

Tradition, Tradition

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 August 2021

Preacher: Walt Alexander

[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! Chapter 7, verse 1.

If you look there with me, I'm going to read to verse 13. It says, Now, when the Pharisees gathered to him, that is, our Lord, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed.

Then Mark tells us a little aside. For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands, according to the tradition of the elders.

And when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.

[1 : 23] Verse 5. And the Pharisees and the scribe, they asked him, Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?

And he said to them, Our Lord, 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.

In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.

And he said to them, You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition. For Moses said, Honor your father and mother, and whoever reviles father and mother must surely die.

But you say, If a man tells his father and mother, Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban, that is given to God, then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father and mother.

[2 : 27] Thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down, And many such things you do. Heaven and earth will pass away.

My word will never pass away, our Lord says. The 1960s hit musical, Fiddler on the Roof, Tells the story of a man caught in the changing of the times.

It's a story about a poor Jewish milkman named Tevye, If I'm pronouncing that correctly. Theater people might be rolling their eyes. He lives with his wife, their five daughters, In a small Russian village, Trying to hold on to Jewish traditions, While the world is rapidly changing around him.

And Tevye does not like it a bit. He wants to go back to the old days, When the father was the master of the house. And the father scrambled for a living to provide for his family.

And when the mother spent her time making a proper and quiet home. And when the son and daughter were eager to learn from the book, And ready to marry whomever the father picks.

[3 : 45] He wants his family to hold fast to tradition. The opening song captures his desire perfectly. Tradition, tradition, tradition, tradition.

Because of our tradition, we kept our balance for many, many years. Here in our town, we have traditions for everything. How to eat, how to sleep, even how to wear our clothes.

You may ask, how did this tradition start? I don't know. But, it's a tradition. So you know what that means. He continues, because of our traditions, Everyone knows who he is and what God expects him to do.

He concludes, without our traditions, Our lives would be as shaky as a fiddler on a roof. Perhaps you can relate to Tevye.

We're not in Kansas anymore. The times are a change. And we need to hold fast to our traditions. And in so many ways, we should. Traditions can be very, very good things.

[4 : 46] They can be a way of doing the same things over and over again. Because we believe they're the right and good things. But our passage this morning narrows our focus to some of the dangers of tradition.

Especially among religious people like us. Sometimes we do the same things over and over again, Merely because they are the things we always have done.

Sometimes we do the same things over and over again. For so long, we begin to believe that anything else is wrong. Sometimes we do these same things over and over again for so long that we hold on to these things more tightly than we hold on to anything else, even the Word of God. And when traditions begin to become more important than the Word of God, we have left biblical Christianity. Yersla Pelican said it like this, Tradition is the living faith of the dead.

So that's the good wholesome side of it. Tradition is the dead faith of the living. Tradition is not bad.

[5 : 55] Traditionalism is deadness. Doing the same things over and over just because you always have is the dead faith of the living. In our passage this morning, Jesus confronts the scribes and Pharisees for the way they have followed the tradition of the elders and kind of ended up in a very dead faith.

He confronts them for elevating tradition. He confronts them for adding to the Word of God. He confronts them, as we'll see, for legalism. In so doing, he unveils the freedom that Christ came to bring.

Mark includes this confrontation. I'm going to expand on this a few minutes. In his gospel, as a warning to religious people, lest we stumble into traditionalism. In a way we're going, adding to what God has said always takes away from the freedom Christ died to secure.

Adding to what God has said always takes away from the freedom Christ died to secure. It's going to make a lot more sense once we get done working it through. But the first is the foundation of tradition. The foundation of tradition.

In the opening section of this passage, the first two verses, Mark describes this incident between the scribes and Pharisees and disciples of Jesus. Scribes and Pharisees come down from Jerusalem and they see the disciples presumably coming back from the marketplace and they begin to eat without washing their hands.

