were far from God.

According to Revelation 20, one day in the future, all lost people will stand before Jesus at the Great White Throne Of Judgment. The Bible says books will be opened. One book will be the Book of Life. For those of us who have been redeemed, our names will appear in the Lamb's Book of Life. Revelation 20 is a judgment for lost people, and the Bible says they will be judged according to what they have done as recorded in the books. So, here is the nature of God's Law. If you break only one single law, according to James 2:10, you are guilty of breaking ALL the laws. Romans 3:19-20 says, "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared

righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law, we become conscious of our sin."

We sin because we are born with a bad heart. Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" A humanist says, "all people are good at heart, but because of a lack of education, or poverty, or a poor environment, or association with bad people, a person gradually falls into evil." The other position is that man is born with a sinful nature and must be redeemed by Jesus Christ.

Jesus used this occasion about clean and unclean traditions to teach us the source of human sin. Your heart is the part of your personality where moral choices are made.

Salvation involves getting a new heart. The bad news is that we're all sinners bound for hell, but the good news is that Jesus died on the cross so that we could receive a spiritual heart transplant. God doesn't want to patch up your old heart. He wants to give you a new heart.

Jesus told Nicodemus that he would never be good enough to see the kingdom of heaven. Jesus said to him, "You must be born again." When you are born again spiritually, God gives you a new start on life, and it includes a new heart. II Corinthians 5:17 says, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

Jesus has a heart full of grace and forgiveness. He wants to become a part of your life. Salvation isn't a matter of the head; you can't think your way into heaven. It isn't a matter of your hands; you can't work your way into heaven. Salvation is a matter of the heart. God offers you salvation as a gift, but it didn't come cheap. Jesus gave His life for you.

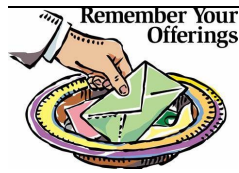


HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- 9th - Melva Seibert, Matthew Pack, Noah Burke
- 10th - Frankie Mattingly
- 11th - Kathleen Garrett, Stephanie Proctor, Troy Stumph
- 13th - Jennifer Lewis Cox, Laura Devine,
Jasmine Coulter, Brie Sagracy
- 15th - Corey Tingle, Jake Cheser



11th - Happy Anniversary to Carl & Jeri Stumph!



Remember Your Offerings

Though you may not be able to attend church right now for worship services and Bible studies; we still have obligations to God to give our tithes and offerings. If you would like to send your tithe and offering to the church you can do so one of two ways. You can mail it to Debbie Rus-

sell 1627 Whitehall Road Mackville, KY 40040 or to Willisburg Baptist Church PO Box 58 Willisburg, KY 40078.

Clean or Unclean?

So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?" Mark 7:5 (NIV)

Based on Mark 7:1-7; 14-15; 21-23 (NIV)



C A B P B U A T Z E G M I J O
 I P H A R I S E E S A R V W M
 G E Y L D L N V Z A A T O L Z
 R U N C L E A N Z N C C I V I
 D K L Y S E L Z T E F H S N J
 F U N D V O X I W W A L E W G
 K J N X I G Y Q P O O G S R P
 F A Y W A S H S M S R E K M S
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 B M N O F G L A W X E H F G F
 T P Z O D S P Q R H M S V I H
 N G X J R U L E S A P I B K K

LAW	WORSHIP	UNCLEAN	FOOD	TEACHERS
HANDS	HEARTS	PHARISEES	HYPOCRITES	DISCIPLES
RULES	EATING	LIPS	HONOR	WASH

3. HIPPNLIPIAS _____
4. BREEHWS _____
5. STIUT _____
6. THAMETW _____
7. IHTTMOY _____
8. KULE _____
9. MESJA _____

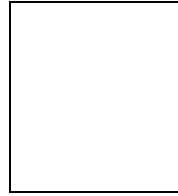
IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

- Family of Mattie Kays
- Shirley Clark
- Page Robinson
- Ernest Goff
- Gerald & Frankie Mattingly
- Donna Lewis (Unspoken Concern)
- Nikki Stumph
- Danny Akin
- Margret McMillen's Grandson
- Sara McIlvoy
- Sallie Goff

- Beulah Chesser
- Trey (five year old)
- All of our school children & youth
- All our missionaries
- First Responders
- All Medical Personnel
- Police Officers
- Most importantly the salvation of souls

Books Of The New Testament Word Scramble

1. NIHTIOARCHS _____
2. IAAGNLTAS _____



The Word

