



On The Frontier



“For The Glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel”

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Truth VS. Tradition

Webster’s defines tradition as:

“the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction.”

Since this information has no supporting documentation it is susceptible to and welcomes the compounding of error.

As a child I played the game “telephone.” One person whispers a brief message in the ear of another who in turn whispers in the ear of the next and so on. By the time you get to the last person the message in no way resembles the original. So it is with the oral transmission of thoughts and ideas brought into the present from the past. Thus, this information becomes unreliable.

Furthermore, traditions are often altered to suit the need of the day. This practice compounds error while promoting the agenda of the one promulgating the tradition.

Traditions, like religions, are invented by men often with no factual basis behind them.

Facts don’t play a big role in the fabrication of tradition but it’s important we understand what a fact is and how they differ from truth. Facts change, truth does not. A fact today may not be a fact

tomorrow, e.g., the price of gasoline.

Working in my dad’s service station at age 11, I sold gasoline for 19¢ per gallon. Facts changed and the price of gasoline has gone up! These may be true facts, but facts none the less.

Truth differs from facts because truth never changes. What is true today will be true tomorrow.

God’s written Word is true, man’s spoken word is not! You can always trust the Word of God, you cannot often trust the word of man. That which is God breathed is 100% reliable ALL THE TIME!

Religion is an invention of man as are traditions and superstitions. Religion, being man made, is rife with tradition AND superstition! Both religion and tradition are unreliable and thus unworthy of faith and practice.

Christianity however, is not a religion. Christianity is what God has done in raising His Son from the dead and what He will do for and in you when you believe this.

Romans 10:9

that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from among [the] dead, thou shalt be saved. (1884 Darby Version)

Christianity is a family matter, the relationship of a loving Father with

His Children! Isn’t it wonderful that God has called us to His family!

Does this mean all traditions are bad? No, some are quite innocuous.

We all practice some traditions, e.g., going to Church on Sunday and having family brunch afterwards. Obviously there’s nothing wrong with that. What then is it that makes a tradition bad?

Matthew 15:1-3, 7-11

Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

The washing of hands spoken of here was not done for hygienic purposes but for traditional ceremony. This rigorous custom is still observed in Palestine today entailing a thorough scrubbing up to the elbows, all done for traditional reasons.

Now as well as then, no ceremony nor sacrifice need be done in the stead of the Son of God especially when delivering God’s Word.

Verse 3

But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

It's when tradition transgresses, oversteps, neglects, usurps, contradicts, mitigates or modifies God's commandment that it becomes bad.

The Pharisees and Scribes were the religious leaders of their day. They were expected to hold the Word of God above their traditions. But did they?

Verses 7-11

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

But in vain [a fruitless waste of time] they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. (1769 Authorized Version)

Some people are deluded into thinking their diets and religions will save them. Won't they be surprised when the role is called up yonder! What you put in your heart comes out of your mouth. This is what counts.

According to Jesus, the Word of God is the only information worthy to believe. Not tradition (orally delivered, small, big or otherwise), not religion and certainly not superstition.

Jesus did not follow traditions! Jesus followed the written Word of God. His favorite motto is "It is written!"

Jesus Christ remains your most relevant source of godly information!

As it was then, so it is now. And so shall it be forever!

Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

July 22, 2007

Jesus Of Nazareth, Messiah, Son Of God And Saviour Of Mankind

Messiah is from the Hebrew *mashiyach* meaning "the Holy One of God or "the Anointed One."

Koine Greek, from which the New Testament has been translated, has no equivalent as *mashiyach* embraces a Hebrew concept. The closest match in Greek is *Christos* (Christ in English).

Most identify Jesus the Messiah as Jesus Christ. It's important to recognize these words as appellations and not surnames. Jesus was not a member of the "Christ" family.

The name Jesus is not in itself sufficient to establish the identity of the true Messiah. There are others mentioned in Scripture with the same name. One such individual is Joshua.

