

Tradition

Matthew 15:1-28 Remember the song from Fiddler on the Roof called "Tradition"? We all have our traditions. I recall one Christmas hosting my older sister and her family from Seattle. She and her family have their special Christmas traditions, and so does our family. We had a time trying to fit in both family traditions on Christmas day. Traditions are not bad, but they can become a hindrance to God's Word. In fact, if we hold to our religious traditions more than we hold to God's Word, we can make the Word of God have no effect in our lives.

In our church we have heard some say, "But we cannot change this part of the service because we have always done it this way." God is always doing something new. He has not stopped creating. Traditions will often block the new fresh move of the Holy Spirit. It is mind-boggling to realize that the Word of God, which is more powerful than a two-edged sword, can be blocked by tradition.

We are exhorted in the Bible to take up the shield of faith daily as a part of our full armor. Faith mixed with the Word daily will have a lasting effect upon our lives. However, if we choose to take up the shield of tradition rather than the shield of faith, the Word of God will be blocked from touching us and changing us. The Pharisees and Sadducees in Jesus' day were avid readers of the Law. Jesus said they searched the Scriptures but would not come to Him. The Pharisees and Sadducees were looking for the answers in the Scriptures, but they had no idea the answer to all of their questions was standing right in front of them. Jesus is all wisdom and all knowledge, and His Holy Spirit is the great teacher. Tradition is based upon the past. Faith, however, can only operate in the present. The change in our hearts and minds as we read and hear the Word will only come when faith is exercised. Faith and tradition can never mix together. They are like oil and water.

Is there something in the past you are holding on to? Is there a way that you always have your quiet time in the morning, and it hasn't changed for years? Maybe the traditional way of spending time with the Lord needs to be shaken so you can exercise faith as you read God's Word.

Be open to new fresh ways of spending time with the Lord. He wants to do a new thing in your life. Don't block it by continuing to do the same old, same old. By the way, I am preaching to myself.

Lord, help me to get out of the rut. I heard once that a rut is a grave with both ends open. Help me to climb out of routine and tradition and wait for the fresh wind You have for me by Your Holy Spirit. If I stay in the rut, I will never feel the sometimes powerful and sometimes gentle wind of Your Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, breathe a refreshing breeze upon me today. In Jesus' name I pray.

**READ: Genesis 46:1-47:31; Matthew 15:1-28; Psalm 19:1-14;
Proverbs 4:14-19**