

# Transform Magazine

April 2020  
Volume 3 Issue 4



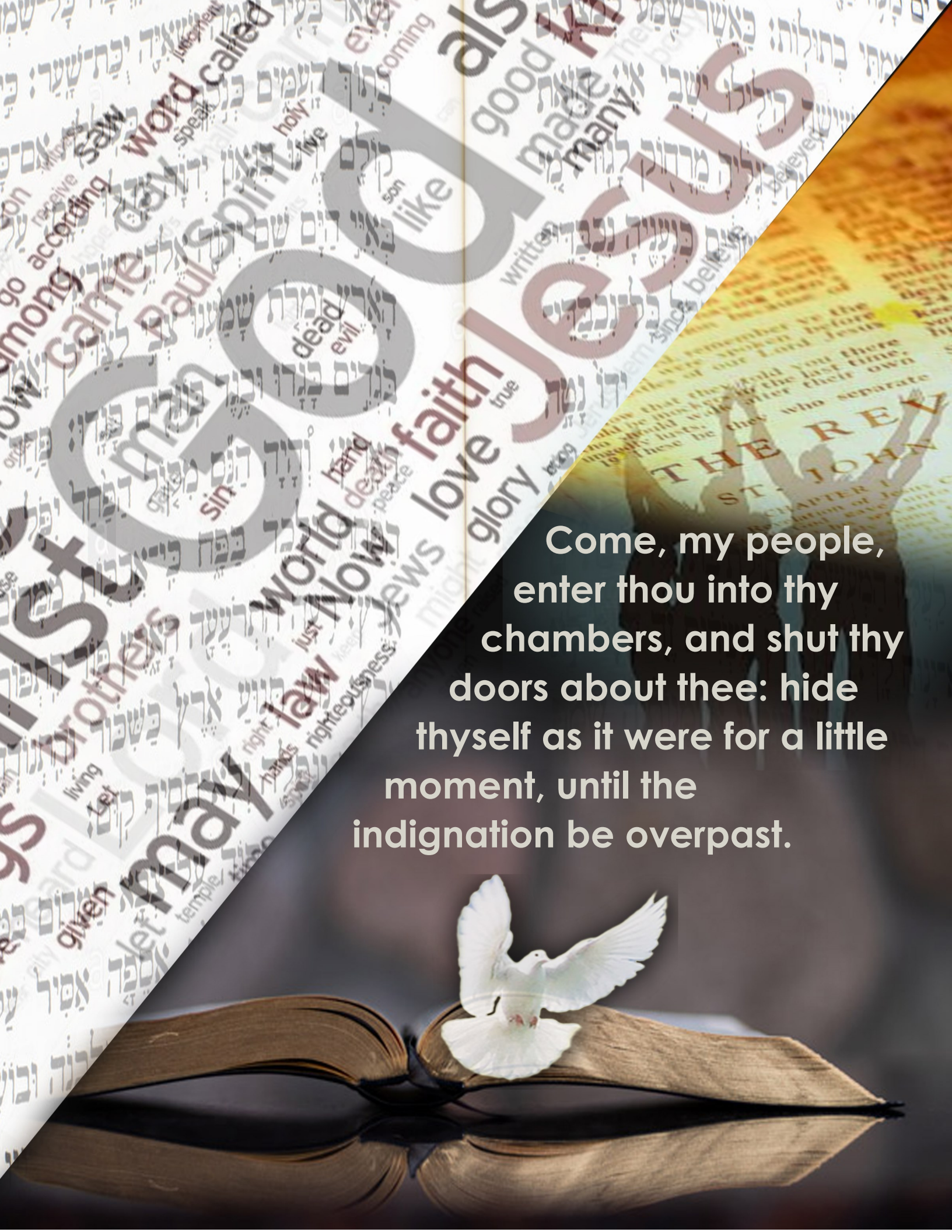
**Religious Traditions**

**Spiritual Relationship**

Watch Attentively  
Pray for Understanding  
Listen for Guidance  
& Serve with Diligence







**Come, my people,  
enter thou into thy  
chambers, and shut thy  
doors about thee: hide  
thyself as it were for a little  
moment, until the  
indignation be overpast.**



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**Publisher/Chief Editor**

**Transformation**

Dr. C.A. Dangerfield II

[inform@thetransformu.com](mailto:inform@thetransformu.com)

**Feature Editors /Writers**

**Department Editors/Writers**

Ella Alexander - New York, NY

[ella.vlfm@gmail.com](mailto:ella.vlfm@gmail.com)

Eunice A. Christian - Brooklyn, NY

[eunicec434@msn.com](mailto:eunicec434@msn.com)

Stacie Daniels - Columbus, OH

[stalato@gmail.com](mailto:stalato@gmail.com)

Judith Allwood - Jacksonville, FL

[judith\\_allwood@hotmail.com](mailto:judith_allwood@hotmail.com)

Diane Harvell - Philadelphia, PA

[Dharvell215@gmail.com](mailto:Dharvell215@gmail.com)

Tony Martin - Detroit, MI

[tonymartin@tds.net](mailto:tonymartin@tds.net)

