

## Matthew 15a

### Jesus denounces religious externalism

#### Leaders from Jerusalem come asking Jesus questions

[[ Matthew 15:1 ]] Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

[[ Matthew 15:2 ]] Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

**A meaningless do nothing tradition. /\* song about in fiddler \*/ These guys are not concerned about the miracles Jesus has done, but rather these meaningless traditions.**

**Shows a wicked heart that overlooks the good the disciples do, but looks for all the faults. It's a waste of time and pagan. The real issues of Christianity are overlooked.**

They are speaking of elaborate ceremonial washings, not a hygienic cleansing; the Jews of this day strictly observed a rigid, extensive ritual for washing before meals. These washings were commanded by tradition, not by Scripture; the religious leaders say as much when they refer to the tradition of the elders.

Why was Jesus so stern in His reply? Because these leaders were far too concerned with trivialities such as these, and by declaring these people unclean, they were denying them access to God.

This must have offended God greatly, as it does when anyone discourages another from coming to Him.

“Wash not their hands”: The Bible does have laws for the priests, yet here we are talking about your everyday orthodox Jew, of which there is nothing about washing your hands in this sense in the Old Testament.

In Judaism, there are oral traditions, which they put above the written tradition. The oral traditions which were embodied in writings called the Talmud and, in another sense, the Mishna, superseded the Torah. They held the Torah higher, but would only look at it through the interpretation of the Talmud or the Mishna. For example: Exodus 34:26, and the kosher laws.

## Traditions of Judaism vs. Commandments of God

The Pharisee headquarters was in Jerusalem. We will be seeing a confrontation between the traditions of Judaism and the commandments of God.

In some respects Judaism was the embodiment of the commandments of God, and it was the respect and reverence that Judaism had for the Torah that preserved them for God's purpose. Yet, Judaism was also ensnared with traditions of men.

### Jesus' answer: man's tradition against God's will

[[ Matthew 15:3 ]] But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

That's heavy but **they have justified their sins.**

Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

2Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

**Don't worry about the traditions of men. Primarily you are to obey God.**

**For example: Man breaks God's law of salvation:**

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

**Man teaches that you can be saved by being baptized. That voids the Bible and substitutes man's tradition.**

**They pull out 2 Thessalonians 2:15 as a proof text that you are to go by the traditions of the Catholic church.**

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[[ 2Thessalonians 2:15 ]] *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*

*'stand fast' - dont quit*

*'traditions' - not of the church.*

*2Thessalonians 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of US.*

*'us' - the apostles, not the church fathers, oregon, catholic doctrine and tradition.*

#### 2 types of tradition in the Bible

- 1) *inspired scripture - Pauline tradition*
- 2) *traditions of the elders or Pharisees*

*Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with [their] lips, but their heart is far from me.*

*Mark 7:7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men.*

*Mark 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, [as] the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.*

*Mark 7:13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.*

*the traditions of men overthrow the truths and commandments of God.*

An example of how their traditions dishonored God:  
the practice of not helping your parents with "devoted" goods

[[ Matthew 15:4 ]] For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

**In the OT there were such laws. Men don't like to fulfill God's commandments.**

[[ Matthew 15:5 ]] But ye say, Whosoever shall say to [his] father or [his] mother, [It is] a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

**Here is the tradition men use to circumvent this:**

[[ Matthew 15:6 ]] And honour not his father or his mother, [he shall be free]. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

**Relevant verses:**

Mark 7:11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, [It is Corban, that is to say, a gift], by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; [he shall be free].

Mark 7:12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

'Corban' - a gift

Under the law children had responsibilities to the parents. People are happy for any system to circumvent that. Thats what the scribes did. The edlders and scribes ran the religous show in Jerusalem. Gifts were given to circumvent responsibilities. Elders today do all kinds of things to circumvent the reposibilities of the Bible.

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**You have to be a lawyer (well, this is legalistic):**

In this practice, a Jew could say that his possessions or savings were a gift to God, especially dedicated to Him - and therefore unavailable to help his parents.

Through this, a Jew could completely disobey the command to honor his father or mother, and do it while being ultra-religious.

There was a set of traditions.

