

Tradition and the Christian

Properly Understanding the Role of Tradition

What is Often Heard:

- Christians focus too much on tradition.
- Tradition breeds empty formalism.
- Christianity is nothing more than a series of actions mindlessly repeated each week.
- The Church of Christ is only concerned about keeping their traditions.
- The Church of Christ emphasizes their traditions to the neglect of serving Christ.

The NT and Tradition

Negative Traditions

"And He answered and said to them, 'Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition... And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.'"

Matthew 15.3,6

Positive Traditions

The NT and Tradition

Negative Traditions

**"He was also saying to them,
‘You are experts at setting
aside the commandment of
God in order to keep your
tradition.’"**

Mark 7.9

Positive Traditions

The NT and Tradition

Negative Traditions

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

Colossians 2.8

Positive Traditions

The NT and Tradition

Negative Traditions

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

Colossians 2.8

Positive Traditions

"Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you."

1 Corinthians 11.2

The NT and Tradition

Negative Traditions

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

Colossians 2.8

Positive Traditions

"So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us."
2 Thessalonians 2.15

The NT and Tradition

Negative Traditions

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

Colossians 2.8

Positive Traditions

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us."

2 Thessalonians 3.6

The NT and Tradition

- Some traditions are ungodly:
 - Traditions which negate God's word (Matthew 15).
 - Excusing ourselves from caring for our parents.
 - Traditions inconsistent with Christ (Colossians 2).
 - Self-harm and the worship of angels (Col. 2.18).
- Some traditions fall into the category of liberty:
 - Traditions which conform to God's word and are accomplished in various ways (e.g. assembly location).

The NT and Tradition

- Some traditions must be followed:
 - Traditions which proceed from God (2 Thess. 2).
 - Appreciate and highly esteem elders (1 Thess. 5.12f).
 - Abstain from sexual immorality (1 Thess. 4.3).
 - Traditions which come from Christ (1 Cor. 11.2).
 - The principle of headship (1 Cor. 11.3ff).
 - The observance of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11.17ff).

How Authoritative NT Tradition was Communicated:

- The traditions were delivered by Christ's authority.
 - 1 Corinthians 11.2
- By spoken word or written letter.
 - 2 Thessalonians 2.15
- By apostolic example.
 - 2 Thessalonians 3.6-7

The NT and Tradition

Necessary Traditions

Prayer - Acts 2.42

Communion - 1 Cor. 11.17ff

Assembling - 1 Cor. 14.23,26

Singing - Ephesians 5.19

Ungodly Traditions

Prayer to Angels

Rolls and Water

“Assembly unimportant”

Playing

The NT and Tradition

Necessary Traditions

Prayer - Acts 2.42

Communion - 1 Cor. 11.17ff

Assembling - 1 Cor. 14.23,26

Singing - Ephesians 5.19

Unnecessary Traditions

Two: Opening/Closing

Passing Plates

In a building; 3x weekly

Hymnal; 4-part Harmony

Closing Thoughts

- Not all tradition is sinful.
 - Tradition passed down by statement, example, and forced conclusion is authoritative.
- Not all tradition is useful/expedient.
- Longevity does not make something godly/ungodly — we must consider God's word!