Jessie Griffin– Boardman, OH

[jesse@thekingdomreign.com](mailto:jesse@thekingdomreign.com)

Donna Richardson Jones– Atlanta, GA

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# PROPHETIC SUMMIT

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## Spirituality and Traditions

### Respecting Both for a Healthy Relationship with God

By Eunice A. Christian

April 5, 2020

**Matthew 23:23-24** ~ <sup>23</sup> *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.* <sup>24</sup> *Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!*

**Colossians 2:8** ~ <sup>8</sup> Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

**2 Thessalonians 3:6** ~ <sup>6</sup> But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.

\* \* \*

#### Points of reference:

- Opening Scriptures
- Foreword
- Comparing Spiritual to Tradition
- Traditionally Minded
- In Remembrance of Him
- Being Clean Inside and Out
- Where Your Heart Is
- The Old Landmark
- Spirituality and Tradition Together
- Stay Encouraged

### FORWORD

This month's theme will be upon the topic: ***Spirituality and Traditions: Respecting Both for a Healthy Relationship with God.*** While this may be easy to differentiate for some, it may not be for many because traditions are common behaviors, beliefs, and practices that are shared and usually reinforced from generation to generation, or from group to group. Furthermore, when one thinks of tradition when it comes to spiritual beliefs, it can sometimes evoke a negative connotation. What comes to mind (at least for me) when thinking of traditions is that traditions are usually revered and honored, with the anticipation that such behaviors, beliefs, and practices remain alive for years to come, due to its significance to the originating generation or group. As most of us know, not all traditions are passed down (example: languages, clothing, professions).

#### Comparing Spiritual and Traditional

To be considered *spiritual* means having qualities that reflect spirit-like characteristics or qualities. It may be safe to share that if one considers him— or herself as spiritually-focused, it does not equate to being void of traditions—and *vice versa*. To combine tradition and spirituality does not necessarily mean it is against what is considered good and perfect under the Will of God. I believe to a degree that both a spiritual walk and certain traditions **must** go hand-in-hand.

**Matthew 5:17-20** ~ <sup>17</sup> *Do not think that I [Jesus] came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.* <sup>18</sup> *For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.* <sup>19</sup> *Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* <sup>20</sup> *For I say to you, that*



***unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.***

What I believe is important to understand is this: As Believers, we should be mindful of when traditions interfere with, or goes against, the spiritual teachings of the gospel.

### **Traditionally Minded**

I must admit, when I recently re-read the scriptures, Mark 7:5-15, about Jesus' disciples being scorned for not washing their hands before eating bread, it troubled me, especially in light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that has galvanized the world. The Pharisees had an issue with Jesus' disciples because it was a tradition to wash hands before eating bread. When Jesus was approached with the matter, He addressed their concerns in what was, or should have been, an enlightening manner to those who questioned Him:

**Mark 7:5-13** ~ <sup>5</sup>Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, *Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?* <sup>6</sup>He answered and 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. And in vain they worship Me. Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'***

<sup>8</sup>***For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.*** <sup>9</sup>He said to them, ***All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.*** <sup>10</sup>***For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'*** <sup>11</sup>***But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban" —' (that is, a gift to God),*** <sup>12</sup>***then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother,*** <sup>13</sup>***making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.***

***Wow! What a lesson!*** The Pharisees and scribes did not expect Jesus to take that opportunity to express *His* displeasure as to how they favored the traditions of men over the commandments of God. Jesus rebuked them for their traditions and practices that disadvantaged and harmed those God's commandments were designed to protect, respect, and honor—their true elders—*mothers and fathers*. What Jesus confronted them with is how they were holding onto a tradition that practiced putting one to death if someone cursed their mother or father; however, they also held as a tradition at least one practice that is against one of God's commandments—to *honor thy mother and father* (Exodus 20:12). Those Jesus admonished had practiced denying whatever profit their parents were entitled to by claiming such profits were being dedicated to God (Corban).

The key issue here is not so much that they were wrong about cleanliness; one should wash hands before eating. It was that the Pharisees and scribes mentioned that doing so was *according to the tradition of the elders*. What I received from these scriptures, in part, is that if they had not credited religious leaders as their elders, this may not have been the teachable lesson that it was then and is today. Jesus knew the hearts of those He encountered. He gave them something to think about—whether they desired to acknowledge their fault or not—and it came in a manner least expected. They honored the traditions of men, but neglected the teachings of God.

**1 Corinthians 1:27** ~ <sup>27</sup>*But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty....*

### **In Remembrance of Him**

As it is written, Jesus requested that His disciples reverence God, His Father, as well as acknowledge Him for what He was meant to do—this would be considered a spirit-led tradition.



**Luke 22:17-20** ~ <sup>17</sup> Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, **Take this and divide it among yourselves;** <sup>18</sup> **for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.** <sup>19</sup> And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, **This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.** <sup>20</sup> Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, **This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.**

*Do we not honor the Lord and our God by the breaking of bread and drinking of wine in honor of Him until He comes again?* Yes; this tradition, this sacrament, is called *Holy Communion*. The Lord did not despise all traditions; He despised traditions that men developed, taught, and sustained that were against the teachings of God. He despised traditions that disrespected the Will of God.

