

TRADITIONS

Definition: *paradosis*: a handing down, or handing over.

Dictionary: a custom so long continued it almost becomes the force of law.

TRADITIONS AMONG THE JEWS OF JESUS' DAY

Traditions were established for the noble purpose of keeping the Law.

The sect of the Pharisees was formed to maintain orthodoxy.

The Pharisees were zealous of their ancestral traditions. Mar.7:3-4, Gal.1:14

Gamaliel was a Pharisee. Act.5:34

Paul the Apostle (Saul of Tarsus) was a zealous Pharisee. Act.23:6, 26:5; Phi.3:5

The rabbis' interpretations of the Law had taken on the force of law.

Some traditions violated Scripture. Mar.7:1-13, Mat.15:1-6

The "keepers of tradition" had become overbearing and self-serving. Mat.23:1-7

TRADITIONS AMONG THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

The source of traditions is all important.

Traditions (doctrine) from God.

Traditions of the Apostles came from God through inspiration. Mat.16:19; 1Co.2:12-13

The Apostles handed down the teachings of Christ. (Called "traditions" 2Th.3:6; 2:14-15)

Paul taught "traditions." 1Co.11:2. Cf. 1Co.14:37

Traditions of men

Traditions that originate in the mind of mankind, often with good intentions.

They cannot be cited as authority. Col.2:8.

They may conflict with Scripture.

TRADITIONS IN THE CHURCH TODAY

If traditions conflict with Scripture—they are bad (anti-Scriptural).

If traditions gain the force of rule—they are harmful.

If traditions bind where the gospel doesn't bind—they are needless burdens.

If traditions become sacrosanct (inviolable)—they become divisive.

If traditions are kept after becoming counter-productive—they are a hindrance.

If traditions are in keeping with the Word, and serve the purpose and needs of the congregation—they are good.

Note: Traditions can be done by rote* and become a substitute for true worship. Isa.29:13

**a memorizing process using routine or repetition, often without full attention or comprehension; mechanical routine.*

WE MUST DIFFERENTIATE

Traditions (teachings) found in the New Testament are doctrine.

They are approved of God and must be followed.

Traditions of men cannot be used as doctrine.

They must never be given equal weight to Bible authority.

Traditions devised to carry out the keeping of the Lord's commands cannot be bound.

They can and do serve a useful purpose, but must never be bound.

TRADITIONS CAN BE GOOD, BAD OR HARMLESS—IT ALL DEPENDS

Observe **all** the traditions of the Apostles.

Observe **none** of the traditions of men that are put forward as doctrine.

Observe **any** tradition of men that is found to be beneficial.