

12th Sunday after Pentecost / 11th Sunday after Trinity – 2021

Saturday, 8/21 at 4:00 & Sunday, 8/22 at 9:00



Text: Mark 7:1-13 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: We are in **Mark chapter 7**, focusing on the topics of Scripture and tradition.

- The Traditions of the Elders:** ¹ The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around [Jesus] when they had come from Jerusalem, ² and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, **unwashed.** ³ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, *thus* observing the traditions of the elders; ⁴ and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.) // The traditions of the elders are “...practical rules handed down by learned

Rabbis..." (Lenski, 283). Oftentimes, they took a law of God *and put a fence around it*. In other words, the house is the law, *but they expanded the law to the property lines*. For example, the Bible required the OT priests to wash before they served in the temple (Ex. 30:17-21), so they expanded it to *washing when they come from the marketplace*.

2. **Tradition Over Scripture:**

- a. **Blind to the truth:** ⁵ **The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?"** // Rules can be good, *but for the Pharisees and the scribes, "the tradition' was placed above the [Scriptures]"* (284), *which is upside down!* They were *"so steeped in their traditionalism... that they [were] utterly blind to the true teaching of their own divine Torah"* (Lenski, 286). Unfortunately, that is also true in many church bodies today: They read from the Bible – *giving the impression they believe it*, but they teach some things that are false! **Two examples:**
- i. **6-Day creation:** The Bible is crystal clear; read **Genesis 1**, etc.; however, in a 2014 Pew Research Poll, *ONLY the LCMS (Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod) and the SBC (Southern Baptist Convention)*, of all those polled, *are firmly in agreement with the Bible*.¹
- ii. **Faith alone:** The Bible is crystal clear; read **John 3:16; 5:24; 6:47; Rom. 3:28; 1Jo. 5:12**; etc., etc., etc.; however, the RCC and OC officially teach faith + works and, according to a 2017 Pew Research poll, half of protestants also believe faith + works 😞😞😞.²

¹ <https://www.pewforum.org/2009/02/04/religious-groups-views-on-evolution/>

² <https://www.pewforum.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2017/08/US-Protestant-Reformation-FINAL.pdf>

- b. Actors: ⁶ And He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.’ ⁷ ‘BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.’ ⁸ “Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.” // Jesus called the leaders hypocrites, *thus actors*; they **pretended** to be devout followers of God, **yet** they *ignored God’s ways and followed their own*. Three important points:
- i. Bible weight: It is GOD’S WORD, so it *is MUCH HEAVIER than every other word!*
 - ii. Bible interpretation: **Historical Grammatical** – *It means what it says!* **Historical Critical** – *What does it really mean?* Sadly ☹️, most now use the latter, HC which is ▶complicated, ▶foolish, and ▶dangerous!
 - iii. Our sinful hearts: Jesus said, “...out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications... deeds of coveting *and* wickedness, *as well as* deceit... envy... pride *and* foolishness” (Mk. 7:21-22). So, *it is always best to go with God’s Word!*
- c. Actor example: ⁹ He was also saying to them, “You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. ¹⁰ “For Moses said, ‘HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER’; and, ‘HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER, IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH’; ¹¹ but you say, ‘If a man says to *his* father or *his* mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, given to God),’ ¹² you no longer permit him to do anything for *his* father or *his* mother; ¹³ *thus* invalidating the word of God by your

tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.” // God’s command is clear about children to parents – HONOR, *yet they canceled God’s commandment*. Similar things are done today:

- i. Infant baptism: Since children have sin ([Ps. 51:5](#)), need Jesus ([John 14:6](#)), and should be baptized first and taught second ([Matt. 28:19-20](#)), *God acts through baptism* ([Eph. 2:4-5](#); [Acts 2:38-39](#)) *to save them!* Yet today, many well-intentioned pastors and parents use human reason to overturn God’s Word.
- ii. Stewardship: God calls us to honor Him with our money (see our [Tithing brochure](#)) **AND** our abilities ([Rom. 12:1-8](#); [1Co. 12:4-31a](#)). However, some have chosen to practice one while neglecting the other.

3. **A Sharp Distinction Between Scripture and Tradition**: We have traditions, *like our Ascension Day meal*, **yet all BLC teachings are based ONLY on the Holy Scriptures** (in the RCC, they give equal weight to the Bible, tradition, and reason☹). *Challenge me to show you the Bible basis for any teaching!*

Conclusion:

- **Truth** – **Scriptures** – *from God*; **traditions** – *from people*.
- **Relevance** – **Scripture** – *saving truth*; **tradition** – *should never contradict Scripture*.
- **Inspiration** – Blessed with our own Bibles, let us ▶read, ▶study, ▶apply, and ▶share God’s Truth with others!

Let Us Pray: Dear H.S., help us and others to keep Scripture far above tradition for our good and God’s glory!

Website: www.blc7500.com (our short URL); **YouTube-watch:** Benefit from the Bible
Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma; **Podcast-listen:** Benefit from the Bible
Address: 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134; **Phone:** 440-845-2230