### **Being Clean Inside and Out**

It is evident by the Word of God that Jesus believed in being cleansed; spiritually and physically (having a clean heart, a renewed mind (Psalm 51:10)); the significance of the washing of feet (symbolic of a humble walk in Christ Jesus (John 13:1-7)). Yet, Jesus knew how to get the attention of those He wanted to reach; even when it was difficult or challenging for His disciples (and multitudes today), to understand or receive easily. But, by the grace of God, His chosen had a made up mind to continued to follow and obey Jesus. None were lost except the Son of Perdition, Judas.

As an example for us today, we should not shun certain traditions or observances such as Holy Communion or baptisms, which symbolize the body of Christ Jesus and being born again, respectively. These sacraments engage the Holy Spirit. It is what Jesus requested of His disciples to do then, and for us to do today. We actively take part in these observances because we do them in remembrance of Him as our Redeemer who lives, by the grace of God our heavenly Father, under the power of the Holy Spirit. Such sacraments bring us closer to God—it helps us in becoming spiritually clean inside so that we may glorify God the Father. While the majority of the time such spirit-led traditions are performed where at least two-or-three are touching and agreeing (Matthew 18:19), it is a personal declaration as to who we are and what we are to our Lord and God. Spirituality and traditions can and should be interconnected in harmony and in alignment with the Will of God; being empowered by the Holy Spirit, and a humbled and repentant heart.

**Matthew 3:11-15** ~ <sup>11</sup> *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.* <sup>12</sup> *His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* <sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> And John tried to prevent Him, saying, *I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?* <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered and said to him, **Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.** Then he allowed Him.

### **Where Your Heart Is**

**Matthew 6:21** ~ <sup>21</sup> **Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**

The treasures of our heart reveal who and what we are to God and to mankind. *Our spiritual walk, as well as the traditions that we adhere to, are usually led by where our heart is.* Therefore, we should ask for the Holy Spirit to touch our hearts lest we go astray. Spiritual traditions that we adhere to must be in alignment and mirror the Holy Word. We should be encouraged and remain faithful when Christian traditions approach, especially Lent, Easter (Resurrection Sunday), and Christmas, so that sacraments do not evolve into traditions that lack or quenches the presence of the Holy Spirit.

**Exodus 12:14-17** ~ <sup>14</sup> **So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.** <sup>15</sup> **Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.** <sup>16</sup> **On**



*the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you. <sup>17</sup> So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.*

Not all of God's chosen were meant to follow all of the traditions in the Holy Bible; there are traditions strictly designed for the Hebrews to follow and obey. However, know that Jesus declared that we are all saved by the grace of God and not by works.

**Ephesians 2:14-18** ~ **14** For He [Jesus] Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, **15** having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, **16** and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. **17** And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. **18** For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Forbid that we maintain certain traditions that were upheld in the Old Testament that cause the Word of God to be of no effect, such as the sacrificing of animals. To reinforce the Word, *Jesus paid it all; we do not need to continue certain practices and traditions as in the Old Testament because God blessed both Jews and Gentiles with a New Covenant.* Those who are God's chosen have their faith sealed by the Blood of The Lamb.

**2 Thessalonians 2:13-14** ~ <sup>13</sup> But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, <sup>14</sup> to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup> Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

## The Old Landmark

I can remember where I was at when I experienced seeing a storefront business opened on a Sunday; it was alarming—*back then*. Since then, decades later, and for many, going to a store on Sunday has become less and less against the grain and commonplace. The scripture that came to mind is—*Be ye not conformed to this world...* (Romans 2:2). Admittedly, the alarming effect no longer has the enormous sting it used to, but the conviction is still within. That is when I know the Holy Spirit loves me.

**Hebrews 3:7-8** ~ <sup>7</sup> If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? <sup>8</sup> But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

Surely, we should honor God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit every day of our lives; giving all the honor, glory, and praise for the marvelous things and good works that we are blessed with each day. Surely, we should carry on the tradition of training up children in the way that they should go according to the Holy Word so that they will not depart from the path of God (Proverbs 22:6).

Spirit-led tradition is important for us all, especially when it comes to fighting a good fight against wickedness in high places; for if we did not have a solid, constant foothold in our faith—a practice that we adhered to—we would be like a ship without a sail going to and fro without guidance and a strong foundation.

**Mark 6:34** ~ <sup>34</sup> And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

Jesus taught how we should give to those in need. He taught how to pray and fast; how we should not concern ourselves with earthly treasures, and how to seek and serve God. These are spiritual practices that are reinforced in certain traditions so that we may not only honor the Lord and our God in spirit, but so that we can pass on such knowledge to others by the unction and power of the Holy Spirit.

## Spirituality and Tradition Together

In closing, there is no way to avoid these two strongholds from overlapping. Spiritual-minded individuals who seek God's direction should have constants to adhere to. Furthermore, traditions should have a healthy place in a worshipper's life, knowing that the Word of God takes precedence over any tradition that is not demonstrated in the Word of God.

