

Traditions and the Church

Traditions from God or Traditions of Men

In this age of religious confusion, traditions play a large part in the structure of Christianity. The line between what is doctrine and what is denominational tradition has become blurred. Some churches have elevated the status of their traditions to that of doctrines, thereby confusing the people. Most parishioners would have a hard time explaining their beliefs partly because of these uncertainties.

To understand the doctrine Jesus Christ established for the Church, you can send us a note by mail or e-mail, include your mailing address, and we will send you a free copy of *The Doctrine of Christ*. This booklet may also be downloaded from our website.

Traditions within the Church

After Christ returned to Heaven, Satan wasted no time in attacking the Church. Before long, ideas, doctrines, and traditions began to spring up that were not from our Lord Jesus Christ. Apostasies started to appear as Satan began to twist the truth once delivered to the Apostles. The Apostle Paul told the leadership of the churches around Miletus and Ephesus, “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears” (Acts 20:29-31 NKJV). It was a constant battle to fight back the “forces of evil” that were determined to destroy the Church.

Because Satan has continuously attacked the Church since the time of the original Apostles, we find it needful to, “...**earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints**” (Jude 1:3). Satan has filled Christianity with his deceptions and lies. He has blurred the focus of most believers by designing and introducing counterfeit doctrines and traditions into the churches. **Counterfeit beliefs have been Satan’s “stock-in-trade” by which he has been able to deceive the churches. And remember Satan is the original author of “the half-truth”—some truth mixed with lies so one can’t easily separate the errors from the truth. This has happened with many doctrines and traditions within the churches.**

We see in Col. 2:8 that we are to, “**Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.**” So it is, therefore, important for us to **examine our beliefs and traditions to be sure they come straight from Jesus Christ.** After all, Paul said we, “...are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:20-21). So it is imperative that we examine what we believe and observe.

If you desire to find the truth and separate it from error, you must first know truth! **Truth is a person! Truth is Jesus Christ!** In John 14:6 we see Jesus telling Thomas, "...I am the way, **the truth**, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." Jesus is the way, Jesus is truth, and Jesus is life! **The only way to be able to untangle the web of deceit and half-truths in the doctrines and traditions within the churches is to get to know JESUS! Getting to know the person named Truth can set us free from Satan's snarled web! For Jesus said, "...ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).**

What bothers me so much is that the average Christian doesn't really care about a deep relationship with God or what doctrines or traditions their church or denomination holds to be important. They simply go on with their daily lives with a statement such as, "Oh well, it doesn't much matter to me. I'm not very religious and the church knows more about those things than I do anyway."

Jesus gave us an example of how bad traditions can affect us in Matthew 15:3-9 (NLT). Jesus said, "...**And why do you, by your traditions, violate the direct commandments of God?** [Of course one of the doctrines floating around today is that the Ten Commandments have been done away and are no longer in effect.] For instance, God says, 'Honor your father and mother,' and 'Anyone who speaks disrespectfully of father or mother must be put to death.' But you say it is all right for people to say to their parents, 'Sorry, I can't help you. For I have vowed to give to God what I would have given to you.' In this way, you say they don't need to honor their parents. **And so you cancel the word of God for the sake of your own tradition.** You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, 'These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. **Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.'**" **Jesus Christ in telling you to wake up! He is demanding that you check your own beliefs to see if they are what He has taught!**

All over the world ideas of men are being taught as doctrine in the name of Christ! The traditions established by churches and denominations are often man-made ideas rather than instructions from God!

So how many of the commandments from God and the traditions set down by Jesus Christ and the apostles do you think have been supplanted by leadership influenced by Satan? **Don't just guess! Get up off the couch and check it out! What did Jesus really teach?** Compare the Word of God with what is being taught in your church today! **Don't be shy or lazy. Be brave!**

PROVE WHETHER YOUR BELIEFS COME FROM GOD OR MEN!

I wish more Christians truly cared! WAKE UP! COME ALIVE SPIRITUALLY!

Christian congregations have become so messed up that the original apostles would hardly recognize the Church today!

Here is some homework to get you started; check out the origins of these beliefs:

Mardi gras
Ash Wednesday
Lent
Easter
Easter egg hunts and egg rolls
Rabbits and eggs
The idea of Santa, elves, a flying sleigh pulled through the sky by reindeer
The commercialism surrounding the ideas of Christmas
Celebrating Christ's birthday
Homosexual leadership allowed in churches
Marriages between same sex couples

Try to find the above ideas and customs or traditions in your Bible. Did Christ authorize any of these or are they traditions of men?

Jesus Christ said of this generation, “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent” (Rev. 3:15-19 NKJV).

You see, THE CHURCH IN OUR DAY AND AGE IS LAZY AND GOD IS ABOUT TO WAKE IT UP! Hard times are coming upon the Church because we don't care anymore! Because of our Laodicean attitudes, suffering is coming upon God's people!

Hold on to the Good Traditions Given by Christ and the Apostles

The Apostle Paul said in II Thess. 2:15-17, “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and **hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.** Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* **everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.”**

The things the Apostles taught: (1) by word, or (2) by epistle—letter were to be upheld as beneficial traditions to follow for the Church. Good traditions will give us comfort, peace, and hope.

And again in I Cor. 11:1-2 (NKJV) Paul said, “**Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.** Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and **keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.**”

In II Thess. 3:1-15 Paul states, “Finally, brethren, **pray** for us [a good tradition], that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you: And that we may be **delivered from unreasonable and wicked men:** for all *men* have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and **keep you from evil.** And we **have confidence in the Lord** touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the **patient waiting for Christ.**

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye **withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.** For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for **we behaved not ourselves disorderly** among you; **Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought;** but wrought with **labour and travail night and day,** that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but **to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.** For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that **if any would not work, neither should he eat.** For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that **with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.** But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.” This is how we should treat other people and denominations that teach contrary to the doctrine of Christ and the traditions set forth by the Apostles.

The Apostle Peter also tells us, “Wherefore **gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope** to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; **As obedient children,** not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He which hath called you is holy, so **be ye holy in all manner of conversation [conduct];** Because it is written, **Be ye holy; for I am holy.**” And “**Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently**” (I Pet. 1:13-16; 22).

The only way you can really know what Jesus Christ has taught is to study His words until you know them! You can begin by studying all the booklets and articles on our website. But don’t just believe us, believe your Bible!

Jesus said in John 7:17, “If any man will do His [the Father’s] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God...” This is true about both the doctrines and the traditions in churches and denomination today. **If we are willing to do the will of the**

Father, we will know whether the traditions are from God or created and designed by men!

The purpose of this article is not to point out all the traditions that are wrong in other churches. **This article is to encourage you to develop a much closer relationship with God through Jesus Christ. If any person will obey the Father and do what He says, he will be able to tell if the doctrine or tradition is from God or men!** Keep and do the traditions Christ and the Apostles set as examples for us to follow and forget the rest that have been established by men for personal or denominational reasons!

Please wake up! The time is short! Jesus Christ is coming soon!

by Joseph M. Smith
www.thelittlebook.com
© *A Message from Jesus Ministry* 2008