



Rice Memorial MBC

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Jesus' Teaching on the Law

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **May 18, 2014**

Worship with us at **3201 Mary St** until we rebuild our sanctuary at 802 W. 15th,
...We're just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas...

Matthew 15:1-11, 18-20

Introduction: Ever since human beings first became corrupted by sin and aware of their separation from God, many of them have been trying to regain his favor by their own devices. From ancient times, pagan religions have involved practices ranging from nonsensical and silly to disgusting, nauseating, and unspeakably vile.

Today, most "civilized" people detest such practices and observe more "enlightened" religion. But the **great majority** still seek to reach God through their **own merits**. By church attendance, neighborly kindness, charitable giving, or community activism, they hope, somehow, to gain God's favor. They do not understand the depths of either human sin or divine grace.

Sadly, the Jewish religious leaders of Jesus' day had fallen into this same **arrogant** frame of mind. So, zealous were they to keep the law that they had hedged it in with an unbelievable array of **rabbinical traditions**. These brought them into **conflict** with Jesus, as we see in this week's lesson.

(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator*, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series)

Matthew 15:1-2, Then came to Jesus **scribes** and **Pharisees**, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples **transgress** the TRADITION of the **elders**? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

NOTE: *Transgress the tradition of the elders*, The word **elders** means, literally, **old men**. It here means the **ancients**, or their **ancestors**. *Tradition* means something handed down from one to another by memory: some precept or custom not commanded in the *written law*, but which they held themselves bound to observe. The Jews supposed that when Moses was on Mount Sinai, two sets of laws were delivered to him: one, they said, was recorded, and is that contained in the Old Testament; the other was handed down from **father to son**, and kept uncorrupted to their day. They believed that Moses before he died delivered this law to Joshua; he to the judges; they to the prophets; so that it was kept pure till it was recorded in the Talmuds. In these books these pretended laws are now contained. They are exceedingly numerous, and very trifling. They are, however, **regarded** by the **Jews** as **more important** than either **Moses** or the **prophets**. One point in which the Pharisees differed from the Sadducees was in holding to these traditions. It seems, however, that in the particular traditions here mentioned all the Jews combined.

The Pharisees, and *all the Jews*, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, Mark 7:3. Mark has also added, that this custom of washing extended not merely to their hands before eating, but in coming from the market; and also to pots, and cups, and brazen

vessels and tables, Mark 7:3,4. They did this professedly for the sake of *cleanliness*. So far it was well. But they made it a matter of superstition. They regarded **external purity** as of **much more importance** than the **purity** of the **heart**. They had many foolish rules about it: as, the quantity of water that was to be used; the way in which it should be applied; the number of times it should be changed; the number of those that might wash at a time, etc. These foolish rules our Saviour did not think it proper to regard; and this was the reason why they found fault with him.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

Mark 7:1-5, Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they **found fault**. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the **washing of cups**, and **pots, brasen vessels**, and of **tables**. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

Matthew 15:3-9, But he answered and said unto them, Why do YE also **transgress the commandment** of God (**supreme [highest] Divinity**) by **your tradition**? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye **made the commandment** of God of **none effect** by **your tradition**. Ye **hypocrites**, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their **heart (MIND)** is far from me. But **in vain** they do worship me, teaching for **doctrines** the commandments of men.

NOTE: But he answered, etc. They **accused** him of violating their traditions, as though they were obligatory (imposing duty). In his answer he implied that they were not bound to **obey** their traditions. They were invented by men. He said also that those traditions could not be binding, as they **violated the commandments of God**. He proceeds to specify a case where their tradition made void one of the plain laws of God. And if that was their character, then they could not blame him for not regarding them.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

Mark 7:6-9, He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their **heart (MIND)** is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For **laying aside** the **commandment of God**, ye hold the **tradition of men**, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye **REJECT** the **commandment** of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Thought 1. The strength of Jesus' life and ministry was that he had a desire to please God his Father, first and foremost. And please man only in line with what God's word has commanded man to do at that time and under that Covenant. So, the secret to his strength was his reverence for his Father, known as "the FEAR of the Lord (Yahweh)."

Proverbs 14:2, He that walketh in his uprightness **feareth** (REVERENCE) the Lord: But he that is **perverse (turn aside)** in his ways **despiseth** (disrespects) him.

John 8:28-29, Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my **Father** hath **taught me**, **I speak** these things. And he that sent me is with me:

the **Father** hath not left me alone; for **I do ALWAYS** those things that **please him**.

Acts 5:27-29, And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, **Did not WE** straitly **command you** that ye should not teach in this **name?** and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to OBEY God rather than men.**

Matthew 15:10-11, And he called the multitude, and said unto them, **Hear, and understand:** Not that which goeth **into the mouth** DEFILETH a man; but that which **cometh out** of the **mouth**, this defileth a man.

NOTE: The foregoing dialogue, though in the people's **hearing**, was between Jesus and the pharisaic cavillers (one who raises false or frivolous objections), whose object was to disparage (debase by words or actions; to dishonor) Him with the people. But Jesus, having put them down, turns to the multitude, who at this time were prepared to **drink in everything** He said, and with admirable **plainness, strength, and brevity**, lays down the great principle of real pollution, by which a world of bondage and uneasiness of conscience would be dissipated in a moment, and the sense of sin be reserved for deviations from the holy and eternal law of God. Hear and understand...

