

JESUS CONDEMNED EVEN UNDERSTANDABLE BIBLE BASED TRADITIONS

Jesus slammed the Jews for having a good tradition that handwashing was mandatory and which was understandable if you look at Bible principles. His problem was it was not explicitly commanded by God. This observation supports the Reformed doctrine that Catholic tradition is illicit and has no authority. Catholics however say that the word of God is two things, the Bible and tradition.

Jesus' condemnation of tradition only forbids non-inspired tradition or man-made tradition (Matthew 15 or Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23). We must mark how severe he was against it. The scribes and Pharisees before they ate washed up to their elbows always before eating. They asked Jesus why his disciples ate with dirty hands. So far the scribes and Pharisees were reasonable. It is good to wash before eating. But Jesus savaged them by calling them hypocrites who were into religious observances but whose hearts were far from God. Jesus quoted God as saying their worship was useless for their doctrines were human regulations. Then Jesus said that it is only what goes on in your heart that can make you dirty. So Jesus was very much against man-made religion.

Protestants argue that the condemnation of man-made tradition covers Catholic tradition too.

Catholics respond that their tradition is not man-made and that they agree that man-made traditions of religion are sinful.

The Protestants are the most convincing because the Catholic excuse that the traditions came from God is exactly what the scribes and Pharisees would have said too.

But some theologians say that Jesus makes it clear that he refers to man-made tradition not being bad in itself but only when it contradicts the law of God. This overlooks the fact that the issue in question was handwashing. It was not for or against any clear command of God. God did stress washing in the Jewish Bible. But the problem with the command is that God did not address handwashing at all. The problem was religion having commandments and doctrines that did not come from God.

Now handwashing was a kind of baptism a ritual washing. The problem was fake tradition was demanding it in the name of God which was overreach. It reminds us of how John did baptisms as ritual washings. But Jesus asserted that his baptisms were authorised by God. So it is not the same thing.

Jesus picked an interesting example. It was understandable to make it a command of God. The Jews probably thought it was implied by Torah principles. If it was not a command then it was not a mistake that really mattered. But to stress adherence to the Bible Jesus said it did. The episode debunks Catholic tradition which claims to be reasonably worked out from Bible principles such as ideas like the Incarnation, Transubstantiation and so on.

It is thought then that Jesus' opposition to tradition is not proof at least by itself that the Bible alone must be heeded. But the Bible warns that most people will tend towards apostasy and Jesus and the apostles warned about heretics implying that even if tradition was accepted as a parallel authority to the Bible it could not be depended on once the overseers, the apostles, were gone. So the context of Jesus' condemnation strongly suggests that only tradition that ends up as scripture should be followed. And we must remember that Jesus only said it was man-made tradition because it didn't fit the Old Testament and added to its teaching. There is no point in condemning man-made tradition if no method is left for distinguishing between man's teaching and God's. Jesus made it simple.

Catholic tradition is from man not God and is a serious sin.