[7 : 17] And once again, we see the scribes coming down from Jerusalem. We saw that in Mark 3, 22. And once again, these scribes seem to be complete, or seem to completely disregard all that Jesus is doing.

Every time they're mentioned, there's no mention of his miracles, no mention of his many signs and wonders. They only want to talk about the rules he's breaking. They see these disciples eating with unwashed hands and they want to confront them.

You know, I want to help them out too. You know, I know a lot about washing hands right now. I don't know about you guys, but a year of getting down and learning how to wash my hands, I can show these disciples a few things, but they're not interested in helping the disciples with hygiene. What they're after is purity. Now let me explain a little bit. Actually, Mark gives us a little aside. So you see that in verse 3 and 4.

If he was just telling this story to Jews, he wouldn't include this, but he includes it because he's telling it to Gentiles. For the Pharisees and Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands, hold them to their tradition. When they come to the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash.

[8 : 21] And they have many other traditions. And so Mark is kind of telling us something about the tradition of the elders. And I want to just kind of set the stage for that a little bit and tell you what's going on.

You know, the Bible is filled with wonderful commands. Be holy as I am holy. Honor your father and mother. Keep the Sabbath holy. They're wonderful commands, but they're actually very hard to obey.

Tell me how you obey. Be holy as I am holy. It's easy to read the many commands of the Old Testament, but hard to keep them. So throughout the history of Judaism, the Jewish elders would teach.

They would give practical help. They would come alongside the law, especially where it was too silent or too general, like be holy as I am holy. So they would come and they would teach along.

So they wanted people to obey the commands of God. So they added some practical steps and rules around the laws, commands in order to keep people obeyed. So these are often called fence laws or hedge laws.

[9 : 25] The idea is they kind of hedged in the command of God so that you didn't break the command. The fence or the hedge kind of kept you away from breaking the command.

And so these practical steps and these rules are what Mark twice calls the tradition of elders in verses three and four and again in verse five. So by the time of Jesus, this tradition of the elders had become quite a list passed down orally among Jewish people.

You remember that when we saw Jesus in the Sabbath in the synagogue in Capernaum in chapters two and three. Now it's important to realize that adding rule, adding these rules is not necessarily wrong.

If you notice, Jesus does not throw out the tradition of the elders in the passage. He doesn't say they're wrong for doing this.

Jesus' attention is on how they're applying the tradition of the elders. In fact, if you want to obey God, you will have to take steps. If you want to obey God, you will have to put forth effort.

[10 : 42] If you want to obey God, you'll have to build fences in your life. You know, think about it. Do not murder. I mean, quite obviously, that strikes out execution.

But we know from James and from other places that it strikes out anger and so many other things. And so you begin to have to draw lines. You have to work this out of things you must not do in order to obey God.

If you do not draw those lines, you will disobey God. D.A. Carson helps us here. He says, people do not drift toward holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to God, faith, and delight in the Lord.

We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance. We drift toward disobedience and call it freedom. We drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation.

We slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism. We slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated. Though, we can't throw out all the rules.

[11 : 48] Adding rules is not necessarily wrong. In fact, it's unavoidable. So let's work this out just for a minute. You know, if you're going to train your kid to honor their father and mother, it's a good command to train them in.

You have to be very clear what is disrespectful. Disrespectful. Is it disrespectful to roll your eyes? Disrespectful to talk back? Disrespectful to lay down on the ground and kick? What's disrespectful? Like, if you don't define what's disrespectful, you can't just fall around the house and say, honor your father and mother, honor your father and mother. That's not going to work. You have to define it. Or, Ephesians 5.3 says, there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality among you.

If you obey this command, you've got to take steps. You may make rules for yourself like no phone use after 10 p.m., no watching blank rated movies, no writing with someone of the opposite sex like the Billy Graham rule.

In seeking to obey God, you will build fences if you're really serious about it. If you do not, you'll likely be found disobeying God. This is where I think like good traditions kind of fall in line with this.