Hebrews 4:8

For if Joshua [*Iesous*] had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day. (1901 American Standard Version)

The word *Iesous* appears 975 times in the New Testament and is used to describe individuals other than the Lord. Notably Barabbas (insurrectionist and murderer released in Jesus' stead) held the first name of Jesus.

Matthew 27:16,17

And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called (Jesus) Barabbas.

So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them, "Which one do you want me to release to you, (Jesus) Barabbas, or Jesus called Messiah?

(New American Bible).

Matthew 27:16

This year there was a notorious prisoner, a man named Barabbas.[a]

Footnotes: Some manuscripts read Jesus Barabbas; also in 27:17. (New Living Translation).

Matthew 27:16

At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. [a]

Footnotes: Other mss read Jesus Barabbas (Holman Christian Standard Bible).

Matthew 27:16

And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.

Footnote: Text reads Jesus Barabbas. (New King James Version).

Our Lord's name is significant as it means Jehovah is salvation and Jesus was sent to save God's people from sin! However, that name is not exclusive to our Lord. The title of Messiah is! Together their meaning is marvelous and held only by God's Son!

The Apostle Peter knew and confessed this truth.

John 6:69

And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.
(1769 Authorized Version)

Why is it then that so many so-called "Christian" ministers don't believe this? Why do they go in search of historical Jesus? Which is incidently, nothing more than a failed attempt by historians to reconstruct Jesus of Nazareth solely by historical methods.

They hold that it's impossible for the Gospel accounts of Jesus to be historically accurate, because they record things that simply could not have happened, like Jesus walking on water, healing people, raising people from the dead or casting out demons.

No matter how you dice it, this is not scholarly evaluation of historical evidence or of Biblical manuscripts. This is nothing more than metaphysical naturalism.

Metaphysical naturalism is the position typically adopted by atheists and those who deny that Jesus is the Son of God. These individuals, being void of God's spirit, are empty containers attempting to validate their lack of faith from sources other than the Bible.

There is no "new evidence" supporting the idea that the Gospels were fabricated or seriously distorted "stories" about Jesus. There is no "new evidence" debunking the accounts of miracles or the resurrection.

All attempts at discrediting the Bible have in fact reinforced its authenticity.

Recent discoveries have given even more credibility to the content of the New Testament records than ever before.

The trend in the last two decades has been for liberal scholars to become more conservative in their views on the reliability of the New Testament record, not less.

The records in the Bible are accounts of events that happened.

God determined, not man, what should be recorded and what should not.

II Timothy 3:16

Every scripture, [is] God-breathed, and profitable—unto teaching, unto conviction, unto correction, unto the discipline that is in righteousness,
(1902 Rotherham Bible)

There is powerful substance (not mythology) supporting the Authorship of both the Old and New Testaments. Those who think of the biblical records as myths are the same who don't believe that Jesus is the Son of God. To believe Jesus is God's Son requires believing the biblical account of his birth.

Matthew 1:18

And of Jesus Christ, the birth was thus: For his mother Mary having been betrothed to Joseph, before their coming together she was found to have conceived from the Holy Spirit,
(1898 Young's Literal Translation)

Those who don't believe that Mary conceived without Joseph's involvement do not believe Jesus to be the Son of God. They therefore cannot honestly call themselves Christians.

Consequently, rejection of the Bible as truth is a rejection of many God breathed truths such as Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God.

Hindus don't believe Jesus was the Son of God, nor do Muslims, Jews or Buddhists. None of them, however, operate under the pretext of being Christian!

A Buddhist monk does not pretend to be a Christian minister any more than a Jewish Rabbi claims devotion to Jesus. Those who don't believe the Bible or that Jesus is the Son of God, should not masquerade as Christian ministers.

The Quran for Muslims, the Bagavad-gita for Hindus, the Torah for Jews and the Holy Bible for Christians.

