



Truth or Traditions

June 17, 2018

Matthew 15:1-9

“They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules” (Matthew 15:9).

While plotting to kill Jesus, some Pharisees and teachers of the law followed Jesus to find a way to entrap Him. In some of their efforts, they accused Jesus of allowing His disciples to break their traditions, traditions their elders had created. In reply, Jesus told them that they were using their old traditions to disobey the Law of God while appearing to obey God. After giving them an example of how they used a crafty tradition to break the Law of God; enabling them to appear holy while they avoided honoring their mother and father, Jesus called them hypocrites. A hypocrite can appear to be a good religious person when in actuality they practice the opposite of what they represent themselves to believe. The Pharisees and teachers of the law represented themselves as sincere worshipers of God who obeyed God completely, but they were self-centered instead of God-centered. They created traditions that would allow them to selfishly break the law of God while appearing before others to be keeping the law of God. For example, they created a tradition that would allow them to keep the most money for themselves by giving a smaller offering in temple worship than what it would cost them to help their mother or father in their old age. Because they plotted ways to disobey God while appearing to obey God, Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah and said their worship was vain or empty; their worship experience was of no value to God, to themselves, or to others. Throughout history, individuals and groups have been tempted to create traditions and practices that set aside the Law of God while appearing to obey God.

1. What teachings from the Bible did the Pharisees accuse Jesus' disciples of breaking? Explain your answer.
2. What did Jesus accuse the Pharisees of doing?
3. What commandment of God did Jesus accuse them of breaking? Why do you think He chose that commandment?
4. In what ways do people make void the law of God? In what ways do
5. In what ways do people make void the word of God?