[12 : 53] You know, they're good things that are trying to stimulate good growth. They're good and right things. But so, so let's get back to the story. So that's, that's my little aside about tradition of elders. It helps us to understand why Jesus responds the way he does.

And so, when the scribes come down from Jerusalem, they see the disciples break one of their rules, one of the tradition of the elders. And Exodus 30.19 says that all priests must wash their hands before entering the tent of meeting and offering sacrifices.

Okay? So they must be clean. That's the idea. They must be clean before they enter the presence of God. But the tradition of the elders commands all people to be, to wash their hands.

The idea is it's a wise enough command. You know, the Old Testament says if you touch a dead body, you're unclean. Or if you're a leper, you're unclean. If you touch somebody who touched a dead body or who is a leper, you're unclean.

Or any number of these things. So it's kind of a good command. The idea is if you're walking through town, you don't know who you're hanging out with, you might touch somebody who is

unclean. You might be unclean without being unaware or with being unaware.

[13:57] So you might want to wash your hands before you eat. So what's the big deal? Just wash your stinking hands. And so they go to Jesus.

Verse 5. Why don't you wash your disciples, walk according to the tradition of elders, but eat with undefiled hands? Really what they're saying is do you not care about the tradition? Do you not care about remaining clean?

And so the stage is set for a showdown. Dun, dun, dun. And we're going to find out what Jesus really thinks. So point to the deadness of traditionalism.

The deadness of traditionalism. So we saw the foundation of tradition. Now we're going to see the deadness of traditionalism.

So Jesus responds in a quite shocking way. Instead of answering them, kind of classic Jesus, you ask him a question, he does whatever he wants. He, in defending himself and his disciples, he rebukes the scribes and Pharisees for how they're following the tradition.

[15:08] Look down there with me. He says, well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites. Isaiah wrote that thinking about you. As it's written, this people honors me with my lips, but their heart is far from me.

In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. Now that seems a little harsh. I mean, Jesus followed those traditions too.

Probably. You know, it seems a little harsh. You know, in fact, we have a pretty negative view of these Pharisees, you know.

We tend to think because of all these confrontations with Jesus, these guys are just rotten to the core. But, you know, like any religion, there's just some folks that are kind of doing it halfway and just kind of come up and come around whenever they want.

But there's others who are very serious and devoted to seeking to love the Lord, their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. And that's what the Pharisees were. But Jesus says, you're hypocrites.

[16:06] This would have stunned him. What he's saying, actually the word is for somebody who's in the theater, a Tevye type guy. So he's saying, you're just pretending. Like, you just have a mask on.

You're just a charade. You're a fake. So how could Jesus call them hypocrites? When they confront the disciples of Jesus for not washing hands, Jesus confronts them for legalism.

Legalism, in a word, is attempting to gain acceptance before God through my obedience to God. Attempting to gain acceptance before God through my obedience to God. In its most basic form, legalism is believing God loves me more and more, loves me more and blesses me more because of what I do for Him.

So life, when it's not going well for me, it must be because I'm not doing enough for God. When it doesn't seem that God is blessing me, it must be that I'm not doing enough for God.

It turns the generous God who did not spare His own Son into, as one writer says, He whose favor has to be earned. It's deeply heinous.

[17:18] We're going to see more of that. Galatians 2.16 tells us we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. So that's big L legalism.

That's the big mama. But she has lots of children. And R.C. Sproul identifies two forms of legalism in this passage which we're going to break out for you.

It is legalism, sub point one, to elevate the traditions and teachings of men to the level of what God has said. It is legalism to elevate the teachings and traditions of men to the level of what God has said.

Another type of legalism, R.C. Sproul says, in this passage, Mark 7, involves adding to the law of God commandments and prohibitions that God has not spoken. That's what happens in this passage.

As I've said, washing hands could be and is a wise way of keeping yourself clean and pure but it's not the law of God. The law of God says only priests must wash their hands.

