

# **Truth vs. Tradition**

Sermon 47 in Matthew Series

## **Matthew 15:1-20**

This is not the first time in the life of Christ, or in Matthew's account that Jesus took the religious leaders to task, and it wouldn't be the last. Matthew 23 records some of the most scathing attacks against any group in all of Scripture.

### **Opening Questions**

- A. Why does Christ denounce their tradition?
- B. Does "tradition" ever serve a useful purpose?

### **1-2 -- A Question that was really a harsh Judgment**

This was a ceremonial washing and purification – this really has little or nothing to do with sanitary washing.

Mark 7:1-4 adds important details

How and why the ceremony was performed.

A living example of this kind of wrong thinking -- Gal. 2:11-16.

### **3-4 – Why do you transgress the law of God?**

### **5-6 – The "legal loophole" explained in simple terms**

#### **Mark 7:8-13**

Corban =A gift devoted to God. It is no longer yours. It is given to Him – by oath -- and cannot be taken back – except for land which can be redeemed in the year of Jubilee.

Two beneficiaries

The person who is no longer under obligation.

Those who will receive the property/money when the person dies.

### **8-9 – The application – Isaiah 29:13 and v. 14**

1 Cor. 1:18-25 – 14b is quoted and is the basis of Paul's argument.

John Gill quotes a rabbi who lived more than 100 years before Christ.  
“If the hypocrites of the world were divided into ten parts, nine of them would belong to Jerusalem and one to the rest of the world.”

**10-11** -- A parable for the multitude (usually not listed as a parable)

One commentator wisely said: “People might defile themselves ceremonially (under the Old Covenant) by eating something unclean, and it was understood they would defile themselves morally by saying something sinful (James 3:6). Here Jesus clearly distinguished between the law’s ceremonial requirements and its moral standard. **Ceremonial defilement can be dealt with through ceremonial means. But moral defilement corrupts a person’s soul.**”

**12** -- A practical problem

**13-14** – Let them alone

**15** – Peter (as the spokesman) and his request

**16-20** – the application

To properly understand this “parable” – you need to understand that Jesus talking about the heart as the seat of corruption.

Verses **17, 20** to be taken literally -- real bodily functions -- real food and real excrement.

Verses **18-19** – the true source of sin and corruption.

**Mat 12:34** -- “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Prov 4:23 -- Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life.

1 Sam 16:7 “man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

Colossians 2:8-9 -- Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, **according to the tradition of men**, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in a bodily form;