

wisdom you love... God's or man's? This Greek word is used only once in the New Testament and is focused on the wisdom of men rather than of God.

**Empty deception** is another part of this warning. It is defined as...

...**empty** - vain and devoid of truth

...**deception** - delusion, deceit, deceivableness

Thus Paul's warning is inclusive of deception based on an alleged "love of wisdom" which is in reality devoid of truth.

Paul seriously desires his audience to be warned to avoid the pitfalls of man's traditions and the world's principles. Here are the definitions of these terms...

...**traditions** - this involves the transmission of a precept of the Jewish traditional law

...**principles** - includes an orderly arrangement a principle

Traditions and principles are not necessarily evil; however, when held above the Word of God...they are always evil.

God's Word is replete with warnings of deception.

- Deception is deceptive because it **sounds like the truth.**
- Deception is deceptive because it is **presented as though it is the truth.**

- Deception is deceptive because it **agrees with what we already believe.**
- Deception is deceptive because it is **what we want to believe.**

Below is the first part of Jesus' answer when His disciples asked Him about the signs of the end of the world and of His return...

*"And Jesus answered and said unto them, **Take heed that no man deceive you.**" (Matthew 24:4)*

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#### Conclusion:

The **Word of God reigns SUPREME** when it comes to learning and judging spiritual truth!

**Nothing**... absolutely nothing overrides the Scriptures in the development and determination of spiritual truth!

*"Now these were **more noble-minded** than those in Thessalonica, for they **received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.**" (Acts 17:11)*

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*"You make the word of God useless by putting your own teachings in its place. And you do many things like this." (Mark 7:13)*

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God packs many things into Mark chapter 7 and the focus of this study is how the religious leaders elevated their traditions above the Scriptures, the Word of God. We see a clear digression in Mark 7:7-9.

#### The Digression

If people begin by making their opinions and beliefs equal to the Scriptures, or they define the Bible to agree with their own beliefs... their position regarding the Word of God will digress and eventually their beliefs will trump the Bible. They will insist the Bible says what they **think** it says.

#### Teaching Man's Commandments As Doctrine

*"Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for **doctrines the commandments of men.**" (Mark 7:7)*

## MAKING THE WORD OF GOD USELESS

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The first stage of this slipping from truth is to make the commandments of men **equal** with the Word of God. As we can see in Mark 7:7, the religious leaders were teaching their own opinions (the commandments of men) as if they were the **sound doctrines of God**.

Making man's word equal with God's is the beginning of the fall from truth.

### Holding Man's Traditions Above God's Word

*"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."* (Mark 7:8)

The second stage of departure from the truth is to hold the traditions of men as **superior** to the Word of God.

Previously these religious leaders taught men's commandments as though they were God's doctrines. In this step they ignore the commandments of God and elevate the traditions of men.

In Mark 7:8 we see these people "**laying aside**" God's commandments and choosing to uphold and endorse the "**traditions of men**".

### Rejecting God's Word To Keep Traditions

*"And he said unto them, Full well ye **reject** the **commandment of God**, that ye may **keep your own tradition**."* (Mark 7:9)

During the third stage of apostasy, they no

longer ignore the commandments of God... they now **reject** them.

At this point the Word of God is **clearly** contrary to these men's traditions. They choose to **reject** God's commandments... God's definitions... God's Word... in order to **keep** their own **traditions**.

This is a very sad and extremely evident withdrawal from the truth. Perhaps this can more easily be seen in the following...

Mark 7:7 - men's commandments taught as God's doctrines.

Mark 7:8 - Laying aside God's commandments to hold to the traditions of men.

Mark 7:9 - Rejecting God's commandments in order to keep one's own traditions.

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### The Example Jesus Used

Mark 7:10-13

10 For **Moses said**, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, **let him die the death**:

11 **But ye say**, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; **he shall be free**.

12 And **ye suffer him no more** to do ought for his father or his mother;

13 **Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition**, which ye have delivered:

and many such like things do ye.

Honoring your father and mother is the specific example that Jesus used in this passage.

The Word of God (Moses) commanded that one honor their parents and if they did not... they should "**die the death**".

The **traditions** of the religious leaders violated this command by claiming that they were free from observing it due to their religious service.

The end result is what Jesus clearly rebukes them for in Mark 7:13. They have made the Word of God to be useless because of their traditions.

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### Warning - Traditions Of Men

*"See to it that no one takes you captive through **philosophy** and **empty deception**, according to the **tradition of men**, according to the elementary **principles of the world**, rather than according to **Christ**."* (Colossians 2:8)

This somber warning from the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul is in full agreement with Jesus' words in Mark chapter 7.

Paul warns us not to let anyone enslave us through philosophy and empty deception in accordance with men's traditions and worldly principles.

The Greek word for "**philosophy**" used here is generally a "love of wisdom" which can be a good thing, or not; it depends on Who's