

WHAT JESUS SAID – THEN AND NOW

Worship Without Reverence

TEXT: Mk 7:1-13

INTRODUCTION – Some of you are not going to like me today.

I am preaching from a text from the sayings of Jesus that many of Jesus' hearers did not like either.

Now I hope you know me well enough that you know I am not like the country preacher who said of a sermon, "If it don't make somebody mad enough to spit, it ain't worth preachin'."

I don't feel that way. I don't want to make people mad. I like people to like the sermon and I like people to like me.

BUT

When it comes to preaching the Word of God, you just have to say what it says!

And folks, if some people did not like it when Jesus said it, how can I expect everybody to like it when I repeat it?

So, we will begin by reading the text straight from Scripture. It I found in Mark, chapter 7. The same teaching is also recorded in Matthew, chapter 15.

The primary point of Jesus' words was Worship Without Reverence.

Now, you may think that I am going to talk about being quiet at certain times during church, but I am not. You may think I am going to talk about style of music used in church, but I am not. You may think I am going to talk about dress or attire in church, but honestly, that has nothing to do with the text.

What was Jesus talking about when He talked about worship without reverence?

Mark 7:1–13 1 Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. 2 Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. 3 For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash *their* hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, *like* the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?"

6 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written:

'This people honors Me with their *lips*,

But their heart is far from Me.

7 And in vain they worship Me,

Teaching as *doctrines the commandments of men.*'

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men— the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.”

9 He said to them, “*All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. 10 For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ 11 But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, 13 making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”*

The pivotal verses of the passage are 6 & 7.

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Jesus is quoting Isaiah. Both what Isaiah said in Hebrew and the root meaning of the Greek in the words of Jesus is, “**Without reverence, they worship Me.**”

Another way to put it is “Without the fear of the Lord, they worship Me.”

Therefore, their worship is empty, without significance, without meaning – vain.

I. WHY DID JESUS SAY THAT THE PHARISEES AND SCRIBES WORSHIPPED WITHOUT REVERENCE?

- Because they were hypocrites – they said one thing and did another
- Because they honored God with their words
- But they did not mean it in their hearts

That prompts me to think of the words I have sung today:
 Did I mean these things, really?
 Am I living by them?

Do I intend to live by them this week?

II. HOW DID JESUS KNOW THAT THESE MEN WORSHIPPED WITHOUT REVERENCE?

You may say, “Because Jesus knows everything!” And yes, of course He does!

But, there was an evidence in their lives that revealed it, and Jesus cited the evidence.

7 And in vain they worship Me,

Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men

A. The proof that they were worshipping

- without reverence,
- without a genuine fear of the Lord,
- without a true devotion of heart,

was that they substituted the traditions of men for the commandments of God.

B. The example Jesus gave was their dishonoring of parents by declaring their possessions “Corban.”

1. Corban means “given to God.”
2. Some Jews were declaring all their possessions “Corban” to avoid caring for their aging parents, thereby setting aside the command to honor father and mother.
3. They could later undo their commitment of devoting their possessions to the Lord by saying “Corban” again, and were thus freed by their tradition to use those possessions on themselves and their own desires.

C. The result was **Mk. 7:13 making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”**

D. Note that this was only one example of the way they were substituting man’s ways for God’s commands.

Jesus said, “Many such things you do.”

E. So I said, “**Lord, what do we do today?**

What do we who call ourselves Your people, Your children, do **that substitutes the traditions of men in the place of the commandments of God?”**

And I believe it was the Lord that brought these common things in the church, these common things in our church to my mind.

- **We make the Lord’s Day our day rather than His day.**
- **We make the training of our children in academics and entertainments of greater importance than training them in the Word and ways of God.**
- **We spend on numerous things for ourselves before we give the tithe to God.**

Let me explain, one at a time.

III. WAYS WE SUBSTITUTE OUR TRADITIONS FOR GOD’S COMMANDMENTS

A. We make the Lord’s Day our day rather than His day.

1. God said that one day out of seven was to be holy to Him, a day for rest, worship, spiritual development.
2. Originally, that day was the Sabbath or Saturday.
3. When Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday, the first day of the week, immediately the church began to make the day for rest and worship to be Sunday, and they called it the Lord’s Day.
4. And so, across the ages, the Lord’s Day has been kept and honored and reserved for people to rest from their labors and to spend time in worship, Bible study, and discipleship, until recent times.
5. And lately, we have even developed a new name for this day to give our practice of disregarding the Lord’s Day a holy veneer. Just like the Pharisees did who called their practice “Corban” – “Given to God!” Man, that sounds so righteous. Who could argue with that?

