

# The Bulletin

## Meeks St. Church of Christ

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August 5, 2018

### “What The Scribes & Pharisees Taught Us Pt. 2”

By Brian Meade

The Jewish leaders of Jesus day had many spiritual problems and issues that needed correcting. Jesus, the very Son of God, pointed out these faults in an effort to help them — yet was rejected. Sometimes, the greatest lessons we can learn is what NOT to do. We can learn from their failure to please God, as we continue our study by what they teach us today:

#### IV. The Scribes & Pharisees Taught Us That We Cannot Make And Bind Human Traditions.

In Matthew 15:1-13, we find some of the Pharisees and Scribes complaining that the disciples of Jesus did not wash their hands before they ate bread. This was a violation, not of the law of Moses, but of “*the tradition of the elders.*” (Matthew 15:2)

In Matthew 15:3-6, Jesus clearly shows them the difference between human and divine traditions. He pointed out that they had bound traditions of men that caused them to disobey the divine ordinance to “*honor your Father and Mother.*” (vs. 3-4)

They were simply saying that it was a “gift” dedicated to God and that tied up their resources from helping their parents. In Mark’s account of this occasion, Mark uses the word “*Corban*” and it is described as an offering or gift (Mark 7:11).

All this tradition did was lead them to disobey God. It might have salved their conscience to formally say “*Corban*” to their parents, but God did not release them from honoring father and mother. Jesus said they had transgressed the commandment for the sake of their tradition (Matthew 15:3).

What we learn from this clash with the Scribes and Pharisees:

(1) **There is a vast difference in the traditions of God** (1Corinthians 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15) **and the traditions of men** (Matthew 15:2; Mark 7:3). It has everything to do with the source—“*From heaven or men?*” (Matthew 21:25). Men have no right to make and bind traditions on others to the same level as scripture.

(2) **Human tradition makes our worship vain.** Jesus said in Matthew 15:9, “*But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.*” It is a sobering reality to think that human tradition can make all we do in work and worship to God— all for nothing, no profit. But that is the danger of false religion that prefers traditions of its own design and decree. Jesus warns all who would follow the path of the Scribes and Pharisees in human tradition— there is no salvation there!

(3) **God only approves of what we can find in scripture.** That’s the way to tell if God is directing us to say or act. We are directed by the authority of Jesus by the scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Peter said in I Peter 4:11, *If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God.*” (NKJB). Tradition is not found in the word of God, thus God will uproot traditions of men. But He answered and said, “*Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted.*” God doesn’t plant human tradition!



There are other traditions of men that, if we are honest, we can readily see as from men and NOT God. Christmas celebrated as a holy service to God has roots in Catholic tradition— not from God’s word. Churches will often rally around Christmas with live nativity scenes and seasonal decorations around the building.

Well, that may seem sweet and sentimental, but it is not true prescribed worship or service to God. Neither are the Easter celebrations, sunrise services, or passion plays performed for the church in a service designed by human tradition. God’s word already has a way to remember the death of our Lord, on a Roman cross, every first day of the week— it’s called the Lord’s supper or communion (Acts 20:7).

Some look at instrumental music in church services as just a traditional way to worship God. To them, every church has a right to their own traditions, because that’s just what they do to be different. Some never bother to see if God planted this or not. This could also be in the category of choirs, solos, youth ministers, praise teams, moderators, circuit overseers, and church councils— the traditions of men. God’s word has to validate our works, or it is vain tradition.

## **V. The Scribes & Pharisees Taught Us That Hypocrisy is Not the Way to God.**

Hypocrisy is defined as *"to answer on the stage, play a part," and so, metaphorically, "to feign, pretend,"* (Vine’s). It generally denotes someone who is not genuine in their faith and practice in service to God. Hypocrisy is all about pretense or pretending to be pious, holy, and righteous before God— when in reality, one is not.