1) One being that you could set aside some of your goods for either of two purposes: as a dedication to the Temple,

2) or in reserve for the performance of a vow.

If your goods were in that category (2), you could claim them as Corban—it is a gift, or vow. Which meant specifically that those goods were set aside for the Temple for the Lord, or for the keeping of some vow.

From this idea came a practice, say grandpa and grandma were hungry, you were to provide for them. But if you had a big steak you could declare it Corban as being exempt from having to take care of your parents with it.

If it was Corban it was excluded from your requirement to take care of your parents. So they used this tradition of reserving it as a gift to God as an excuse to get around the commandment to care for their father and their mother.

**God says 'hell', man uses words like 'limbo'. They say you don't have to go to hell. Replaces what God says. The atheist gets evolution, science. Tradition of the elders in a secular sense.**

**So Jesus is saying that these traditions are not only wrong, but they have been contrived as to make the commandment of God of no effect!**

## Jesus condemns their hollow tradition as hypocrisy

[[ Matthew 15:7 ]] [Ye] hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

[[ Matthew 15:8 ]] This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with [their] lips; but their heart is far from me.

Isaiah 29:13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near [me] with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

The great condemnation of these men is well quoted from Isaiah: [teaching as doctrines the commandments of men; we must constantly avoid the temptation to elevate man's teaching to the place of God's revelation.](#)

God is interested in the internal, which is the real and the eternal more than the external; is your relationship with God just external?

They profess to be God's priests.

The heart is centered on their own selves and their own sins. They profess to do the will of God, but in essence they do away with God and His commands.

You have thus kept the people from being blessed of God. The message has never been popular, so tradition is used to cover it up.

**Example:**

*Acts 8:36* And as they went on [their] way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, [here is] water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

*Acts 8:37* And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

**John R. Rice says 8:36 shouldn't even be in the Bible because it interferes with the plan of salvation. He throws that verse out.**

## Jesus speaks to the multitudes about religious externalism

[[ Matthew 15:10 ]] And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

[[ Matthew 15:11 ]] **Not** that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

/\* The mouth represents where we 'put things into' our body. \*/  
/\* I'm not talking about dunkin donuts \*/

### **Jesus states a fundamental principle:**

- ceremonial washing of hands or any other such thing that we "put into us" is not defiling.  
Rather, what comes out is what defiles, and it reveals that we have unclean (defiled) hearts.

In other words, what goes in the mouth doesn't defile a man, but **the words that come out of the mouth are from the heart, which is wicked. It reveals an inner defiling.**

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: **who can know it?**

**You know it by what someone says. God can tell it without what they say. Heaven or hell depends upon a man's heart.**

Matthew 12:37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

**That's what defiles a man.**

**If they would have had the right words, God could have justified them. You don't even have to speak words for words to condemn you.**

**Give # -**

Romans 10:8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, [even] in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

**A guy must confess or his words have ruined him. Words come out of the heart.**

Matthew 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

**An evil man can't say a good thing.**

**God justifies the heart by the words that come out of the man's mouth.**

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Conclusion - The fundamental principle is simply this: ceremonial washing of hands (not for hygienic purposes) or any other such thing that we "put into us" is not defiling; rather, the things which come out of us defile us - and reveal that we have unclean (defiled) hearts.

This is not to say that there are not defiling things that we can put into us (such as pornography); but *in this specific context*, Jesus was speaking about ceremonial cleanliness in regard to foods. **He was probably anticipating when all foods would be declared kosher (Acts 10:15).**

*Acts 10:15 And the voice [spake] unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, [that] call not thou common.*

The kosher laws were, in a sense, calling certain foods 'unclean'.

The Hebrew word "kosher" means "fit" or proper. Generally used to describe foods that are prepared in accordance with special Jewish dietary laws.

**Animals**, such as pork, rabbit and horse meat  
**Fish**, such as catfish, eels, shellfish, shrimp and octopus  
are NOT kosher.

From [www.askmoses.com](http://www.askmoses.com) - a reader writes:

Question - I ate non-**kosher** food, is God upset at me?

