

When Rite is Wrong

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Mark 6:53-7:30.

B. The power and effect of tradition.

1. Tradition has tremendous force in our lives.
2. Power from the past touches all at one time or another.

III. There is an element that makes tradition good or evil.

A. Traditions in the passage began as ways to understand the law, which was good.

B. However, the tradition grew massively so that the purpose of the law was forgotten.

C. Tradition produces hypocrites.

D. Kinds of tradition:

1. Right forms but wrong attitudes, which is hypocrisy.
 - a. Tradition externalizes religion.
 - b. This is a terrible danger because it makes people think they are right before God because of external actions.
 2. Religious actions clothing worldly philosophies.
 - a. Worship is something one cannot do outwardly; it must be genuine, individual, and varied.
 - b. Worship must be realistic—it cannot remain static.

E. When tradition comes in...

1. One leaves the commandment of God. Traditions arise when we try to find a substitute to hand God what He really wants.
2. One holds fast to the traditions of man.
3. One denies and injures both God and man.

F. The source of these traditions.

1. There is nothing evil or good about the outward customs.

2. It is what one feels inside that makes the custom bad or good.

G. When the Syrophoenician woman turned from the ground of tradition, Jesus met her need.

1. Tradition is a way of building a barrier between God and us.

2. Faith reaches out to the heart of God.

Application questions:

1. What is the key to determining whether a tradition is good or bad? Explain.

2. What are some traditions you know of that no longer serve their original purpose for good?

3. What are some positive traditions within your church you think should be continued? How do these traditions continue to encourage good in the church?