Jesus was uniquely qualified to see through hypocrisy as he knew what was in the hearts of men— their thoughts and intentions (Matthew 9:4; Matthew 12:25; Luke 9:47). He could see past the hypocrisy of even those who were very careful to hide their motives. Nothing was hidden from Him, as He walked among men who made their service to God in a pretense of religious piety. Therefore, Jesus was also uniquely qualified to reprove and rebuke those who were the hypocrites of His day.

But Jesus had some of the hardest words to say to the Scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:25-32. He denounced them, as He said, *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...."* He used that exact phrase seven times in Matthew chapter Twenty-three and then pointed out their error each time.

This should serve as a warning to all who walk the path of pretense— you cannot be saved in hypocrisy. To pretend is not the same as actual genuine obedience in service to our God— Who sees and knows our deeds (Proverbs 15:3; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 2:2).

## **VI. The Scribes & Pharisees Taught Us The Need For Bible Authority For All That We Do.**

In John 21:23, Jesus was confronted by the Jewish leaders concerning His authority to cast out the money changers from the temple (Matthew 21:12-13) and even healed the blind and the lame in the temple (Matthew 21:14). This angered the chief priests and the elders enough for them to challenge Him, *"By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?"* (vs.23)

They were not wrong in asking Jesus where His authority was for doing these things— but their motives and intentions were wrong! They sought to silence Jesus by asking such a question of Him— as they thought He had no authority from the Jewish leaders. It never occurred to them that Jesus had divine authority.

But there are lessons about Bible authority that this incident teaches that we still can learn from today.

### **(1) We need to have authority for all we do.**

Bible authority is simply the right or permission that is needed for those under the authority of Jesus Christ, our King. He has the right to rule us (Matthew 28:18). And to fail to have no authority for a practice is to be acting without the right or permission in our deeds. Paul said in Colossians 3:17, *"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."* Contrary to the thinking of many today, it is not Pharisaical to ask if we have Bible authority for a practice the church proposes to do.

### **(2) There is only two sources of authority: from heaven or from men.**

Jesus offered to tell them by what authority he was doing His works, if they would answer Him one question, *"The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?"* (Matthew 21:25) Jesus question illustrates the difference between what God says and desires of us and what men say and desire as commandments of men (Matthew 15:9). Jeroboam worked without divine authority in 1 Kings 12:33, when he crafted worship *"which he had devised in his own heart...."* When it is given to us from heaven, it will be found in God’s book.

### **(3) The only true source of authority is divine authority.**

We will be judged on the last day, not by the authority, traditions, and creeds of men— but of God (Revelation 20:12-15). The only authority that really matters is from God.

**News and Notes:** Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Betty Hurst, Steve Switcher, Gail Armstrong, Nicky Curtis, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), Charlene Newborn, Delain & Robbie Doles, Greg Fields, June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Clois Wright, Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Madeline Flippo, Karey Trimble, Jerry Trimble, Janis Johnson.

**Those Who Serve:**

**Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:**

**Opening Prayer:** Russell Briggs  
**Preaching:** Brian Meade  
**Sermon:** *"Duties of Husbands & Wives in Marriage"*

**Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am**

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:** Fred Johnson  
The Book of John (Mike Willis)  
*Lesson 4, Page 20, Question #1*

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:**

**Announcements:** Paul Busby  
**Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:** Jerry Kennemur  
*Proverbs 2:6-9*  
Chris Callahan  
Paul Johnson  
Lee Busby & Adam Harris  
**Assisting:** Brian Meade  
**Preaching:** *"God's Wisdom For A Happy Home"*  
**Sermon:** Tim Harris Sr.  
**Closing Prayer:**

**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.**

**August 8th:**

**Auditorium Bible Class:** Paul Busby  
1 & 2 Kings (Mike Willis)  
*Page 15, Question #4*  
**Invitation:** Dan Cottrell  
**Song Leader:** Adam Harris  
**Closing Prayer:** Daniel Holloway