**Matthew 17:1-9** ~ <sup>1</sup> Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; <sup>2</sup> and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup> And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. <sup>4</sup> Then Peter said to Jesus, *Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.* <sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ***This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!*** <sup>6</sup> And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. <sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them and said, ***Arise, and do not be afraid.*** <sup>8</sup> When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. <sup>9</sup> Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, ***Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.***

*Imagine how Paul must have felt upon seeing Jesus in such radiance, with such magnificence! Paul wanted to honor Jesus—but God! (We may have aspirations and plans, but God! He will have the last say.)* There is a time and place for honoring the Lord and our God, so long as it does not quench the spirit or deters one from his or her spiritual path.

**Hebrews 13:20-21** ~ <sup>20</sup> Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, <sup>21</sup> make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

\* \* \*

## Stay Encouraged

We cannot truly fathom how great our Lord and God is, but what we can identify with is our Lord and our God's mercies towards us. Knowing that there are recorded accounts of how Jesus walked this earth—and knowing how He lived and died for us—should cause us to serve Him with an abundance of gratitude and humility. We know that we could never repay Him for what He has done, and continues to do for us, by the power of the Holy Spirit—we know this—but the way we can honor Him is to love and obey Him.

*We should, therefore, be willing to spread the gospel so that the Holy Word may be received by all who will believe—and for those who truly believe, may we rejoice together, and be continually encouraged in knowing that we have a glorious expected end in Christ Jesus.*

**Philippians 2:14-16** <sup>14</sup> Do all things without complaining and disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup> holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

\* \* \*

***There is no greater gift than the power of God's redemption.***

***So, if you've have not done so already, give your heart to Jesus while you still have time.***

***Have a transformed mind, look to Jesus.***

Be blessed and be a blessing. ❤️



## Here is a Golden Nugget

When we learn to truly listen before responding we can avoid unnecessary disagreements. Listening and comprehending the tone, motive, and intent eliminates having to apologize when your pride gets in the way.

**Listen before you speak!**

When we spend our energy in criticizing and pointing out what we believe to be the faults of others and even try to involve others to echo our sentiments. Have we really stopped first to reflect upon ourselves and placed the same amount of energy inward rather than outward. Consider this we have more influence to change ourselves rather than changing others. When we do this we teach others through observations of our actions rather than our judgment towards others. Our illustration is our greatest voice and speaks volumes to our character, knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.



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Michael D. Green





God has provided man the opportunity to really stop and self reflect on ourselves. With this opportunity, we can do an inward search and reflect on that which we have been given by God as a blessing (the simplest things such as family and loved ones that are near us.) while also identify some untapped talents and abilities we knew not of. Reconnecting with who and what should have meant the most. Coming away with an appreciation of what has been in our midst all along but we failed to recognize. Once we have gained this understanding take a sigh of relief and say "Thank you, God, and forgive me for my ungratefulness!"

**TIME**  
*for Reflection!*

# Religious Traditions

Dr. C.A. Dangerfield II

Religious traditions depending on where you worship can be a distraction to a spiritual relationship. The reason for making that statement is when having conversations with people your eyes are opened up to a lot of things that are transpiring within people's walk and personal relationships with God. In some of the roughest examples, I have been exposed to, it sounds very cultish and controlling. Being told how to think and feel as if it were scripted and there are consequences if you travel outside any lines or should I say guidelines. The freedom to know and feel God's presence independently is unheard of. Studying the Word is presented in a way that it is so regimented that experience is unheard of.

My question would be if salvation is free? Why should we be guilty of talking about an individual relationship with God and that which he has revealed to us when it is supposed to be intimate? Independent from anyone else. You can introduce a person to someone but after the initial introduction, your job is pretty much done when the other person decides to further their connection and build upon it.

Religious traditions a lot of times boil down to trying to recreate things that we have experienced that were pleasant and impactful for that time. To consistently try to recreate rather than having a natural experience brings a counterfeit and awkward setting at best. Then it becomes a routine and definitely not a cherished experience. That is when you lose your spiritual relationship factor and everything becomes robotic and programmed. That is when you start to question the motives behind the request made because you see no results in relation to the transforming power of God. Rather than the dictation of man.

One can teach principles based on understanding, but you cannot teach a relationship that has to be independently experienced to understand the essence. Essences bring out the oneness that one develops in a relationship which is hard to explain because it's derived between two parties. Therefore it is intimate, so we must be very careful along those lines of passing judgment because some areas are private and sensitive.

We must then learn to respect boundaries until such time one is opened to share. If you are in a natural relationship with your spouse there are parts that are public and others that are very private. There are corporate prayers and praise that are done, but there are also the same which are private. Where we experience God in such an oneness that it may be outside of explanation but we ourselves just know and rest contently in the experience. That our desire for others is that they go and experience it for themselves, having the understanding it occurs when we seek Him wholeheartedly.

Religious traditions can overshadow one's relationship with God because leadership becomes a substitute for God to the point that they are idolized by their members. Unfortunately in some cases, this becomes a place of control where members are restricted even in other parts of their lives. We have to ensure that God remains focal and that in leadership we lead and enlighten to the principles of God and not an outside agenda.



