

Truth or Tradition? Col. 2:8; Mt. 15:9

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC, Sunday, Oct. 1st

The Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20) include Salvation *"Go and teach all nations"* Identification / Associating: *"Baptizing them..."* Education / Orientation: *"Teaching them to observe..."* Mt. 28:18-20 It shouldn't surprise us that Satan seeks to hinder God's Plan through: Conflict (*Persecution*) Acts 8:1; Carelessness (*Passivity*) Pr. 24:10-12; and Contamination (*Doctrinal Poison*) Gal. 5:7-9

How does Satan "contaminate" God's Truths?

"Tradition" (parad'osis) means a "transmission." It comes from paradid'omee which means to surrender, yield up, entrust, and so "transmit." If Satan is successful in "contaminating" God's truth with man-made traditions, then they are transmitted, eventually replacing God's Truths!

Example: The Jewish "Bible" is made up of the Torah and Tanakh. The Jews added the Talmud (6200 pages) made up of the Mishnah (Rabbinical Traditions) and Gemara (Interpretations of Mishnah)

Mt. 15:16 *"Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."*

Christians have done the same thing as the Rabbi's, replacing God's truth with their traditions! **"Religion" is Satan's masterpiece!** His first recorded words were *"Yea hath God said?"* Gen. 3:1 He's a master at "mixing" truth and error. There are many areas where Religious Traditions have replaced God's Truths in the lives of "religious people." **One such example is how the 10 Commandments were changed in the Catholic Catechism.** Another involves the 89 references to Baptism use the word "baptizo" (to make fully wet). Yet millions of sincere people are "baptized" by sprinkling (rhantizo) or pouring (ekche'ō) though God doesn't once use either of these words when discussing Baptism. **So why are millions of baptisms done by sprinkling or pouring?** **TRADITION!** The Catholic church embraces such traditions elevating "Sacred Tradition" to an equal footing with "sacred scripture." (The magisterium) That's why Catholic teachings have "evolved" so much over the centuries.

How did Satan use Tradition to trump God's Truth of Baptism?

1. Deception. (Infiltration) (Col. 2:8; Jude 1:4; 2Tim. 4:1-3; etc)

A. The NT wasn't universally "canonized" until 367 AD.

- 1) There was was no consistent standard of what constituted God's Word for the early church.
- 2) There were many "epistles" written by early leaders and even some "forgeries". (2 Thes. 2:2)

B. The Early "Church Fathers"

- 1) Many of the writings of prominent preachers were circulated to various churches.
- 2) Their "opinions" and "interpretations" often "stuck" with many believers. For example:
 - a) **Irenaeus** (Pastor of Lyons, France AD 177) wrote that the communion bread *"contained a divine reality"* which eventually (1214) gave way to transubstantiation (Mass) being forced on Europe. (On pain of death!)
 - b) **Justin Martyr** (150 AD) Refers to baptismal waters as *"the water bath of regeneration."*
 - (1) "Baptism" became synonymous with "Regeneration" leading to confusion about salvation!
 - (2) Many, fearing for their souls, began "baptizing babies."
 - c) **Cyprian**, Pastor in Africa (AD 250) began to make "exceptions" when he wrote of the sick: *"those who obtain God's grace in sickness ...for that they are not to be immersed but affused (poured) with the saving waters."*

2. Corruption. (Church became Politically Powerful)

A. “Religion” became the unifying factor!

- 1) Constantine became the emperor after a “conversion experience” in 312 (Milvian Bridge)
- 2) He began presiding at the various church councils with the title "Pontifex Maximus“.
- 3) Trouble with the Roman Senate forced Constantine to relocate to Turkey (Constantinople).
 - a) This “split” the Roman Empire and Creating the “Eastern Orthodox Church”.
 - b) His absence from Rome gave his Council of Bishops (Led by the Bishop of Rome) a great deal of power and influence over the European empire. *Bishop Leo claimed the title “Pope” in 440.*

B. The Pope worked with European rulers to use “religion” to Unite the Kingdom. Europe became the “Holy Roman Empire!”

1) The “Church” used two primary “tools” to accomplish this.

- a) Infant baptism became “Law!” (Remember “*There is no salvation outside of the church*”?)
Thus the “citizens of the Holy Roman Empire” were also “Citizens of the Church.”

(1) *The imperial “Justinian Code” (AD 529) made rebaptism a heresy penalized by death!*
“We desire that all peoples subject to Our benign Empire shall live under the same religion that the Divine Peter... **We order all those who follow this law to assume the name of Catholic Christians, and considering others as demented and insane.** We order that they shall bear the infamy of heresy; and when the Divine vengeance which they merit has been appeased, they shall afterwards be punished in accordance with Our resentment” *Corpus Juris Civilis (The Civil Law, the Code of Justinian),*

- b) Excommunication: Based on a perversion of Mt. 16:19 “*keys of kingdom*” they taught that the Pope had the authority to damn any who disobeyed.

(1) Fear of physical torture (inquisition) and spiritual damnation were used to “force obedience!”

These two “Traditions” paved the way for the “Dark Ages”!

“If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the consequences of it. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State.”

Joseph Goebbels (Hitler’s Minister of Propoganda)

Conclusion: After the parable of the Sower and seeds, and the Wheat and Tares (Mt 13:24-30)

Jesus said: 31-32 *“The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it ... becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.”* What did Jesus say the “birds” represented? (See vs 19)

See also Jesus’ warnings in John 16:2; Mt. 24:8-11; and Paul’s warning in 2 Tim. 4:3,4.

Any honest reading of the scriptures and “European/Church” History will verify these facts.

While the Catholic Church claims “magisterium” gives the Pope and Bishops the right of “sacred tradition”, what does this have to do with “non-Catholic” denominations?

“Protestant” denominations have their roots in the Catholic Church and Traditions.

Application: What Satan has done throughout “History” is what he still seeks to do in “your-story”. He seeks to “contaminate” God’s great plan and thereby *“spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”* Col. 2:8

It was because Jesus defied the “sacred traditions” of the Jewish Talmud that he was rejected.

It was in this context that he said: *“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* John 8:31-32

Are we willing to allow God’s truth to confront our own “sacred traditions” about: Salvation? Baptism? Discipleship?