

Mission Before Tradition

Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Grant in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Look

Traditions are something we surround ourselves with, like a warm blanket of familiarity. They can be a part of our identity in various social circles, a context for community engagement, or ever just a solitary act of personal grounding. At their worst they can get in the way of fully engaging, but at their best they can facilitate full intentional participation.

1. What are some small personal traditions you have that help you get through your day?
2. What is a particular big tradition that you find yourself dreading? Why do you dread it?
3. What is a family tradition you have that has changed over the years? Why did it change?

Book

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The Pharisees, as they are common to do, are confronting Jesus and looking for yet another way to discredit him. The tradition of washing hands and food was a well known one, but was also predicated on having access to clean water. In many ways, they were trying to cut straight to the topic of uncleanness.

1. How is the wording of their question very telling about the state of the Pharisees' hearts?
2. How is the implied relationship between hands and hearts different between the Pharisees and Jesus?
3. Why is Jesus' reference to Isaiah an important anchor in his response?

Took

When a discipline is followed simply out of tradition, it often loses meaning. When a discipline is followed out of intention, it can create a space for the Holy Spirit to dwell. This inner intentionality creates a space for the Holy Spirit to dwell.

1. Why is the intention behind our Christian traditions so important in today's world?
2. What are some ways that you see people letting Christian traditions get in the way of the mission of the church?
3. What is one of your personal traditions you can re-examine this week in order to find more opportunity for intention in it?