Answer - God loves you and wants only the best for you. It bothers Him greatly when you do something which is detrimental to your well being. For the Jew, a proper diet is a Kosher one, and non-Kosher food is considered "unhealthy" for the Jewish soul. So, if non-Kosher food is eaten, the necessary measures of repentance need to be taken to rectify the damage that has been done.

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Jesus then warns His disciples that only what is of God and of truth will last and be secure.

[[ Matthew 15:12 (12 disciples) ]] Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

**May have been the 12 disciples.**

Of course He knew that He offended them! He intended to offend them.

[[ Matthew 15:13 ]] But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be **rooted up**.

/\* has the *flavor* of what is found in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares \*/

[ Matthew 13:24-30 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

Matthew 13:25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

Matthew 13:26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

Matthew 13:27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

Matthew 13:28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

Matthew 13:29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

Matthew 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

- **which talks about God planting good seed in His field. The devil also plants his seed, but that seed will be rooted up and thrown into the fire.** ]

But the planting *here* is the false doctrines of the Pharisees.

References -

Matthew 3:10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

The Lord 'roots' up -

Deuteronomy 29:28 And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as [it is] this day.

This applies directly to the religious leaders; their commandments of men will not last, because they are not rooted either in God or truth.

For a plant to be bad, all it has to be is a plant that God did not plant!

Meaning things in your life. Anything that is in your life that God didn't plant is temporal and will be rooted out.

It is the condition of your heart that truly defiles you

[[ Matthew 15:14 ]] Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. 'them' - the Pharisees

**This applies directly to the religious leaders. Their *commandments of men* will not last, because they are not rooted either in God or truth.**

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[[ Matthew 15:15 ]] Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this **parable**.

**It's not really a parable. Jesus didn't really speak in a **parable**. Yet because the disciples did not understand Him, they asked for an explanation, much like they did with the parables.**

[[ Matthew 15:16 ]] And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

**[[ Matthew 15:17 ]] Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?**

**[[ Matthew 15:18 ]] But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.**

**As we said -**

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Jeremiah 17:10 I the LORD search the heart, [I] try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, [and] according to the fruit of his doings.

**Heart: Jeremiah 17:9-10. Nothing is more deceitful than the heart. Incurably wicked.**

**Jesus amplifies the point first made in verse 11; we are defiled from the inside out rather than from the outside in, and this is particularly true of ceremonial things like foods.**

**Unfortunately, the emphasis of the religious leader's in Jesus' day (and often our own) is purely on these external things, not the internal things that make for true righteousness.**

[[ Matthew 15:19 ]] For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

Evil thoughts come from an evil heart. Murder is hatched in the heart. You can't rehabilitate him because you can't rehabilitate his heart. In the context He is accusing the scribes and pharasees of these things. They are plotting His murder.

**Also adultery -**

**Matthew 5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.**

**fornications -**

**No written evidence about this.**

**thefts -**

**Matthew 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.**

**Matthew 21:38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.**

Theft is also denying someone else the rightful use of his or her own property.

None of us can lay claim to not having any one of these occur in our heart. The Law of Moses dealt with the overt act which was enforceable by the society. Jesus Christ in Matthew 5,6 and 7 on the Sermon of the Mount, translates those intents to the heart. If you even think these things... etc.

**stolen -**

**Matthew 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.**

**they try to steal the KOH by violence**

**He is accusing the pharasees of all these things - out of their own mouths.**

[[ Matthew 15:20 ]] These are [the things] which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

**These (unwashed hands) aren't the things that defile a man.**

## Jesus is met with a request from a Gentile woman

[[ Matthew 15:21 ]] Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

From the sea of Ghalilee. The Jews have condemned themselves. Tyre and Sidon are Gentile. He's shown that Israel has a defiled heart. He departs out of Israel for Gentile cities.

[[ Matthew 15:22 ]] And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, [thou] Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.  
'woman' -

She recogniozes Him as the Messiah. A picture of someone willing to take help any way she can get it. Men aren't willing to solve the problem in any way it takes, thus exposing sin. Some sinners don't want to get forgiven because they won't take the remedy God gives them.

This woman is coming to intercede for her daughter, and she provides a picture of an intercessor: she makes her daughter's needs her own.

Yet, she also shows an awareness of who Jesus is (O Lord, Son of David!), something that was lacking among many of Jesus' Jewish contemporaries.

