

The Tradition of the Elders

April 24, 2022

Matthew 15:1-9

1 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 2 “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!”

3 Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ 5 But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ 6 they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. 7 You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

8 “ ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.’ ”

1. The supremacy of the Word of God

2. Tradition

3. Hypocrisy

a. Look up not down

b. Look in not out

c. Look forward not backward

“When traditions become ossified, they rob lives of vitality, integrity, and innovation. When the underlying connection between these traditions and the principles they once embodied is lost, people may find themselves mindlessly following traditions and lose their way on the path God commands. It is all too easy to uphold our traditions at the expense of faithful obedience to God. Religious traditions may even become a cover for not attending to the rigorous demands of the Christian life. “

Lewis F. Galloway