

Audio Sermon **Message #3** **God’s Word versus Tradition****[A Intro – Pastor Jefferson 0:00 thru 1:20]**

Hello friends, I’m **pastor Jefferson**, welcome to DWJD Ministries audio Teaching **message #3**. Our emphasis is always on giving you an effective method along with some powerful tools with which to greatly expand and deepen your walk with Jesus. If you haven’t already, go back and listen to the message introducing this series first. Then starting with **message 1**, proceed in order thru all the audio sermons. These messages are designed to be heard in numerical order. If you wish to be signed up to receive the messages, send us an email requesting to be added to our sermon series. Include a short line asking to be included in the audio teaching ministry and send it to Info@DWJDMinistries.com. We will then share a link with you for each audio message as it becomes available. This is an educational ministry where we are working on cultivating followers of Jesus Christ.

[B What is a Mentor? 1:20 thru 2:58]

In the last message, **number 2**, we were discussing; “*What is involved in our making disciples?*” And we said that our job involves mentoring these fledgling disciples as they complete their absorption of knowledge regarding the Word of God. A **mentor** is defined as ‘**a trusted counselor or guide.**’ Thus, we are able to serve in the role as tutor or coach to the newly minted followers. And we work in close concert with Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the completion of our quest. We are forbidden from attempting to make disciples on our own. Which brings me to my next question: “*Who then is qualified to teach new disciples?*” Let me give you an example. When I was coming up in the church, I quite often found that those who were teaching me, were not qualified for the job. Typically, their knowledge of the subject matter was scarcely more than mine. I had most of my questions regarding God, Jesus and the Bible go unanswered. Or the answer I received was at best a guess on their part. I heard a lot of what I now call, “**Christian mythology**” during that time. And it wasn’t like I was asking impossible or tough questions such as: “*Who made God?*” or “*Why Did God create evil?*” It was a major frustration for me in my religious training.

[**C** God’s Word versus Tradition 2:58 thru 4:23]

Thankfully, Jesus gave us an answer to that very question. Open your Bible to **Matthew**, chapter **15**. Take a moment, stop the player, and carefully read the first 20 verses of the chapter, then resume listening. Okay, in **verse 1**, we see where some of the religious leaders came to see Jesus from Jerusalem. I want to point out that they made a specific trip to go find Jesus just so they could then challenge Him. We read their question in **verse 2**: *“Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders, by not washing their hands when they eat bread?”* Jesus answered their question in **verse 3** with a question, which in reality was an indictment. He asked, *“Why do you, yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?”* I can just imagine the Pharisees and scribes looking around at each other and one of them probably replied with, *“We don’t do that!”* That is a very typical response of those who think they own the moral high ground. I see and hear it every day in the words and actions of those who are the modern-day equivalent of Pharisees and scribes.

[**D** Honor Your Father and Mother 4:23 thru 5:18]

In **verse 4** Jesus replied, *“God said to ‘HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,’ and ‘HE WHO CURSES HIS FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.’ ”* Jesus was quoting from four different verses out of the Old Testament in that verse.¹ The Hebrew word we see used for **honor** is *kaw-BED* and means *‘heavy or burdensome.’* It primarily conveys this idea in both a literal and metaphorical sense. The implication is that something if something was *“heavy”* it was to be highly respected and revered. It is used to describe things ranging from the glory of God, to as done here, the expected respect of parents. We honor something when we are willing to bear heavy loads in its support.

[**E** Or Curse Your Father and Mother 5:18 thru 6:01]

Conversely, the Hebrew word found for **curse** is *yeh-kal-LEL* and means *‘to make light of, to treat with contempt or to despise.’* The word **despise** is defined as *‘to look down on with disrespect or aversion.’* In the ancient Hebrew culture, words carried significant weight and the act of cursing someone or belittling them was a most serious

¹ Read Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 5:16, Exodus 21:17 and Leviticus 20:9.

offense. To make light of someone, either by words or deeds was to undermine their very dignity and worth. When done to parents, God called for the death of such children.

[**F** The Principal of Korban 6:01 thru 7:07]

In **verse 5**, we see Jesus revealing their tradition. *“But you say to your father and mother, ‘Whatever I have that could help you has instead been given to God.’”* It was a common tradition for the religious elite to declare some of their money and possessions as **kor-BAN**, meaning, **‘a gift dedicated to God.’** Now mind you, this gift hadn’t yet been delivered to the Temple or the clergy for that matter. So, this **kor-BAN** is the spiritual equivalent of a tax write-off. It was a legal method used to shield assets from being taken and used for some other purpose—such as caring for their parents. Later they would just annul their vow, where the assets could then be recovered for when they needed it for themselves. Thus, they legally avoided their Biblical responsibility for honoring their parents. Jesus equated this practice with the cursing of one’s parents.

[**G** Nullifying Scripture 7:07 thru 8:37]

By way of review, it is the fifth commandment which tells us to *“Honor your father and your mother, that the days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.”*² Whether you like it or not, the children of parents are commanded by God to take care of their parents when they reach a point where they can no longer work and support themselves. Children are to be a guaranteed backup retirement system. Regardless of what you may think or have heard, there are no valid excuses for not doing so, not even God Himself. In **verse 6**, Jesus proclaimed that they were invalidating the fifth commandment in favor of their traditions. The Greek word Jesus used for **invalidating** is [1] **ek-ROW-sah-tay**. It is only used this one time and so its meaning is special. It means **‘to annul, make void, or to nullify.’** By their use of this tradition of **kor-BAN**, the Scribes and the Pharisees were making the word of God non-binding, thus denying God’s authority. This was pure blasphemy, and blasphemy was a charge worthy of death in their system. But, since it was part of their oral tradition, its practice was not

² Read Exodus 20:12.

only okay, but viewed as entirely legal.

