

A TEACHING FROM THE BRANCH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Traditions of Men

Why Culture Can Silence the Word of God

Lucky Mahlasela

branchofrighteousness.org

Introduction

Not everything handed down to us in the name of faith actually came from God. Scripture draws a sharp line between what is *revealed* by God and what is merely *inherited* from generations of people — and Jesus Himself warned that the second can quietly nullify the first.

The traditions of men are anything passed down that is not actually rooted in revelation rightly interpreted and rightly applied. They are often taught as doctrine — spoken of with the same authority as if they came from God — when in truth they came from men. Over time, they don't stay as opinions. They settle into something deeper: culture. And culture is powerful precisely because it isn't only taught deliberately — much of it is simply absorbed, without anyone ever choosing to believe it.

Where This Shows Up

This isn't a problem confined to one group. It's a pattern that repeats at every level:

- **Judaism** — which began long before Jesus and continues today — carries traditions that predate and, at times, override the actual Word given to Israel.
- **The Church**, across every denomination, has accumulated its own layers of tradition, some faithful to Scripture and some not.
- **Every nation and people group** carries inherited assumptions treated as truth simply because “this is how it's always been done.”
- **The world system itself** — the cosmos, as Scripture calls it — has its own traditions.
- **Every country and region** filters faith through its own local customs.

There is even what could be called a Heavenly Realms culture — a mixture of the true and the inherited, present even among the redeemed. And because tradition is often invisible to those inside it, changing a culture is one of the hardest things a person or a movement can attempt. You cannot argue someone out of something they never knew they had absorbed.

The Real Danger

Not all tradition is harmful. Some of it is simply neutral — customs and forms that carry no spiritual weight either way. But some traditions stand in direct opposition to the Word of God, and when those are taught as *if* they were doctrine — as if God Himself said it — they don't merely coexist

with Scripture. They nullify it.

Jesus said it plainly:

“Making the word of God of no effect through your tradition.” (Mark 7:13)

A tradition dressed as doctrine doesn't just fail to help — it actively blocks the Word from producing power in a person's life.

The Three Roots of Powerlessness

This is why so many believers live far below the authority Scripture describes them as having. There are three main roots:

1. **Ignorance** — simply not knowing what God has actually said.
 2. **The traditions of men** — believing something false as doctrine, and building a life on it.
 3. **A lack of desire for power** — settling for a form of godliness that never asks whether it actually carries force.
-

A Present-Day Example: Cessationism

One of the clearest examples of this in the modern Church is Dispensationalism's teaching of **Cessationism** — the doctrine that the gifts and works of the Spirit ceased after the death of the apostles.

Under this teaching, many believers have unknowingly accepted a ceiling over their own spiritual life: the Five-Fold ministry stones of the Kingdom Age and the nine manifestations of the Spirit are treated as historical relics rather than present realities. The result is a Church that remains stuck in what could be called the Church Age, never moving forward into the fullness of the Kingdom Age God intended.

This is tradition functioning exactly as Jesus warned — not as an obviously false idea, but as a quietly accepted “doctrine” that nullifies the Word's power before it ever has the chance to manifest.

Closing Thought

The way forward isn't cynicism toward everything inherited, nor rebellion for its own sake. It's discernment — the willingness to ask, honestly, of every “doctrine” we've received: *is this actually the Word of God, or is this the tradition of men wearing its clothes?*

That single question, asked consistently, is often the beginning of a believer moving from ignorance and powerlessness into the authority Scripture actually promises.