

Sept. 2, 2018
“The Power Of Tradition”
(Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23)

The Pharisees and some teachers of the law were offended that Jesus’ disciples did not do the ritual of ceremonial hand washing.

In this case, it was a matter of religious ceremony.

A few observations:

#1.- Their fondness for Traditions has been one reason the Jewish community has survived.

Their traditions served as a key ingredient in maintaining their identity.

They have special laws for diet, relationships, and other things. It made for a vibrant cohesive community.

According to Tevye (from *Fiddler On The Roof*), because of their traditions, everyone knew who they were and what God expected them to do.

There is a certain comfort in living by such traditions. There is order and a certain security.

Tradition has been the primary glue that has kept the Jewish community together over the centuries.

Antiques like traditions help us hold onto the past.

#2.- Some of us can be Hypocritical in our condemnation of tradition-keepers.

Pastor tells a story about an assimilated Jewish woman who could accept an Amish person who kept traditions, but not her own people.

(over)

Tradition is a mighty force in our lives. It is important in our worship, in celebrations, in our way of business and in the way we judge acceptable behavior in all of life.

Tradition helps us discover meaning in our lives. It helps us give form and substance to life.

We are builders on foundations already carved out by generations of thoughtful and courageous people before us.

Jesus’ response to the question was a rather stark condemnation by Jesus of the Pharisees’ faith.

#3.- Could it be that in Jesus’ eyes these traditions had taken on almost Idolatrous significance for the Pharisees?

Even a good thing can be taken to _____.

There’s a sense in which we can keep God in a state of _____ through the use of tradition.

When we get comfortable with our _____ and procedures, we’re no longer open to God’s _____ and liberating spirit!

And we’re not open to God’s call to _____ others.

It’s our _____ that Christ is concerned about. It is the _____ person that Christ came to _____!

Religious traditions have often been used to put people _____, rather than _____ them up.

Do we seek after His love, His _____, His commitment to a better life for ALL people? Or are we satisfied with looking like a _____, keeping the _____ of our faith?

Where is God? Is He at the center of your heart?

Let’s seek to _____ the God whom we have encountered in Jesus Christ, whose nature and whose name is _____!