[**H** Worship was in Vain 8:37 thru 9:53]

Jesus then verbally laid waste to these members of the religious elite. We read His response in **verses 7 & 8**: *"You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.' "* ³

Jesus here is quoting from **Isaiah 29:13**. The prophet Isaiah, was in turn quoting Yahweh God Almighty. In **verse 9**, Jesus continues His attack when He adds, *"And their worship of Me is in vain, based solely on the human derived rules which they have been taught."*

Ouch! This is precisely what I have been discussing regarding the training of disciples. We are NOT to use man-made doctrine, traditions or whatever in the teaching of newly minted disciples. We are never to replace the direct word of God; it leads to vain worship.

Vain is defined as *'marked by futility or ineffectualness.'* And the worst part is that the Pharisees knew exactly what they were doing.

[**I** They were the Hypocrites 9:53 thru 11:18]

We see this by the fact that Jesus called them **hypocrites**. The Greek word Jesus uses here is *hy-po-krit-TIE*, which is defined as *'someone who pretends to be something they are not, particularly in a moral or religious sense.'* It denotes a person who outwardly displays righteousness but inwardly is deceitful or insincere. The word was originally used for actors appearing on the Greek stage. And just like actors, these people are also pretenders. But they are even worse than actors as they are also dissemblers, and phonies, who deep down know precisely what they are doing. But unlike actors, they are not doing it for our entertainment. No, they are refusing to worship Christ, all the while pretending that they are. The Hebrew word for **heart** that Isaiah used is *weh-lib-BO* and means *'the center of human emotion, thought, will and moral character.'* The meaning encompasses the inner life of a person, their intellect and includes feelings. Ladies and gentlemen, this is the state of the majority of the religious community today. And this also includes each of the Christian orientated denominations.

³ Read **Isaiah 29:13**.

[**J** Out of the Mouth is What Defiles 11:18 thru 12:32]

Look now at **verse 10**, where Jesus called the crowd to Him. He wanted them to have crystal clear understanding of what He just said. In **verse 11** He utters a most profound statement: *“It is not what enters via the mouth which defiles the man, but rather what comes out of the mouth, this is what defiles the man.”* Jesus is using an analogy here to equate speech with food. He is saying that merely listening to the false teachings coming out of the mouths of the Pharisees are not what defiles the person. Instead, it is when a person repeats or propagates those teachings that they become defiled. The word Jesus used for **defiled**, He used twice in the verse. It is *koi-NOI*, and means **‘to defile or to profane.’** This word is only used in the context of desecrating something holy. It means **‘to treat what is sacred as common or ordinary.’** This is what we do when we treat the word of God lightly. In God’s eyes, we are in effect despising it.

[**K** They Will All be Uprooted 12:32 thru 13:32]

And just as we observe in **verse 12**, the religious leaders are offended when we call them out for having done so. My experience is that when I try to explain to pastors, leaders and teachers that they are mistreating the word of God by handling it lightly, they become very defensive. Listen, no one likes being told they are in the wrong, especially when it comes to God and church matters. But Jesus is clear in **verse 13** when He says, *“Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted.”* The word we see for **uprooted** is *ek-riz-ZOO-the-seh-tie* and it describes **‘the action of uprooting or removing something from its foundation.’** It is used metaphorically to describe the removal of people or ideas not aligned with God’s will or purpose.

[**L** They Will Fall into a Pit 13:32 thru 14:41]

In **verse 14**, Jesus issues the command, *“Leave them!”* He explains that they are nothing more than blind guides leading the blind. *“And if blind people act as blind guides, then they will lead both to fall into a pit.”* The word we find for **pit** is *BOTH-ee-non*. It brings with it the concept of **‘a deep hole, a place of danger, of entrapment or destruction.’** Jesus is equating this practice of treating Scripture lightly akin to falling into a spiritual abyss, which at best is a perilous situation and at worst a place from which one

cannot escape. He is not talking about the bottomless pit, the Lake of Fire or hell. He is saying that such people put themselves into a position which is very difficult from which to escape. None of us can or will just fall into Hell or the Lake of Fire. At the appropriate time, God will send those so assigned to their final places of doom.

[**M** Waste Winds Up Where it Belongs 14:41 thru 15:50]

Then Peter asked Jesus in **verse 15** to explain the parable to them. In the next five verses Jesus explains that what passes from the mouth goes into the stomach and is then eliminated. He is saying that those words not coming from Him are thus appropriately discarded, right where they belong. The word Jesus used here for **eliminated** is **af-phe-DRONE-ah**, which means **'of a latrine or a sewer.'** It describes the elimination of waste from out of the body. But the words which proceed out of one's mouth originate from their inner being, and it is those which defile the man. In **verse 20**, Jesus finally answers the Pharisees initial question by stating , *"To eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."* So, we can see that God's word is precious, and never to be treated lightly. When man preaches apart from God's Word and His Holy Spirit it is nothing more than pure waste in comparison.

[**Z** Some Closing Thoughts 15:50 thru 16:55]

That's why who mentors disciples is of critical importance. It is our responsibility to guard and protect the word of God and not treat it lightly. We are to ensure that fledgling disciples are kept on a tight ecumenical leash, as it were. Our beliefs and traditions cannot supplant the word of God, else we face the very real prospect of being uprooted. And how can we know what the word of God tells us unless we labor to uncover its deepest meanings? The short answer is we cannot. Today we looked up the definitions of **12** words, of which **10** were from the original Biblical languages. Hey, folks, that's all the time allotted for this message. Please, keep listening and learning. It is the only way. **So, until next time my beloved, this has been Pastor Jefferson, speaking in God's Holy name and for His glory alone. Amen.**