So we have a righteous sounding new name also for the Lord’s Day. We call it Family Day! I mean, who dare argue with that? Isn’t God pro family? Isn’t the church pro family?

Listen, I am all for Family Day.

Make Saturday Family Day.

Or if you work 6 days a week, let Sunday be the Lord’s Day for your family. Do family things. Eat all your meals together and talk across the table. Go to church together. Have lunch. If kids are young, go home and do naps. On the way back to church get a treat. Take out all the other stuff that turns Sunday into a hassle. Take out homework and insist that it be done on Saturday. Take out sports practice and games. Take out the other stuff that infringes on the Lord’s Day.

Folks, the real issue here is not Lord’s Day verses Family. Maybe not for everybody, but for many, the title “Family Day” is a misnomer to legitimize what we want to do.

Mom or dad or both want to

- Watch sports or other tv
- Play computer games
- Do facebook or pinterest

While the kids do homework or play their games or watch their tv.

Listen, if you use Sunday evenings as Family Time and you accomplish with your family what would be accomplished if you brought them back to church in the evening, namely

- Kids involved for an hour in fun ways to memorize the Scriptures
- Parents are disciplined in needful practical applications of God's Word
- All ages are engaged in worship and/or prayer and are taught consistently from the Word of God.

Now if you spend a couple of hours doing that with your family instead of coming to church in the evening, you have my blessing, because you are keeping the Lord's Day with your family.

But friend, by and large, that is not what is happening on Sunday afternoon or evening.

By and large, calling it Family Day, is just a religious cover up for making it OUR DAY, doing what we please rather than what honors the Lord and spiritually grows our lives.

B. We make the training of our children in academics and entertainments of greater importance than training them in the Word and ways of God.

1. Your kids are in **school** between 6 and a quarter hours and 6 and a half hours a day, depending on age, 5 days a week – more than **30 hours a week**.
2. If you have your child in the regular ministries of the church,
 - **Kidzone or Youth Lifechange Group**
 - **Worship, Sun. morning and night**
 - **Kidz in the Word or Youth Praise Gathering**
 - **Kidz choir or Rush Hour**

Your child or student would be receiving training in the Word and Ways of God for about **6 and a half hours a week**.

30 hours compared to 6.5 hours
And that is if they go to everything.

3. And how does your child's attendance record at church compare with their attendance record at school?

- For a bunch of you, if their attendance at school was like it is in church, you would be arrested!
 - And you wouldn't do that, because you know they cannot learn what they need to learn in math, history, and English if they just attend every other day or even if they miss every third day.
 - Yet it is common for parents to only have their children at church half or a third of the time.
4. Listen, folks, we take the discipleship of our children and teens seriously. We don't just provide an activity to occupy them while the adults do important stuff.
- If you will keep your children in our Kid Zone and student ministry, all of it, faithfully, while they are growing up,
 - **They will be taught the content of the Word of God that never changes.**
 - **They will be taught meaningful applications of God's Word to their everyday lives.**
 - **They will learn how to use their Bible and memorize significant portions of it.**
 - **They will learn about God's values and why they are best.**

How does that compare with what your school promises you?

But folks listen,

- It is awfully hard to do this when the child or student is here half the time or less.
- It is hard to do this when parents pick and choose which classes kids attend and don't.
- Would you expect a good high school education if your child never went to a math class?
- Would you expect a meaningful diploma if your student did not go to English classes?

God tells us to teach our children. But He tells us to first teach them His Word and His Ways.

- So we see to it they are in school – where the teaching of God's Word is forbidden.
- We put them in sports programs, dance lessons, and such
- And then if we can scrape up any left over time we give that to trying to learn something of God and His Book.

We make void the commandment of God by keeping the traditions of men.

C. We spend on numerous things for ourselves before we give the tithe to God.

And I break your heart to tell you I have no time left to preach on this!

CONCLUSION: Folks, Jesus told the Pharisees, your worship is without reverence because you are intent on following your traditions rather than obeying the Word of the Lord.

What does He say to us?

What do we need to do to give the Lord true preeminence in our lives and the Word of the Lord prominence in our obedience?