

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Church Members

Rhyan Beverly: chronic health problems

Julie Blades: cancer

Kerry Burton: cancer

Joanne Crawford: Wellington PARC

William Drake: Hillside Center

Mike Griffith: heart problems

Harold Jarvis: chronic back pain

Kevin Kline: LHON

Tracy Kline: chronic kidney disease

Janice Lee: chronic health problems

Charlotte McElvain: Ridgewood Terrace

Joyce Potts: Meniere's Disease

Scott Settle: heart problems

Louise Smith: chronic health problems

Pat Villines: recovering from surgery

Kim Wiles: heart & kidney problems

Family & Friends

Cancer: Debbie Baker, Billy Banks, Lisa Brewer, Jim Combs, Danny Edmonds, April Ehrlich, Christine Estrada, Brandon Hall, Dave Hammer, Steve Higginbotham, Jady Hill, Missy Jones, Geoffrey Kline, June Morris, Shelly Patterson, Dean Stokes, Sandy Treadway, Lois VanWinkle, Dan Winkler

Heart Disease: Kay Clark, Regina Davis, Bruce Gower, Annette Miller, Archie Morris, Susan Scott, Rosemary Starks

Nursing Care: Rita Chappell, Patsy Davis, Anna Lee Hampton, Emerson & Mary Frances Hartford, Bonnie Wiles

Other Health Problems: Dennis Aubrey, Don Blackwell, Adam Boldon, Samuel Cox, Keith Elkins, Daniel Groves, Britney Harrison, Maria Johnson, Crystal Jones, Debra Key, Inez Loyola, Richard Metcalfe, Natasha Moore, Justin Nesselroad, Ray Nix, Kelly Oldham, Presley Pearce, Renee Perry, Brittney Payton, Sherry Phillips, Mary Robertson, Jason Rollins, Grayson Shofner, Steve Slaton

ATTENDANCE & CONTRIBUTION

For the week of March 28, 2021

Bible Study	N/A
Morning Worship	106
Evening Worship	51
Contribution	\$3523.16
Budget	\$3025.00
Wednesday Bible Study	47

TODAY'S SERMONS

AM: Symbols of Christianity

Deuteronomy 5:1-10

PM: Prayer for Wisdom & Forgiveness

Psalm 39:1-13

OUR ELDERS:

- **Dennis Brasher** (270) 825-1661 or (270) 871-2170
- **Terry Moore** (270) 871-7111

OUR DEACONS:

- **Steve Curtis** - *Visitation*
- **Mike Griffith** - *Benevolence*
- **Deyone Miller** - *Worship*
- **Dave Sprague** - *Building & Grounds*
- **Byron VanWinkle** - *Technology*

Madisonville Church of Christ

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TRUTH AND TRADITION

By Dewayne Bryant

We like traditions. They remind us of the past and give us a sense of having a distinctive place in history. We become custodians of the cultural treasures passed down from previous generations, making us a vital link between the past and the future. Traditions give us a shared identity and a sense of value. Maintaining them becomes an important task, and we sometimes pride ourselves on how carefully we preserve and promote them.

This is often the case for family traditions, but it can be true for religious ones also. Historically, human beings have valued the wisdom of our forebearers. This takes on special significance when it involves religion. Believers perceive religious traditions as something more than personal preferences; over time, they begin to assume it carries the force of divine authority and approval. It should come as no surprise that Jesus spent considerable time during His ministry battling those who had done this very thing in elevating traditions of men to the same status as the Word of God.

In Matthew 15, a group of Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem ask Jesus why his disciples did not wash their hands before meals as required by sacred custom. His opponents use the phrase “*traditions of the elders*” (vs. 2), which became a kind of technical expression referring to the interpretations of Scripture made by respected rabbis of the past that had been transmitted orally. These rules seem to have appeared shortly after the Babylonian captivity, but many believed Moses himself had received the oral law at Sinai and passed it down to Joshua, the Biblical prophets, and then to Ezra and his contemporaries.

Some of these traditions appear to have developed from Biblical commands evolved into something

Opportunities to Study and Worship:

Sunday Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. / **Sunday Morning Worship**: 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship: 6:00 p.m. / **Wednesday Bible Study**: 7:00 p.m.

Listen to “What Does the Bible Say?” Sundays @ 8:30 a.m. on WFMW (AM 730)

else. The example of washing before meals in Matthew 15 seems to have been inspired by regulations concerning ceremonial cleanness for priests (Exo. 30:18-21). Although intended specifically for an ordained priesthood, the Pharisees had turned the practice of washing into a common ritual display of piety. They took a Biblical requirement, developed it into something more than what God had given, and weaponized it against those who did not hold to the same standards.

