

Let Us Rightly Divide the Word of Truth
(2 Timothy 2:15)

Introduction:

1. According to John 8:31-32, we can know the truth by continuing in the Lord's Word.
2. As we endeavor to continue in the Lord's Word, we must fulfill certain responsibilities.
 - a. We must take all that the Bible teaches on any given subject.
 - b. We must also "rightly divide [handle accurately] the word of truth."
3. An important component of rightly dividing the word of truth is avoiding human traditions and commandments.

Discussion:

- I. THIS PRINCIPLE IS ADDRESSED IN TITUS 1:13-14
 - A. In his teaching Titus was to help the people in Crete to "*be sound in the faith.*"
 - B. To accomplish this Titus was to teach the people in Crete not to give heed to the "*commandments of men.*"
 - C. Such commandments must be avoided because they turn people from the truth.
- II. THIS PRINCIPLE IS ILLUSTRATED IN MARK 7:1-13
 - A. (vs.1-5) Certain men found fault with the Lord's disciples.
 1. (vs.1) These men came to Jesus from Jerusalem [Jesus was in Galilee].
 - a. These men were:
 - 1) Pharisees: members of the strictest sect of the Jews
 - 2) scribes: copiers and teachers of the law.
 - b. The scribes and Pharisees often criticized Jesus (ex: Mark 2:15-16).
 - c. This was probably their purpose for coming to Jesus.
 2. (vs.2) On this occasion they found fault with the Lord's disciples.
 - a. They saw the disciples eat with "*defiled*" [unwashed] hands.
 - b. This does not mean that the disciples had not washed at all.
 - c. (vs.3-4) Mark explained what took place.
 - 1) These Jews followed a set of oral traditions that had been passed down for many years.
 - 2) One tradition said that the Jews could not eat a meal until they went through a ceremony of washing themselves.
 - 3) They also believed that their cooking vessels and tables had to be purified.
 - 4) Sanitation was taught in the Law of Moses (Leviticus 12-15).
 - 5) However, this was a manmade tradition.
 3. (vs.5) They asked Jesus why His disciples did not follow their tradition.
 - B. (vs.6-8) Jesus answered the Pharisees and scribes.
 1. (vs.6) He applied the statement in Isaiah 29:13 to these men.
 2. (vs.7-8) He also said that their worship was "*vain*" and why it was vain.
 - C. (vs.9-13) Jesus pointed out the hypocrisy of these men.
 1. (vs.9) They actually considered their traditions to be more important than God's written commandments.
 2. (vs.10-12) Jesus illustrated their error.
 - a. (vs.10) Jesus quoted 2 commandments given in Exodus 20:12 and 21:17.
 - b. (vs.11-12) These men had developed a tradition which allowed them in their minds to be free from obeying these 2 commandments.
 - c. (vs.13) Unfortunately, this was just one example of many similar practices.

Conclusion:

1. Jesus went on to show what really defiles people (vs.14-23).
2. As we endeavor to rightly divide the word of truth, let us avoid human traditions and commandments.