

The Ditch Is Just As Deep On Either Side of the Road

Parable of the Clean and Unclean

[Matthew 15:1-14]

Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!”

Jesus replied: “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said: ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever help you might have received from me is a gift devoted to God,’ he is not to honor his father with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”

[Isaiah 29:13]

Jesus called the crowd to him and said: **“Listen and understand.** What goes into a man’s mouth does not make him unclean, but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him unclean.”

Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you not know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them; they are blind guides. **If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into the ditch.**”

The tradition of the elders (vs.2) nullifies the word of God (vs.6). Lip service has little value when hearts are far from God (vs.8). Vain worship and men teaching other men are nothing but men’s rules (vs.9).

The result: Blind man leads blind man; both fall into the ditch! It really doesn’t matter which side of the road they fall off because:

“The Ditch Is Just As Deep On Either Side of the Road.”

Will we ever learn? Will we ever learn to “listen and understand?” (vs.10).

or is it true of us as it was true of them that Jesus asked:

“Are you still so dull?” (vs.16).

John 18:37. “You are a king then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered: “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, **to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.**”

It is not tradition that will teach people truth.

It is not church elders who will teach people truth.

It is not the Author of this book who will teach people truth.

Jesus, the exact representation of the Father, is the only reliable source for truth.