What would you do if Jesus came and you were **NOT** ready?

# WARNING

A statement or event that indicates a possible or impending danger, problem or order of unpleasant situation.

Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Acts 1:11



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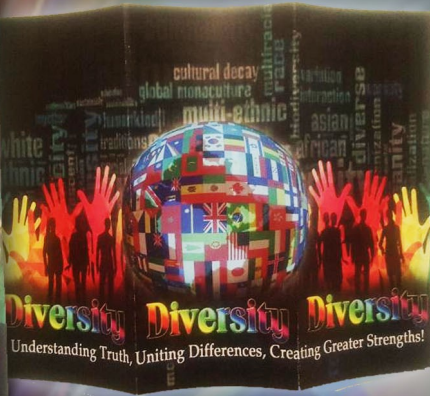
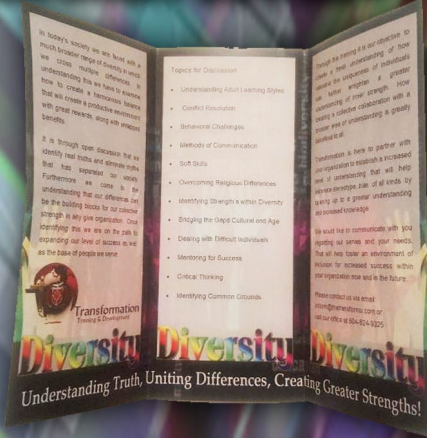


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**Sherita Jenkins  
Owner/Instructor  
757-898-5353**

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# The Comparison of a Religious Mindset and Spiritual lifestyle

## Minister Donna Jones

Let's look at Mary and Martha for a second, not to say that Martha didn't have a relationship with Jesus but as you recall Martha was very upset and felt hurt and mistreated because Mary, her sister had made up her mind to be at the feet of Jesus. Now we know that Jesus corrected Martha by sharing with her that her sister had chosen the right thing. He didn't mean that it was wrong to be busy doing what Martha was doing but that there are sometimes more important choices that if selected will leave plenty of time to do chores or "ministry". One thing I feel Jesus is saying to us is don't get so caught up in ministering for Him that we don't minister to Him. God wants intimacy first and foremost and all else will come with commitment and faithfulness. The danger in ministry work is not having balance. Balance to seek His Face above all else and get firsthand from Him how to minister.

I had people coming from out of state to have services in my home. I got totally worn out preparing for them with a great big country dinner, when only to find out they were fasting and just wanted to go to their hotel to prepare to do service. My thoughts were good but if I had put more time in seeking at His feet I would have been more in tune and not so into their physical wellbeing, which was important as well but too much of my energy was used.

Bottom line but top on the list, Sit at His Feet, grow in intimacy, and watch Him take you into the work He has called. All work and not seeking His Face leads to a religious attitude and life style.

Look at King Saul and David. Saul sought after personal achievement without walking with God. David sought after God and gained personal achievement as he was led by God and deeply cared for the people as well.

Judas sold Christ out while John the Beloved was not only given the ministry of the Book of Revelation but because Jesus knew His Heart, He even blessed John with the care of His mom. When someone trusts you with their mom they usually know you intimately and they sense a loving and kind heart in you. Judas wanted fame, walked in a religious state of mind, worrying about "kingdom" politics of when would Jesus take over. His kingdom desire wasn't really Christ like.

Religion establishes its own kingdom outside of The Kingdom of God. Religion can be extremely dangerous but the Deeper the Relationship with Christ the more Whole we become. Christ is so into us, He wants to be **the center**, not because He is controlling but because He wants only good for us.

Pharaoh's thoughts were do for me because I am in control, but instead Jesus did the work to reveal love to us. Religion will cause leaders to feel like they are only to be served while Intimacy with Our Lord will stir up a hunger to serve with a selfless motive.

Paul said in **I Corinthians 4:17-**"For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church."

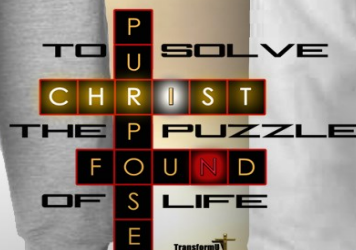


Religion can never replace the Joy we get out of Seeking Him, Loving Him, and Sitting at His Feet. A programmed life of religion will make you feel as tall as a tree to be known as a good member of the church but won't it touch your heart to pray with a neighbor and share the good news and give an afternoon of your time. Being in tune with the Holy Spirit and having a dedicated lifestyle of Jesus will cause your heart to rejoice to bring someone to Christ and teach them how to worship in Spirit and Truth. Please let us all seek His Face as Joshua did as he gave over time in God's Presence as Moses helper.

Read Exodus chapters 33 and 34. Because of Joshua's hunger for intimacy with the Glory, he gained strength to obey and the walls fell down. Love God, be Intimate with Jesus and yield to the Holy Spirit and you'll never get trapped into having a form of religion. You'll have the real thing.