### Jesus heals the Gentile woman's daughter

[[ Matthew 15:23 ]] But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

[[ Matthew 15:24 ]] But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

'said' - to the disciples

Jesus defines the focus of His mission to her: to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, not to Gentiles like her.

[[ Matthew 15:25 ]] Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

'worshipped' - in spirit

[[ Matthew 15:26 ]] But he answered and said, It is not **meet** to take the **children's bread**, and to cast [it] to **dogs**.

'meet' - right

'children's bread' - the children of Israel

'dogs' - Gentiles

What she has said allows Him to give her her wish. She hasn't asked for bread, just for the crumbs. The bread was to the children of Israel.

[[ Matthew 15:27 ]] And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

**Lord, help, me. When the problems get greater, the prayers get shorter. Not long, drawn out, religious prayers.**

**His ministry was to the nation of Israel.**

The woman has a response of great faith; admitting her low estate (not debating the reference to dogs), she asks Jesus to deal with her on her own low level - and receives from Jesus. We need to see the power of coming to God as we are, and letting Him make true His promises to those weak and unclean.

[[ Matthew 15:28 ]] Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great [is] thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

**A classic passage that shows the overcoming of the predetermined will of God by the free will of an unregenerate person. God has circumvented His will. His ministry was to Israel.**

## The feeding of the 4,000

### Jesus ministers healing to the multitude

[[ Matthew 15:29 ]] And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

[[ Matthew 15:30 ]] And great multitudes came unto him, having with them [those that were] lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

**He heals whatever and right away. The only kind of healing ministry that is scriptural.**

Here we find no reference to the faith of those being healed; perhaps Jesus was ministering more out of His (and His Father's) good pleasure (perhaps in contrast to the encounter with the Gentile woman in Tyre and Sidon).

[[ Matthew 15:31 ]] Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

**Test of your ministry - who gets the glory - the Lord They glorified the God of Israel. The test of any work is what the bystander would attribute it to. They automatically attributed it to God's power. Your ministry shouldn't bring praises to the physical things. The Lord should get the glory. His Spirit is to bring glory to Christ and God. Not the pastor.**

## The feeding of the 4,000

[[ Matthew 15:32 ]] Then Jesus called his disciples [unto him], and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

**Three day fast. The key, possibly, to how long you should fast. Three is the number of the trinity, not necessarily completeness, but perfection.**

[[ Matthew 15:33 ]] And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

**- revelation 12 - feeding the multitude in the wilderness - a picture of the trib**

**He leaves the Jews (20)**

**He goes to the Gentiles (23,25)**

**He is up in a mountain like He is during this dispensation  
(29)**

**He is feeding a multitude in the wilderness (33) (trib)  
The 1st coming, the church age, the trib.**

This miracle follows the same basic pattern as the feeding the 5,000, except that it reveals that the disciples were generally as slow to believe as we are.

Jesus did what He only could do (the creative miracle), but left to the disciples what they could do (the distribution of the meal).

At the end of the meal, they gather more, not less; the seven large baskets show that God provided out of His abundance.

Note that there are seven loaves, and the fishes aren't numbered. The Holy Spirit is drawing our attention to the number seven.

The first feeding had emphasized, five the number of grace, and the two fishes—the number of witness. They were specifically aimed at

Israel, they had left over 12 baskets full. Twelve is the number of government of Israel, the 12 tribes.

In this case, they had been with them for 3 days; the number 3 suggests the resurrection or new beginning. This might be a hint of the Church, the seven baskets full!

[[ Matthew 15:34 ]] And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

**Real tenderness, He overlooks their failure in faith. He doesn't rebuke them. He understands that they are just dumb sheep.**

[[ Matthew 15:35 ]] And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

[[ Matthew 15:36 ]] And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake [them], and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

[[ Matthew 15:37 ]] And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken [meat] that was left seven baskets full.

**12, now 7 baskets. Now more -> less**

[[ Matthew 15:38 ]] And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

**8,000 - 12,000 people**

[[ Matthew 15:39 ]] And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

**2nd coming**

**in the trib He was away from the Jew (Tyre and Sidon), now at the 2nd coming**