Some of the Pharisees' practices involved outright defiance of explicit Biblical commands. In Mark 7, Jesus tells members of the religious elite that they have rejected God's commandments to keep their traditions (Mark 7:6-9). He cites the example of "corban," a custom by which the Pharisees could dedicate their possessions to the Temple treasury. By making this a formal vow, they could exempt themselves from financial obligations to aging or needy parents. This circumvention of responsibility violated the Mosaic command to honor one's parents (Exo. 20:12; Eph. 6:2). They no doubt believed they had discovered a clever loophole. Jesus quickly disabused them of that notion.

In His exchanges with the religious leaders of His day, Jesus teaches that manmade traditions and God's commandments are mutually exclusive (Mat. 15:1-9; Mark 7:9). His conversations reveal that the elites had pitted tradition against God's commandments. We see this in the practices of the Pharisees, which when beyond God's revealed will.

As with traditions that had arisen before the time of Jesus, we can see other examples appearing throughout church history, such as baptism and an ecclesiastical hierarchy. The New Testament teaches that baptism is an act of faith in which a believing adult is immersed for the forgiveness of sins. The understanding of the practice became more pliable as centuries passed, admitting other methods and al-

lowing children to be baptized. The same may be said for the development of bishops, which began in the second century and developed into the organizational structure we see in the Roman Catholic Church today.

Careful readers will note that the apostle Paul occasionally uses the term "tradition" positively (1 Cor. 11:1,2; 2 The. 2:15; 3:6). However, we must understand that this reference is not to human traditions but to apostolic teaching. Although the term is used in the Gospels to refer to customs created by human beings (Gal. 1:4; Col. 2:8), Paul more often uses it in the sense of "handing over" teachings that he had received, such as the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:3,4) and what Jesus said during the Last Supper (1 Cor. 11:23,24). In this usage, Paul was merely transmitting the truth, not creating new content.

The Bible is clear that God's Word is truth (John 17:17). This is not the fanciful postmodern notion that individual "truths" are real and that wildly disparate viewpoints can all be true at the same time despite making mutually exclusive claims. "You have your truth; I have my truth" may be the mantra for people living in the 21st century, but it is logically incoherent. The idea that God's truth can co-exist with manmade traditions is likewise absurd.

Traditions can appear virtually anywhere. A common feature is that they evolve into something that becomes a test of fellowship, as with the Pharisees in Jesus' day. Examples might include the insistence that a congregation only use one cup for the Lord's Supper (based on a peculiar interpretation of Matthew 26:27), forbidding eating on church grounds, or prohibiting Sunday school classes because we read nothing about them in the New Testament. All of these create restrictions that go beyond Biblical teaching.

YOUTH NEWS

- *BibleQuest 2021* is scheduled for Saturday, July 31. Questions will come from the New King James Version of Psalms 1 - 50. **Russell Kline** has begun a YouTube channel for BibleQuest, where he will post videos, which will also be available on the BibleQuest Facebook page. New videos will be posted every week.



GOOD WORKS IN PROGRESS

- ◆ The elders are asking everyone who attends worship services and Bible studies at the church building to wear a facemask and to observe social distancing protocols. Please do not come to church, if you have a fever, or are experiencing any other symptoms of illness. If we all will observe these simple rules, we can help to keep each other safe during this perilous time of pandemic.
- ◆ **Tracy Kline** went to the Emergency Room last week and was diagnosed with an infection in her digestive system. Please remember her in your prayers.
- ◆ **Eva Gatlin** was in and out of the hospital last week, where she was treated for pneumonia. She is continuing her recovery at home. Please remember her in your prayers.

FAMILY NEWS

- ◇ **Bonnie Curtis** was given blood at Baptist Health Madisonville, last week. She was discharged from the hospital yesterday and is recovering at home. Please remember her in your prayers.

NEWS OF THE BROTHERHOOD

- * The 30th Annual *Truth in Love Lectureship* is going to be hosted by the East Hill Church of Christ, in Pulaski, Tennessee on May 12-16. The theme is "Never Leave the Lord." Please visit www.truthinlovelectureship.com for more information.
- * The 54th Annual *Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship* has been scheduled for May 23-27. The theme is "Magnify His Name." Be sure to visit their website www.msop.org for more information.
- * Watch the *Gospel Broadcasting Network* 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, at their web site: www.gbntv.org.
- * Listen to Biblical podcasts on *The Light Network* 24 hours per day, 7 days per week at their web site: www.thelightnetwork.tv.



Visit 365.polishingthepulpit.com and click on "Sign Up." Then, choose the option that says "I am a member of a subscribing congregation" and enter the required information. When you are approved, you will receive an email with further instructions. Contact Russell Kline, if you have any questions about this service.