

*Series:* Explore God Chicago; *Sermon:* **Is the Bible Reliable?**

*Delivered by* **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; *Date:* February 17, 2019

***Bible text explored: Mark 7:1–13***

<sup>1</sup>Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. <sup>3</sup>(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders, <sup>4</sup>and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) <sup>5</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” <sup>6</sup>And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

“‘This people honors me with their lips,  
but their heart is far from me;

<sup>7</sup>in vain do they worship me,

teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’

<sup>8</sup>You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.”

<sup>9</sup>And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! <sup>10</sup>For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ <sup>11</sup>But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, “Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban”’ (that is, given to God)— <sup>12</sup>then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, <sup>13</sup>thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.” [ESV]

***Review and application:***

1. What about Jesus’ disregard for the extra-biblical traditions they had compiled and sought to enforce did the Jewish rabbis already resent?  
(See *Mark 2:16, 18, 24, and 3:2, 6, 22.*)
2. On what tradition that Jesus isn’t directing his disciples to practice (*vv. 1-5*) does the latest delegation from Jerusalem focus?  
For whom, and on what occasions, *was* ceremonial washing called for in Scripture?  
(See *Exod. 30:17-21.*)  
How had the rabbis’ ruling vastly expanded the scope of when, and to whom, this requirement applied?
3. What are some religious expectations in our church culture that may go beyond biblical requirements?
4. How did Jesus draw from Scripture (*vv. 6-8*) to expose the hypocrisy of an external super-spirituality that evaded heart submission?  
How did the *corban* rule they established open the way for them to practice a form of legalized religious generosity evasion?
5. What example did Jesus cite (*vv. 9-12*) of the rabbinic traditions making the Word of God void? (See *Exod. 20:12 and 21:17; Num. 30:1-2.*)
6. Pastor Josh noted biblical scholar F. F. Bruce’s comment on how strange it is that historians accept the reliability of the biblical texts more readily than many theologians. How do the number of source documents available for the Bible, and the closeness of their recording to the events covered, confirm its absolute reliability?

7. How did Jesus understand the reliability and authority of Scripture?  
(See *Matt. 5:17-18*.)

Do I share a similar commitment to the Bible's authority in my life?