

# Some Effects of Human Tradition on Religion

Matt. 15:1-3

## Introduction:

- A. “Tradition” simply means “a handing down.” — Vine.
  - 1. Can be good (2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6)
  - 2. Can be bad (v. 3; Col 2:8).
- B. “Human tradition” associated with the church.
  - 1. Can be harmless — cf. Hour of service, Wednesday night, building style, etc. — they work.
  - 2. Can be harmful — if violate law or if become law.
- C. Our text shows the effects that human traditions had on the Jews.

## Discussion:

- I. They Set Aside Divine Law (vv. 3-6)**
  - A. By contradicting law (vv. 5-6)
  - B. By elevating it above law (cf. Traditional view of preachers over content of preaching)
  - C. By giving tradition equal weight as law.
- II. They Had a Warped View of Religion (v. 5)**
  - A. By separating “religious life” from “real life.”
    - 1. Use divine service as excuse for neglecting human service (text)
    - 2. Use human service as excuse for neglecting divine service (cf. Mt. 26:6-3).
  - B. By exactness in ritual, but looseness in other matters (Matt. 23:23,24)
    - 1. Insist on exactness in worship, but loose in with work.
    - 2. Intolerant of corrupt worship, but ignore daily deeds of love and kindness.
- III. They Reduced Worship to Lip-service (v. 8).**
  - A. Must honor with lips and heart (cf. John 4:24; Rom. 10:10)
  - B. Must obey from the heart (Rom. 6:17).
- IV. They Worshiped God in Vain (v. 9).**
  - A. By “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” (Cf. Psalms 127:1)
  - B. By assuming a thing morally right to be religiously right (v. 2).
    - 1. Instrumental music in worship to God.
    - 2. Social and recreational activities in church work (cf. 1 Cor. 11:22,34).
- V. They Resisted Criticism of Their Traditions (v. 12)**
  - A. Tend to love own creations more than God’s — doctrines, institutions, and practices.
  - B. Many will accept criticism of Lord’s church easier than cherished human institution.
- VI. They Would Not Stand the Test of Judgment (vv. 13, 14)**

## Conclusion:

- A. Let us follow tradition handed down from God rather than men.
- B. Let us not elevate any tradition to a position of divine law.