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# **“Religious Traditions vs. Spiritual Relationships”**

## I Timothy 4:14-“Neglect not the gift that is in thee.....”

By Elder Diane Harvell

April 7, 2020

As I think about the many commitments I've made for the sake of “Ministry,” sadly I realize that I have wasted more time into what I thought was good or at least into what I thought God had called me to do by keeping up with traditions.

This is very serious because I almost lost my daughter to the world because of the traditions I kept. Believing that I was “bringing her up in the way that she should go.” I was so committed to “going to church” every Sunday, attending bible study every week and back to church on Sunday all day and half the night, I thought that I was “doing good” but I didn't even realize this way of life was actually lethal and misleading to my family.

Please don't get me wrong, I am not against attending church services, and I am not bashing the only way that I knew how to serve God as many still do today, but I am saying that this is a religious routine and tradition that leaves little room for self evaluation of oneself, or little room to have a personal relationship with God, family or others. Everything I did involved being at church.

Vacations, birthdays, and recreational fun all involved being at church

and so I did not recognize that I wasn't cultivating one of my first gifts that God had given me, my daughter, who just needed me to be “Mom.” We say, “Ministry” first begins at home. **I Timothy 3:5 says it this way-“For if a man no not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?”**

Apostle Paul wrote this scripture concerning the rules and Christian conduct of a Bishop or any leader should have. Yet it seems that somehow many of us “church-goers,” or those who are “saved,” neglect to apply the Word of God especially when it is **plainly** written for us to see! I too am guilty of this but I attribute this because of traditions. Tradition of the church, tradition how “Mamma” raised me, tradition how our church services are conducted! We even traditionally quote scripture, “Obey those that have rule over you” but we do not quote this **in its entirety** and we miss the correct meaning and understanding. **Hebrews 13:17-“says, “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves for they watch for your souls, as they must give account, THAT THEY MAY DO IT WITH JOY, AND NOT WITH GRIEF: FOR THAT IS UNPROFITABLE FOR YOU.”**

I believe “those who have rule” over us should be divinely assigned or appointed to us by God to lead, teach, and undergird us, and when we are ready, then send us out to minister to the world as Paul did Timothy.

So if we are bound by man's traditions and not persuaded by obedience to God, we are amiss in everything that we do whether we do it in ignorance or willingly. I am guilty of both. But it's God's mercy that has given me a Master's Class and given me a chance to get it right to serve Him and not tradition, mine nor anyone else's.



It is our responsibility to obey God. A healthy relationship is a spiritual relationship with God! If we are bound by traditions of others or even our own, this can destroy our purpose and we will not be profitable to God or man because we will lose our place in God and in the world.

In conclusion, I first mentioned my daughter, I thank God she is fine today. And as I am facing yet another chapter of maturity in God, I will not neglect my spiritual relationship with Him but I must reject religious traditions that have no place in God or in us!

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# Spiritual Relationship: Understanding the Outcomes

Dr. C. A. Dangerfield II

Spiritual Relationship brings forth an understanding and a place of comfort for those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. God has provided an umbrella and a hedge of protection over and around them which are obedient to His will and way, those that seek Him for His guidance, wisdom, and knowledge to give us a clear understanding.

Spiritual Relationship allows us to create an atmosphere of oneness where we can learn to understand the mind of God in reference to His will and is His way. We are allowed to gain the wisdom necessary to understand our purpose within this realm call earth for the season in which we are present. That we effectively reach the mandate of our assignment.

A spiritual relationship manifests an awakening in our understanding and allows us to see clearly and to hear His voice with the instructions that must be fulfilled. Allowing us the abilities and knowledge to recognize those with a humble and obedient spirit to unite with for the call and cause of Christ. That our spirits be on one accord in Him and not ourselves to carryout is divine will. Even at times when it is beyond our scope of understanding until it manifests His will and we gain the true wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of the purpose for a particular task.

Spiritual Relationship takes us to places in time far beyond measures of what we deem as our own abilities providing the trust, strength, and boldness to forge ahead in faith and to open doors that would have otherwise remained shut. Because His abilities overshadow our inability and it's our faith that totally represents many keys. Each day represents a learning opportunity in which we must be attentive, cooperative and be a good steward in order to absorb the wisdom and knowledge that is laid out before us. So when the test comes we will journey forward and not have to repeat. By paying attention to details which means we can look beyond the surface for the deeper revelation and the divine understanding. To know when you playing chess rather than checkers.

That's why it is important to study because it strengthens our abilities and capacity to operate at a higher level in Him. Why? We possess a greater understanding of the weapons of our warfare. Placing us in a better position to operate within His spirit by way of the Holy Spirit which will manifest Himself when needed. That is the importance of true communication and our ability to recognize His voice as He speaks to us. We are consistently in the midst of the training ground to sharpen our abilities for such a time for us to be called up or to be called out to represent the Kingdom for His sake.

Being anchored in Him is vital to our overalls success. That we are not pulled away by some random tide due to the lack of preparation. Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not to your own understanding. But in all ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path. Don't go rogue stay vigilant, faithful and trust Him. The outcome will prove to be worth it. The wisdom and knowledge gained will be paramount to your future. Your humbleness will demonstrate your worthiness to serve Him. Whereby He elevates you base on your one your willingness and obedience in serving others.