(Source: Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/jfb)

Proverbs 4:7, Wisdom is the principal (most important) thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get **understanding**.

Matthew 15:12-13, Then came his disciples, and said unto him, **Knowest** thou that the Pharisees were **offended**, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, **EVERY plant**, which my heavenly **Father** hath **not planted**, shall be **rooted up**.

Thought 1. This is the attitude every minister of the gospel should have as a mindset. It won't make everybody "happy" when we do what Jesus does here. And as was the case here, **SOME** people **WILL** be offended. But, we will please our Father and the Lord Jesus and those who stand for right and understand what's taking place..

Another way of looking at it is we should step on the head of "every snake" shown to us! meaning, every doctrine of devils we hear (1 Tim. 4:1), God wants us to aggressively attack with his word in **LOVE**, which will offend **SOME** who hear us, but don't understand.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, 4:1-2, All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is **profitable** for doctrine, for **reproof (conviction: evidence)**, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be **perfect (fresh** [untainted; invaluable, useful]), thoroughly furnished unto ALL good works. I charge thee therefore (for this reason) before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the WORD; be **INSTANT** in season, out of season; **reprove (convince, tell a fault)**, **REBUKE**, exhort with all longsuffering (exercise of patience, [constancy in labor or application; perseverance {persistence in anything undertaken} 1913 Webs.) and doctrine.

Instant defined 2186, **be present**; **assault** [AGGRESSIVE, attacking (*teachings and thinking; not people*) by words, arguments with a view to shake, impair or overthrow].

Rebuke defined 2008, **censure** (find fault with and condemn as wrong; to blame; to express disapprobation (DISAPPROVAL of), **rebuke** (utter words in ANGER).

Matthew 15:14-15, Let them alone: they be **blind** leaders of the **blind**. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Then answered Peter and said unto him, **Declare** (explain) unto us this parable.

NOTE: Let them alone... - that is the admonition (caution; direction) of Christ with reference to the worldly wise, socially prominent, sophisticated, unscrupulous, hypocritical religious leaders. The apostles would have been able to do the Pharisees no good, and there was a grave possibility the Pharisees would do the apostles **harm** by damaging their faith. The child of God today should heed the same admonition with reference to the same kind of persons. **Spiritual darkness** and **sin** are set forth in this place under the figure of blindness, a symbol often so used in the Bible (2 Peter 1:9, etc.). (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

Matthew 15:16-17, And Jesus said, Are ye also yet **without UNDERSTANDING?** Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the **draught** (drain)?

NOTE: Behold in this a ray of light on **transubstantiation**. It being true, as Jesus said, that nothing entering the mouth defiles the man, it is equally true that nothing entering his mouth can **sanctify** and **bless** him. "Whatsoever," said Jesus, that enters the mouth proceeds to the belly and thence to the draught; therefore (for this reason), it cannot be anything **literal** in the **bread** or the **wine** of the Lord's Supper that can either **defile** or **bless** him. Thus it is clear that the bread and the wine are emblems or symbols of the Lord's blood and body. It cannot be the physical and material substance of those sacred tokens which either blesses or procures condemnation; but, on the other hand, it is the ACT of **obedience**, the answer of a **good conscience toward God**, the spiritual perception of the saving truth certified and memorialized by those tokens - it is these that bless the man. Origen stated it thus: "If this were not so, it would sanctify him who eats **unworthily** of the bread of the Lord."

A slight problem occurs in that Peter inquired about one thing, the blind leading the blind; and Jesus answered with emphasis on another thing, the things that defile a man. This was often done by Christ as for example in Luke 13:23. In that case, the disciples asked, "Are there few that be saved?" But the following dissertation never touched that question but focused on the need for every man to "strive to enter the narrow door." In this case, Christ replied by giving Peter the information he needed, rather than by replying in the same vein as the question.

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

Matthew 15:18-20, But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the **heart**; **(MIND)** and they defile the man. For out of the **heart (MIND)** proceed **evil thoughts**, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which **defile a man**: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

NOTE: **But those things which proceed out of the mouth...** Meaning not material things, as spittle, vomit but, as it follows, which **come forth from the heart...** are first conceived and formed there, and then come forth from thence, and are expressed by the mouth; as all **idle** words, **foolish talking**, **filthy jesting**, unsavoury communication, and every word that is rotten and corrupt, or which is done in the life and conversation; **..and they defile the man...** the heart (**MIND**) is the corrupt fountain from whence all MORAL defilement flows; and sinful words and actions are the impure streams, which spring from thence... (Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

Thought 1. This truth reveals why Paul was inspired to write when people are born again of God's Spirit, the next step is for them to renew their MIND, so they can DISCERN God's perfect will, approve it, and then, live in it, by words spoken and deeds done.

Romans 12:2, And be not **conformed** to this world: but be ye transformed by the RENEWING of your **MIND**, that ye may **prove (discern [SEE], approve)** what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.