[18:16] And so these describes and Pharisees, they fail to distinguish it. That's the first error. They fail to distinguish between the law of God and this command or this wise application. And in failing to do that, they add to the law of God.

I know this might be a little heady but I hope I'll iron it out in a few moments. So in failing to distinguish between the law of God and their wise practice, they actually, in effect, add to the law of God.

Commandments and prohibitions that God has not said. They elevate the teachings of men to a level of what God has said. And so they begin teaching as doctrines, Jesus says, the commandments of men.

They teach as doctrines, holy principles of God, merely commandments of men. And so in verse 8, Jesus says, you leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.

This form of legalism is what Jerry Bridges calls Christian legalism. It means we baptize it and call it good.

[19 : 26] Jerry Bridges says, this form of legalism insists on conformity to man-made religious rules and requirements which are often unspoken but are nevertheless very real. It occurs when we add man-made rules to the rules of God.

When we add them and when we fail to distinguish between the commandments of God and the rules of men, it's so easy and so subtle and so common. You know, if you are a parent, you know, or if you were a kid, you know that traditions form very easily.

Perhaps you take your kids out for ice cream after swim practice. Perhaps you do it two weeks in a row. Perhaps on the third week, you say, kids, we're just going to head home and eat dinner.

They say, no, dad, we always have ice cream after swim practice. Right? Religious rules develop like that too.

We do something that seems to serve us, so we do it again and again. Before long, we cannot imagine doing anything else. Then we gradually begin to assume that there must be no other way to do this thing, so we begin to tell others to do the same way that we're doing it and look down on them if they don't.

[20 : 40] Christians often become, and churches often become, more centered around certain religious rules than anything else. One pastor tells a story, I've told this story a couple years ago, but tells a story of a family being forced off the mission field because of peanut butter.

They were sent to a place of the world where peanut butter was not available. It's a fallen world, guys. You can't find Jeff everywhere. They had friends back in the States send them peanut butter from time to time.

They'd stowed away in their bags or something. The problem was the other missionaries had arrived there to the same predicament, but they decided it was more spiritual to abstain from peanut butter, so they chose to not abstain.

They taught one another to not abstain. They made a rule that it is not spiritual to eat peanut butter. Now, that's not in Exodus or Leviticus or the other 613 commands in the Old Testament.

This new family considered this a difference of opinion. No big deal. They don't eat it. I like to eat it. So they kept eating their peanut butter. In the end, the pressure from the missionaries became so great and so intense that they left the mission field for home.

[22 : 05] If it was over peanut butter, that would be concerning. But because it's over legalism, it's not. That's the way it happens.

We add little rules to what God has said. We must not become a church centered more around certain religious rules than the gospel. You can choose to homeschool, public school, or private school.

You can choose to vote Republican or Democrat. You can choose to wear a mask or not. You can choose to get vaccinated or not. You can choose to bear arms or not. You can choose to watch movies, drink alcohol, or whatever else you want to do provided it falls on the lines of Scripture. But please, let us not draw lines where Scripture does not. And let us not conclude that we are more spiritual or more faith-filled than those filled with fear over there who choose to do something different than us.

The Word of God, this is what's going on, the Word of God must bind the conscience and that alone. It's a very serious matter. If you remember Martin Luther at the Deut of Worms when he was defending the 95 Theses that he nailed on the church doors in Wittenberg when they asked him to recant his 95 Theses, his 95 propositions about the Protestant faith or what became it, he said, my conscience is captive to the Word of God.

[23 : 26] I cannot and will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Don't bind your conscience according to anything I say or any other man but by the Word of God.

So, just a little application point. When talking to other people distinguish between the principle and the practice.

The command and how you've applied it. Trust me, if you get that as a swing thought some of you aren't golfers I'm not much one either but swing thoughts what in your mind as you swing you don't want many because you'll blast it the wrong direction but that's a good swing thought if you're talking to somebody about parenting or their marriage what's the principle and then when do I move into my practice?

