

14th Sunday after Pentecost  
“As it is written...” Mark 7:5-8  
August 25, 2024  
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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost is from our Gospel reading, Mark 7:5-8

**“5 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?”**

**6 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.**

**7 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’**

**8 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.”**

So far our text.

**“As it is written:”**

This was Jesus’ response to the Pharisees who would elevate, supplant and substitute the traditions of man for the Word of God. **“Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”** They literally lay aside the commandment of God, God’s Word...and hold on to, grasp and make one’s sole norm and source for belief – the tradition of men, man’s ideas, and ultimately man’s ways of salvation, that is...works righteousness.

Hypocrites – Jesus tells it like it is. People who honor me with their lips, say they are believers in God, leaders of the church, and yet, they have no desire to hear or trust in what truly saves – God’s Word, not man’s word. The hypocrite has no desire to eat of the Bread of Life as we have been hearing these past Sundays. For to eat of the Bread of Life is to eat of Jesus – to believe in Him, trust in Jesus as True Man and True God, the Christ, the Savior of the world.

The hypocrite would rather elevate the eating of physical bread by adhering to manmade traditions on how to prepare to eat it...by making the washing of one’s hands the all

important teaching! Distract and divert people from the true teaching of what satisfies the hungry soul! Of what feeds the soul so that it will never hunger! What is that teaching?

It is the Gospel. It is the Good News of that Jesus feeds the hungry sinful soul with Himself, the Bread of Life, and gives salvation and eternal life freely! That is what's at stake here! The Gospel! Man's teaching is devoid of the Gospel. Only in God's Word does a beleaguered soul find hope and peace in God's command to send His Son into the world and give His life for the sins of the world.

"As it is written" – Jesus always directs our attention only to God's Word. After Jesus rose from the dead, the ultimate proof of who He was and what He had accomplished for the world, what did John write in chapter 20?

**"30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."  
John 20:30-31**

These are written .... these are written to know that Jesus is the Christ and believing in Him there is life!

When Jesus was tempted by the devil to bow down and worship him and trust in him, how did Jesus respond? It is written, **"Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"**

This was Jesus' response to the devil who, the father of lies, tempted Jesus to follow the devil's word instead of God's Word. 1<sup>st</sup> commandment teaching. And it must be our response, also, when we are tempted by the teachings of this sinful world and the devil to obey man rather than God. It is written. It is written. It is written in God's Word – Sola Scriptura. God's Word is the sole source of authoritative teaching and the sole source of the Gospel of salvation.

These Pharisees and Scribes came all the way from Jerusalem because they perceived Jesus as a threat to their power...to what they had written. They loved the glory that they received from the people as being the righteous "do gooders" of their manufactured traditions. Who was this Jesus who was taking away from their glory? We'll show Him a thing or two they thought...

How come Your disciples eat with unwashed hands? Oh, the horror of it! Oh, the pharisees did a lot of baptizing, that's the word that is used in our reading...literally washing. Of what? Of **“the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.”**

But they rejected the washing, the baptism of John for their souls. This is what God's Word teaches...

**Mark 1:4**

**John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.**

**He who believes and is baptized will be saved! Mark 16:16.**

God's Word teaches that baptism unites a sinner with the death and resurrection of Jesus! Romans 6. God's Word teaches that with simple water, and the powerful Word, a person's sins are washed away and God gives life, eternal life!

Jesus goes on to tell the Pharisees how they had turned God's Word upside down.

**“9 He said to them, ‘All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. 10 For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ 11 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), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, 13 making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”**

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment teaching of honoring your father and mother. The Pharisees thought they were smarter than God and made up their own teaching. If you give an offering, a Corban, that takes the place of honoring your parents and helping them in their old age. Yes, there was a cancel culture back then also. The Pharisees cancelled the Word of God with their traditions and made it of no effect.

Times haven't changed a bit. Today we live in a culture of Postmodernism.

Postmodernism says there is no absolute truth, no God, and only relativism. Each person can determine one's own reality. If a person doesn't like police, you can burn down the police headquarters in Minneapolis. Just throw out the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment that says we should honor our parents and other authorities...God-given authorities to give us peace and rule of law. It is written...

In the name of “reproductive freedom” as was being touted in the DNC convention last week, you can do away with the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment, “Thou shall not kill” and establish man’s teaching that abortion isn’t killing a baby. You can even set up a mobile clinic outside your convention hall and have count the number of babies that you can kill each day! Freedom? What about the freedom of the unborn child to live out a life and have a family and most importantly know Jesus who gives freedom from sin through baptism! This is no freedom to break the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment, but enslavement to sin. It is written...

Man’s teachings always invert what is God’s teaching. They take what is written by God and turn it upside down. The very truth that God created male and female is replaced by man’s idea that there is a preconsciousness of who I really am and the goal is to discover it. Whatever I say that I am, male or female you have to respect this because I say so.

God must have been confused when He said in the first book of the Bible:

**“27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”**

Man’s teachings say that God’s institution of marriage between a man and a woman needs to be further enlightened by man’s wisdom that it must also include a union a man and a man or a woman and a woman. God must have been confused again when He said in the second chapter of Genesis **“24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”** It is written.

God’s Word – Law and Gospel – was written to lead us to one important truth – that salvation alone can be found in Jesus Christ. He suffered and died for all men and their sinful teachings. He gave His life to forgive all the times when we have followed man’s teaching instead of God’s Word.

And so after Jesus rose from the dead, He once again plainly taught this truth to His disciples and all of us.

**“44 Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.**

**46 Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at**

**Jerusalem. 48 And you are witnesses of these things. 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”**

God’s Word is written for our salvation, starting in Jerusalem and unto all the world!

Amen.

**“And this peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**