When we find that we have a cherished relationship with God nothing else appears to be relevant except the ability to retain this level of intimacy whereby you go into a protected mode. Which is in Him, our reality is apparent because our nature of understanding the depths of our relationship and a earnest level of trust is present.

For those who have been blessed to be in a natural relationship with a loving partner will understand the secureness that evolves when the trust is one that has not been violated. You can rest in the comfort of the relationship and you continue to build on the oneness found within. You are content so your future is viewed as endless. There we have the same relationship with Christ and what really clinches things is that He has always fulfilled His word. When we come to the understanding of how intimate our relationship truly is, we rest in the fact that God is omnipresent so we understand our connect with that of the Holy Spirit which abides within us,



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# A Time for Reflection and Compassion for Others

Dr. C. A. Dangerfield II

During this season of requested isolation for the care and safety of us all. We have the opportunity to learn a lot more about ourselves and the society around us. The Bible teaches us that "From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks...", I have found this to be true. How because I have taken the opportunity to sit back pay attention to listen as well as watch. By doing so what I hear and have seen has provided me with a lot of knowledge and understanding. I have seen first-hand compassion and love towards one's fellow man through the actions of obedience. I have also unfortunately seen firsthand arrogant, self-centered, loud obnoxious, disrespectful, uncaring, disobedient individuals. However, not as many, but for them we'll apply these words, "you reap what you sow."

Time and love for our fellow man will become our measuring stick that will be applied at our individual great meeting day when we stand alone before God. Giving an account for that which we had to render unto mankind. As I write these words the parable of the talents comes to mind. With this, I first question myself and then I share with you because we all will have this same individual meeting with our father. Think about it for a moment. In the parable, it states that "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several abilities; and straightway took his journey. Matthew 25:15 KJV

God has placed in each person living an ability. With that ability, He has provided an opportunity of time for us to be fruitful with it and to multiply it within the earth as an offering back to Him who has entrusted it within us. The first thing we have to honestly take the time and effort to look inward and identify that which has been entrusted to us. Once we have identified it, we have two options, one is to sow it into fertile ground that it may grow and reproduce itself or have hoarded it unto ourselves that it may not benefit anyone including ourselves and be lost to everyone after we ourselves are gone. It is the opportunity of sharing wisdom and knowledge that provides progress for everyone. It is the principles of God that we experience gaining the knowledge that comes through applying them.

Understanding comes from the combination of both which allows us to see, feel and it touches our very core. The evidence is very real once our site has been able to truly become focused. You will see what has been present all the time and we have been blessed to be a part of. The question would then be in what dimension are you existing and what is your true reality. Have you been focused on what is around you trying to mirror and copy what you see in the surrounding view hoping it will manifest for you? Only to come to the understanding that it doesn't work for you because it is outside of your ability and not within your nature to succeed. So now you have time wasted because your motivation wasn't genuine in nature, but envious indeed so it lacked true passion which is a by-product of one's success. Now you are staring counter motivation in the face realizing you have traveled down the wrong path. Good news is realization has checked in and now the opportunity is present which will allow you to reevaluate your steps, refocus your sights to your true destination and redirect your steps onto the right path.



I'm not going to go away quickly from the remedy. I'm going to apply some in-depth wisdom and knowledge to fortify this understanding. We live in a society which is microwave driven meaning ready in an instant. As good as it may seem it depletes some of the essences. We are moving so fast we fly by the ingredients that provide the end result so we can't truly appreciate the essence, identify or define that one special ingredient that is truly the main factor. Take some time to savor on that thought.

When you taste that unique flavor it causes you to connect to that one dish. Yes, there are multiple presentations of like dishes they look the same but when tried them, they come off different. That's why it comes down to one specific brand that has that one unique ingredient, that satisfies your pallet and nothing else will do. That's what it is like when you find and have that one true relationship with God. Nothing else will even come close, it comes down to all or nothing. A substitute just won't do.

When you are fortunate enough to find and sustain the genuine article of your quest you will not forget anything about the process to getting to that place and fulfillment again. It doesn't matter the journey or amount of time invested to arrive at that place time and time again.



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**Minister:** Do you commit before God and I witnesses that you will do all that is within you to maintain your home where Malory will be care and loved, and do you commit to rearing this child love and honor God with all her heart?  
**Parents:** We do.

**Charge:** Bishop Carlton L Williams

*With that I received your assent that God has graciously*

baptism. Then she will follow Jesus as her Lord and Savior.  
 But you are responsible to do your part as well in rearing her. Rear her to be not only a child of knowledge and grace, but a child of faith.

ibility and gladly accept it is gathered here today?

**Minister:** Do you commit before God and I witnesses that you will do all that is within you to maintain your home where Malory will be care and loved, and do you commit to rearing this child love and honor God with all her heart?  
**Parents:** We do.