There's so much more we could say but point two or sub point two it is legalism to excuse yourself from obeying God in following your tradition.

It is legalism to excuse yourself from obeying God in following your tradition. R.C. Sproul again says a third kind of legalism in this passage that was big L and then little L number one little L number two here is loopholeism.

[24 : 44] Don't you love that name? R.C. would have said that with a big smile. It happens when people try to discern ways to get around the law of God. They try to adhere to the letter of the law even while they trample the whole point and spirit of it underfoot.

As Jesus continues rebuking these scribes and Pharisees he calls them out for this loopholeism. That's what's kind of going on in verses nine through thirteen.

It's this loopholeism that the idea is the command is honor your father and mother but the scribes and Pharisees teach a way out. Jesus says for Moses said honor your father and mother but you say something different.

The idea is they said that if they took all their money and declared it Corban so they took all their money and they said it's God's money then they weren't obligated to take care of the needs around them so they weren't obligated to take care of their parents.

Paul says you're worse than an unbeliever if you don't take care of your family but they had found a loophole around it. Does that make sense? So they found this loophole so in endeavoring to obey the commands of God they found a loophole that got them out of the most obvious application of the command and Jesus said you know he's telling this is what you're doing eleven times in verses six through thirteen he says you you or you or you or these second person pronouns then he says you you have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition that word establish literally means to make your tradition stand in place of to de-word the word of God and place your word in the place de-authorize the word of God and authorize your word in its place one of the most vivid examples of loophole ism in the new testament is the parable of the good samaritan you remember the story a Jewish man was going down the road from Jericho he fell among robbers because it would have been dark and things like that he was beaten left on the road for dead first comes a priest he sees a wounded man he wants to do what is right he's a priest man but he's fearful that this wounded man could be dead and if he touches him he'll be unclean he'll have to go get cleansed again so he walks on the other side of the road and avoids the man the distance communicates his loyalty to the law then comes a Levite he's an assistant to the priest he realizes that since the priest passed him by he has a get out of jail free card if the priest he knows he went first and he comes after him then he's free too so he avoids he too avoids the possibility of becoming unclean by walking on the other side of the road as well finally comes a Samaritan even though he hates

[27 : 44] Jewish people he helps him right the law you see had become a loophole for this Levite you know Jesus confronts us again and again and he sounds like an Old Testament prophet remember when he says one of the most quoted verses by our Lord was Hosea where it says I desire mercy not sacrifice now you can't read the Old Testament and not know that God desires sacrifice you know like he desires sacrifice something that has to stand in the place of guilty sinners like you and me and so he desires sacrifice but you know what if it comes down to moral triage he desires mercy more he doesn't want them to loophole themselves out of obedience by doing the sacrifice instead of doing the mercy does that make sense so he says in another place you neglect the weightier matters of the law the heart of the commands justice and mercy and faithfulness so you

I hope you can begin to see a little bit here I hope we're all beginning to see it at first Jesus' response seems over the top I hope we now see why he's so blunt and so intense legalism is not a distortion of the gospel like adding rules and elevating alongside the word of God is not a distortion of the gospel it's an anti-gospel it's not a distortion of Christianity it's unchristian that's what the

break was in the Protestant Reformation is pushing up against a thoroughly unchristian un-gospel things and so when I look into the future when I anticipate a future which Lord will in this church will go long after I'm dead the most significant problem for this church I see lurking in the shadows is not the culture it's not socialism it's not critical race theory it's not politics it's not worldliness it's not out there most significant problem