There's no debate, it's simple!

You need a Ford factory manual for your Ford, a Chevrolet manual for your Chevy and a Dodge manual for your Dodge.
Any questions see John 20:30-31, etc..

August 5, 2007

Man's Basic Spiritual Problem

Man's basic spiritual problem is doubting the accuracy and integrity of God's Word.

This is the height of irony as man has a dire need to know God. One could safely say man's greatest need is a knowledge of God.

In order to have this knowledge you must have God's Word. Only God can explain Himself and this He does in His Word.

Logic demands you be greater than the subject you explain, e.g., Wally Amos can explain his famous chocolate chip cookies, but the chocolate chip cookies cannot explain Wally Amos. To explain God you must be bigger than God.

Since we are the product of God, we are incapable of explaining Him. Thankfully, we have the Bible!

Those who endeavor to explain God (or more properly their version of Him) by history, experience, religion, theology, nature, feelings or mental perspicacity, are fooling themselves by way of their own impudence.

We must decide if we want the truth or some presumptive individual's interpretation thereof.

Men presume to criticize God's Word but it is the Word which is the true critic of man.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of

soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner (kritikos = critic, skilled in judging) of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

(1769 Authorized Version)

Critics come and go but the Scripture continues forever!

The Bible says of itself:

I Peter 1:25a

But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. . . .

(1769 Authorized Version)

And of man:

Psalms 49:12

But man, like the animals, does not go on for ever; he comes to an end like the beasts.

(1965 Bible in Basic English)

Who is more credible, God or man? Should you believe the eternal Word of God or the rants of the self-appointed pundits ("know-it-all know-nothings") who shall wither and die like grass at the end of summer?

If those who set themselves in opposition to God and deem the Bible nothing more than myth do so under the guise of being Christian, what then is their basis for faith and practice? To call oneself Christian while denouncing the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ, denying the resurrection and his person as the Son of God is both the apex of absurdity and the nadir of humanity. And yet dear reader there are those out there who lie in wait to deceive and deceive they will if allowed.

Romans 16:17-18

And I call upon you, brethren, to mark those who the divisions

and the stumbling-blocks, contrary to the teaching that ye did learn, are causing, and turn ye away from them;

for such our Lord Jesus Christ do not serve, but their own belly; and through the good word and fair speech they deceive the hearts of the harmless, (1898 Young's Literal Translation)

If there are people like this (who manipulate the basic nature of man for their own gain) how does one detect them before becoming deceived?

Colossians 2:6-10

As, then, you took Christ Jesus the Lord, so go on in him,

Rooted and based together in him, strong in the faith which the teaching gave you, giving praise to God at all times.

Take care that no one takes you away by force, through man's wisdom and deceit, going after the beliefs of men and the theories of the world, and not after Christ:

For in him all the wealth of God's being has a living form,

And you are complete in him, who is the head of all rule and authority:" (1965 Bible in Basic English)

When Jesus ascended into heaven he gave gifts of men to the Church.

Their express purpose is stated in the Scripture.

Ephesians 4:11-14

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some,

evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
(1769 Authorized Version)

Rest assured, these “gifts” will always be in perfect harmony and alignment with the written revealed Word of God.
Find yourself one, they’re still around!

August 19, 2007

NOTES

Don't Quit

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh;
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must -- but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up, though the pace seems slow --
You might succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering man.
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup.
And he learned too late, when the night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out --
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt --
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems afar;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit --
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit.

The Anvil Of God's Word

Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then, with twinkling eye,

"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."
"And so," I thought, "the Anvil of God's Word

For ages skeptic blows have beat upon,
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone."

One Man Awake

One man awake awakens another,
The second awakens his next-door neighbor,
And three awake can rouse the town,
And turn the whole place upside down.
And many awake can raise such a fuss
That it finally awakens the rest of us.
One man up with dawn in his eyes, multiplies.