

## Mark 7:1-13 – BC Article 7 – Traditional Values

**Introduction:** Because God's word brings salvation, we reject the traditions that are contrary to his word.

### 1) The Pharisees' Question

- Jesus has been accomplishing some amazing miracles, and his powerful works have resulted in a large following. As a result the, Pharisees have come out to the countryside to investigate Jesus, and to trip him up over a minor point of the law.
- The Pharisees were devoted to the practice of washing. This was not commanded in the Old Testament law (See Lev. 11 and 15), but was a practice that had been passed down in tradition.
- Even in our own churches we can accumulate traditions. Traditions are often appealing because they give us comfort and a sense of predictability and routine. Often there is nothing wrong with traditions in themselves, unless they are raised to a level where they could compete with what God has actually commanded.
- The failure of the Pharisees' washings is that they have risen to a point where they compete with Christ himself. These traditions are being used to invalidate the ministry of the Son of God. Their tradition is blinding their eyes to the salvation being held out for them.

### 2) Jesus' Illustration

- Jesus is going to show them what they are doing to him with what they are doing to the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment. The practice of Corban (See Lev. 27) meant that you could dedicate something to the Lord, and it would be put into his service rather than that of ordinary use. This could be compared to leaving something in your will for a church or charity.
- This practice is Biblical, however, the way it was being done according to the tradition on Israel was not. Some would declare things to be Corban that could have been used by their needy parents, in order to prevent themselves from losing it. The Pharisees were active in promoting and enforcing this money-management scheme.
- Jesus points out that this is a violation of the commandment to honour one's parents. While not every child will necessarily have the resources to support their aging parents, hiding one's wealth from them doesn't fit with God's command to love them. Their tradition rejects the written word of God in the same way as it rejected the incarnate word.
- This does not mean that, aligning with the spirit of our age, we reject every tradition out of hand. The question is one of sufficiency. Do we see scripture as the full requirement of God for faith and life, or do we feel the need to add more authoritative traditions?

**Conclusion:** We must always be willing to hold our traditions up to the light of scripture, otherwise we run the risk of overshadowing the word of salvation with the folly of sinful men.