I see lurking in the shadows is legalism and we need to counteract the tendency towards legalism with more and more gospel gospel the great preacher Charles Spurgeon said it like this he could have said this about right now he could have said this he could have preached this last Sunday today there are not very much there is not very much gospel about the church has given it up a great many preachers preach everything but the living truth this is sad but it is a strong reason why you and I should teach more gospel than ever I have often thought to myself other men may teach socialism deliver lectures and collect a band of fiddlers that means just kind of to entertain that they may gather a congregation but I will preach the gospel I will preach more gospel than ever if I can I will stick to the one cardinal point that's the one cardinal point of

Christianity the gospel of Lord Jesus Christ the other brethren can attend to the odds and ends but I will keep to Christ crucified to the men of vast ability who keep looking to the events of the day I will say allow one poor fool!

to keep preaching the gospel beloved teachers be fools for Christ and keep to the gospel don't be afraid it has life and it will grow only you bring it out and let it grow that is the heart of this church we want to preach more and more gospel so you don't come in here to get my takes on everything going on in this world but I hope you do come in here eager to hear more and equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself taking on the form of a servant being born in the likeness of human in human form and he humbled himself all the way to obedience to death on a cross why to cleanse guilty hell deserving sinners like you and me the gospel or the news of Christianity is the good news about Jesus Christ it's not the news of culture warfare any of these things it's about Jesus and what he came to do we're going to preach it point three the freedom of the gospel the freedom of the gospel in in retelling

[32 : 29] Jesus' confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees Mark is pointing to the freedom Jesus came to bring now if you remember maybe if you weren't here back in January we preached about who wrote this gospel why did he write it who did he write it to it's it's Mark it's John Mark is what he's called in Acts and he's with Paul in the end in Rome if you remember that from 2nd Timothy 4 and so he wrote Peter Peter told him everything to write we know that from church history and he wrote to people in Rome in the early 60s that was when Nero was the emperor and he was killing a lot of Christians so he wrote to people who were Gentiles he wrote to people like you and me who were not Jewish by birth and who were not raised studying the law memorizing the Pentateuch and that becomes clear so if you notice that's why there's those parentheses through here he wouldn't need to explain the tradition of the elders right so he has that parenthetically verse 3 and 4 this is what goes on with the washing their hands and things like that parenthetically in verse 11 he says

Corbin that is given over to God in fact in the passage that Taylor preached next week in verse 19 he says thus he declared all foods clean and so Mark writing to a Gentile audience not a Jewish audience so my question is why does Mark include this kind of run in with Jews that wouldn't pertain to Gentiles they weren't saved in the same way for people in Rome and for us because Mark wants us to hold fast to the freedom Jesus died to secure this incident I believe and especially the way it's retold points forward to the all those who trust in him so what we've been introduced to and what Jesus is coming up against is the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament if you ever tried to read your Bible in a year you're probably still stuck in Leviticus it's where Bible reading plans go to die why because it's filled with all these laws man you're like what in the!

he nearly took them out when they worshipped the golden calf he nearly took them out when they were grumbling numerous times so he gave them these laws this is how you can relate to me I'm holy you're not these are these laws they'll help us so this is what you should eat these are the food you should eat these clothing you should wear this is who you should marry this do when you're sick when you have something going on in your house and at the heart of these laws were sacrifices because God is holy and they continually sin against him they need to offer sacrifice to avert God's wrath remember that same wrath that he promised to pour out in Exodus 32 that we studied two weeks ago but this system of laws of cleanness and sacrifices was temporary Jesus came to bring it to an end look in Hebrews 10 talks about priests and talks about Jesus says every

priest stands daily at his service offering repeatedly the same sacrifice which can never take away sins he's telling it was a temporary provision it can never fully take away sins but when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of God waiting from that time until his enemies should be made his footstool for his feet for by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified so two things and most of most of Hebrews is telling us how the ceremony law is no more but two things need to be need to be understood is that no more sacrifices need to be offered!

