

TRADITION AND THE WORD OF GOD

Mark 7:1-23

Key Verse: 7:8

* THE TRADITION OF THE JEWS (1-8)

1. Read verse 1. What was in the hearts of the Pharisees and teachers of the law who came to Jesus from Jerusalem? (See Jn 5:18; Mk 3:6) Why did they criticize the disciples? (2)
2. Read verses 3-5. What was the tradition which the Pharisees and all the Jews followed regarding handwashing? Where did the tradition of the elders come from? (See Neh 13:23-28) What might be its value? How did the Pharisees misuse it?
3. Read verses 6-8. How did these Pharisees fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah? (6,7) How did Jesus rebuke them? Think of some examples of people letting go of the commands of God while following the traditions of men.

* JESUS REBUKES THEIR IMPURE HEARTS (9-23)

4. Read verses 9-13. What does "Corban" mean? Did this Corban rule come from tradition or scripture? How did the Pharisees use this rule to avoid responsibility and violate the 10 commandments?
5. Read verses 14 and 15. To whom did Jesus speak these words? According to Jesus' words in these two verses, what does and what does not make a man unclean?
6. Read verses 17-19. When Jesus' disciples asked him to explain more about clean and unclean, why and how did he rebuke them? What fundamental change in the Levitical dietary laws did Jesus proclaim? (See Lev 11.)
7. Read verses 20-23. Why are the thoughts of the heart so important? What really corrupts a person? Why? (Php 4:8; 2Co 10:5b; Mt 5:8; Ps 24:3,4)
8. In the light of this passage, think about the importance of Bible study in keeping one's heart pure and one's life uncorrupted. (See also Jn 15:3; Ps 119:9,11; 1 Pe 1:23; 2Ti 3:16-17; Ps 1:3,4).