

Series: Goodnews
Passage: Mark 7:1-13
Sunday: September 27, 2026

Mark 7:1-13 (ESV)

⁷ Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, ² they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders, ⁴ and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) ⁵ And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶ And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

“‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me;
⁷ in vain do they worship me,
teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’”

⁸ You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.”

⁹ And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ ¹¹ But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, “Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban”’ (that is, given to God)— ¹² then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, ¹³ thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.”

1. What were the religious leaders accusing the disciples of doing? Was it wrong?

2. What occurs when traditions are prioritized above God’s commands? How have you fallen into the trap of tradition above what God commands?

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3. How did referring to an Old Testament passage (verses 6-7) have a higher impact on the Pharisees?
4. Does this passage convict you of idolization of traditions or routines? What things do you need to offer into God's hands?
5. Where do you see people today obeying God's commands externally but breaking the law in their own hearts?
6. In what ways has Jesus changed the desires of your heart? How can you further prioritize your relationship with God, than prioritize the comfort of your tradition?
7. How does letting go of marginalized tradition help you love God and others better?