Mr. Stevenson started a non-profit called the Equal Justice Initiative trying to help people from wrongful convictions based out of Montgomery Alabama he tells a story so he he's delivered a number of people from death row it's pretty incredible stuff I think it's a wonderful rebalancing of the justice system when it's in the hands of men he tells the story of visiting an inmate on death row for the very first time he was a law student he was clerking with somebody he was sent to tell the inmate that he would not be executed this year that's pretty cool job so the inmate entered the room and he said he never been inside a prison let alone a maximum security prison like that and on death row the inmate enters the room he was blown away by the shackles he said he can't remember what he was trying to say or why he was there he just fumbled out firstly fumbled [37 : 44] I'm just a lawsuit I don't know much I can't do much then he remember I was sent here to tell you you're not at risk of execution anytime in the next year guy said wait a minute wait a minute what was that I was sent here to tell you that you're not at risk of execution anytime in the next year he said hold on tell me again you're not at risk of execution anytime in the next year he said thank you thank you thank you I've been waiting to see my wife and kids but I didn't want to bring them in if I was going to die in the next year so now that you tell me I'm getting to see my wife and kids soon I've been sitting here to tell you you're not going to die of execution not at risk of dying of execution ever again that's what Hebrews 10 means that you are born at risk of execution there is no reason why you should have lasted until today because you've done so many things to incense the

Lord you've done so many things you've gone your own way you've turned against him you've rebelled against him and yet he sent Jesus Christ he sent him to the executioner's chair to endure the punishment that you deserve that's the heart of the gospel the heart of the good news so that you're not at risk of execution ever again not today not tomorrow not next week not next year not two years from now after you've blown it you're not at risk ever again because of!

Jesus there's no more sacrifices to offer not attending church not reading your bible not praying no more sacrifices there's also no more laws of separation all the laws of uncleanness separation are over bacon is legalized I thought I'd get a little bit more than that but that's alright fair enough you might be fish people the gospel came to go out to all the world the doors to the kingdom of God are thrown wide to every tribe tongue people and nation

Peter captured it so beautifully in the sermon at Pentecost he says repent be baptized every one of you so there's this massive crowd gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of sins you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit for this promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off there's no man you can find that this promise is not for that's what Peter is saying once the Old Testament was a promise for a people it was for an ethnic!

people tied by one genealogy but now in Jesus Christ these lines are bursting out through all the world he said the gospel must go to the end of the earth and then the end will come there's no more separation if you study church history and the history there's been no one no individual in the history of the world that has been the subject of more art more music more prose than Jesus Christ right that's not surprising he's a man you know he's the man that's so understated he is everything in America Jesus is often portrayed as a blue eyed white fair skin man right I was in church not too long ago and it had like the most typical image in my mind of Jesus up up there and that was totally great because it's what

[41 : 58] I thought about! But if you go throughout the world that's not the way Jesus looks right there's diverse depictions of Jesus in Byzantine and Roman icons in Ethiopian art in the sculptures and stained glass of the West in Renaissance painting in the Christian art of Africa Latin American India so what does Jesus look like maybe he looks like all of us because he comes to all of us and makes friends with all of us I think that's what's going on in the art they're not depicting a man who's so far off all throughout the world when Jesus comes to their area people become saved they depict someone that looks a lot like them he comes so close we assume he must just be like us he must have brown hair light skin so

Jesus did not come to give you more rules by all means you're going to have to follow some rules if you're going to follow Jesus he came to set you free free to follow him free to walk with him free to know him knowing Jesus Christ J.F.

Packer says is calculated to thrill a man's heart there's just nothing like it so let us guard this freedom at all cost from traditionalism from formalism from legalism until he returns let us pray father in heaven thank you for the privilege of giving attention to your word oh God would you keep us holding fast not to our traditions but to Jesus Christ and him crucified there's nothing we love more than the old old story of our Lord who's come for us keep us in the good of the gospel and in the peace of God we pray in Jesus name amen amen you've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in

Athens Tennessee for more information about Trinity Grace please visit us at Trinity Grace Athens dot com B Bum Bum Bum