

Lesson Ten – First Quarter 2026

Theme: *The Commandments of Men*

Outline (Notation Form)

I. Opening Observation: Tradition vs. God's Law

1. It has long been observed — and still happens today — that many people get more offended by a **broken tradition** than by a **broken commandment of God**.
 2. A person may shrug at disobedience to Scripture yet become furious if someone violates a practice that isn't even in the Bible.
 3. Jesus confronted this exact issue.
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II. Jesus' Rebuke: "You Break God's Law to Keep Your Traditions"

Scripture Reference (include as requested):

Mark 7:6–9 (KJV)

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites...

7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

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

9 ...Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Parallel: Matthew 15:3–9.

Key Point:

Jesus does not condemn tradition in itself —
He condemns **elevating tradition above God's law**.

III. Distinguishing Two Types of Law

1. The Moral Law

- Found in **Exodus 20** and **Deuteronomy 5**.
- Eternal, universal, unchanging.
- Based on God's character.
- Jesus affirmed it (Matthew 19:17–19).
- Paul upheld it (Romans 3:31; Romans 7:12).

2. The Ceremonial / Traditional Law

- Sacrifices, rituals, feast-day shadows (Hebrews 10:1).
- Civil and purity codes tied to the sanctuary system.
- These pointed forward to Christ.
- When Christ became our sacrifice — these systems **ceased to be necessary**.

What Paul Opposed:

- Not the Ten Commandments

- But additions, expansions, and human traditions
 - What Jesus calls the “commandments of men”
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IV. Why the Confusion?

Many assume that because Paul said rituals and ordinances were fulfilled, he meant the moral law was abolished.

Not true.

Paul never suggested such a thing.

- Moral law → reveals sin
- Ceremonial law → reveals the remedy

With Christ as the remedy, the **ceremonial law ends**, but the **moral law remains**.

V. Examples Where Human Tradition Outweighed God’s Law (Scriptural)

1. Corban Tradition (Mark 7:9–13)

- Pharisees allowed people to avoid caring for parents by dedicating money to the Temple.
- Violates the **5th Commandment** (Honor father and mother).
- Shows tradition overriding God's clear command.

2. Sabbath Burdens (Luke 13:10–17; John 5:8–16)

- Man healed → Pharisees angry because he carried his mat.

- Their added Sabbath rules overshadowed the **true meaning of rest and mercy**.
- Jesus calls them hypocrites for allowing an ox to be untied but not a daughter of Abraham to be healed.

3. Hand-Washing Rituals (Mark 7:1–5)

- Disciples didn't follow the elder's hand-washing tradition.
- Pharisees treated this as a sin, even though it was **never commanded by God**.
- Jesus exposes their priorities:
 - **Clean hands** mattered more to them than a **clean heart**.

4. Stoning the Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:3–9)

- According to **Leviticus 20:10**, *both* the man and the woman must be stoned.
- They bring only the woman → clear violation of Torah.
- Their tradition-based trap tries to override God's justice and mercy.

5. Tithing Mint & Herbs While Ignoring Justice (Matthew 23:23)

- Jesus says they kept their tiny traditions but ignored the weightier matters of the law:
 - Justice
 - Mercy
 - Faith

VI. The Lesson: Don't Let Tradition Eclipse Revelation

1. Traditions are not inherently evil.
 - They can guide, organize, and unify.
 2. But when tradition becomes **sacred**, and God's commands become **optional**, something is deeply wrong.
 3. This was the central problem of the Pharisees — and can easily become the problem of the modern church.
 4. **Christ came to restore the law of God to its rightful place** — above culture, customs, rituals, and preferences.
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VII. Application: Guarding Against “Modern Phariseeism”

1. Are we more offended when someone breaks our **tradition** than when they break God's **commandment**?
2. Are we elevating what we made above what *God* made?
3. Do we judge others by habits we invented rather than by the character Christ calls for?

Remember:

- The moral law reveals God's heart.
 - Tradition reveals **our** habits.
 - Only one should be binding.
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VIII. Closing Thought

The commandments of men demand outward conformity.

The commandments of God demand inward transformation.

Christ challenges us to put first what is eternal,
to hold loosely what is cultural,
and to worship Him in spirit and in truth.