



Everyone wrestles with God. We may not doubt if He exists, but we often wonder if He is right. Jesus got questioned a lot. Using the gospel of Mark, we will glean truth from times when Jesus was second-guessed that will help us with our own questions.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Rick began by reminding us that “When Jesus spoke of traditions he referred to beliefs and practices outside the scriptures, not inside the scriptures.” Why is that distinction so important? Follow up: Name some of your favorite traditions—personal, family, church? What value do traditions hold for us?

2 ASSUMPTION: Their assumption was tradition = devotion. Read Mark 7:1-5. Their tradition of washing was intended to communicate their distinctness as the people of God. What complaints did the religious leaders make against Jesus’ disciples? What did this reveal about their hearts? Follow up: What are some examples of how we might get attached in an unhealthy way to practices that help us express our devotion to God?

3 Read Mark 7:6-8. What stands out to you about how Jesus responds to his second-guessers? How does Jesus redefine holiness for them and how is that relevant for us today?

4 RITE IS WRONG when it displaces scripture. “Their teachings are merely human rules. You have let go of the commands of God.” Why would someone place traditions over God’s commands? Why is following Scripture always more important than following tradition? Follow up: Rick went on to say, “One of the biggest—and hardest—tasks of church leaders is helping people recognize the difference between what they prefer and what God requires.” How have you experienced this to be true?

5 RITE IS WRONG when it distorts mission. Their tradition trumped the mission. **Read Mark 7:9-13.** Why did Jesus call them hypocrites (what was so wrong with their “Corban” tradition)? Follow up: In what ways can traditions make us susceptible to hypocrisy? How do you avoid hypocrisy in your life?

6 RITE IS WRONG when it dispenses righteousness. The problem with tradition is that it can confuse ritual with gospel. **Read Mark 7:14-23.** What was Jesus wanting the crowd to understand from these verses? What would the religious leaders have said it took to be clean before God and how is that different from what Jesus was saying? Follow up: What are some ways that we focus more on “polishing the outside” today? How does **Romans 3:22-24** remind us of what matters most?

7 CONCLUSION: Transformation > Tradition. Tradition can bless, but only the gospel can cleanse. How have you experienced that to be true in your life? Follow up: What is something you can do this week to honor God’s Word more than treasured traditions?