**Charge:** Bishop Carlton L Williams

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# IT'S ABOUT THE SPIRIT

*Chaplain Ella J. Alexander*

James 1:26-27

*"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongues, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*

*Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."*

Above we read about vain religion and pure religion. As children, many are brought up in religious traditions. They keep those traditions until they are in their teens, even as an adult. It could be a tradition of going to church on Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years. Let's go back to where we were taught to pray the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. We memorized the words as a child and that is as far as it went.

Just as there are religious traditions within the home, so are there many religious traditions within the body of believers, the church. There are many religious traditions within the church and the first one is similar to one we were taught at home and that is to go to church on Sunday, or Saturday, perhaps Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday and every other Saturday. The other religious tradition is being a scripture quoter or just dressing up in Sunday best because it was Sunday.

Many claims to be religious but their character couldn't show what they believed. They went to church but cussed, drank, partied, and hung out in the streets. In other words, they lived a life opposite to what they claimed to have or be.

Religion is not wrong or bad. It is how one keeps or live up to what they say that they believe. James 1:26 makes mention about a man (male or female) not bridling the tongue and have deceived himself. If there is no self-control, no discipline, no practice of good works from the heart, then their religion is in vain.

Pure religion produces good works. It shows forth good character and speech. It leads one to do right. Pure religion will result in good relationships with others. It stems from the foundation of love.

When we look at both verses, 26 and 27 it is easy to do a simple comparison. Even having a pure religion is not enough if you don't have a relationship with God who is the creator of faith, honesty, purity, and love. We must learn to build a spiritual relationship with God, not lip service or a natural relationship. Why? Because we won't gain anything doing it that way. Spirit will only produce spirit and flesh will produce flesh. When we approach God religiously and traditionally it will only result in this manner:

**Jesus speaking:** *Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do. Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. (Mark 7:6-9).*

*"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* {Mark 7:23)

Religious traditions could never produce a spiritual relationship with God or your sisters and brothers in the Lord. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, John 3:6.*

In order to have a spiritual relationship we must be born of the spirit and to keep the relationship healthy we must learn how to be spiritual obedient, study to receive revelation and wisdom from the Word of God which is spirit and life. We must learn to communicate to the invisible God who is spirit which speaks to us by His Spirit. All of this takes place due to faith by the Word we hear about Jesus Christ.

God does not want our car, house, apartment, job, money, husband or wife. He wants a relationship with us. Remember there is nothing fleshly that could be done to gain that spiritual part.

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### Lesson 8

Subject: Injustice Will Be Punished  
Bible Basis: Esther 7:1-10

### Guest Instructor

Supt. Michael B. Golden, Jr.  
Hampton, Virginia



**Bishop Ocie Booker**  
Jurisdictional Prelate



**Elder Michael Payton**  
Jurisdictional Superintendent





# Something to Consider

C. A. Dangerfield II

A quick, yet I feel an insightful thought if you take the time to understand. Medicine takes longer to work when we fail to follow the prescription that is prescribed by the physician after the diagnosis. Think about it before you move on. A physician looks closely at the symptoms displayed by the patients in order to prescribe a remedy. Open your mind so that you can receive the understanding. When we fail the lifestyle practices that promote wellbeing we open up ourselves to things that bring our health to a place of risk. Cause and effect are now into play and will generate an outcome. Get ready because the aha moment is on the horizon or if you are a former All in the Family watcher when Edith gets an understanding she utters "Oh My" or "Oh Archie"

The diagnosis has been rendered as increased sin and disobedience on the part of man. Turning our back to the covenants God made with man, for substitutes that are contrary to the Will and Way of God. Warnings were rendered from the east to the west and the north to the south. However, those in power have determined that they have the power to change outcomes, rather than repent and pay attention to the Will of God. To the point of even going against the Eleventh Commandment "Thou should love your neighbor as yourself" pretty simple when you say it. But proven to be harder for some when you start to weigh out the words requesting the action. We figure in too many scenarios.

Obedience is better than sacrifice, think on that for a few. Our individual histories will prove the statement to be correct. So let me go back now we understand the diagnoses to the sickness. But we are having a problem walking out the prescription in order to obtain the full effect of the remedy. The same remedy has been present the same for generations sometimes its fulfilled and most times not completely We have a serious problem with adhering to the first part which is an essential key. To the overall remedy.

The prescription of which I speak is 2 Chronicle 7:14. "If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves, (humble which is defined in Webster's as **1**: not proud or haughty: not arrogant or assertive **2**: reflecting, expressing, or offered in a spirit of deference or submission *a humble apology*) in the current DNA of the nations this factor is not present. Seek my face (the question would then be are we truly seeking the face of God or are we engulfed in finger-pointing and backbiting) And turn from their wicked ways (Are we turning from our destructive practices, are we still in the midst of the same behaviors, we have to be honest at this point, we need healing, not a Band-Aid because that leaves space for re-infection). The promise for complete healing is defined within the prescription "Then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sins and heal their land". This is a definite promise from God based on displaying the right behavior. We cannot afford to be wishy-washy that will only produce the same that we are experiencing now and there is no disputing this fact.





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Email: [request@northeasterncollegeoftheology.org](mailto:request@northeasterncollegeoftheology.org)  
Applications available online.  
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