Scripture: Matthew 15:1-9.

Text: "Why do you transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?" -- Matthew 15:3.

- Sermon Topic: For the Sake of Tradition.
- Proposition: For the sake of tradition (i.e.—to gain social approval) we tend to conform to many customs and practices which are harmful to people and(therefore) sinfull before God; but as Christians we should strive to do what is best for people, as the highest active expression of Christianity possible in this life.

Dates written: February 3-6, 1970.

Dates and places used:

7eb-8,1970-000 land Parce, 7la.

dripture: Matthew 15:1-0.

To f: "War do you transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?" ... Watthew 15:3.

Sermon Topic: For the Sake of Tradition.

roposition: Tor the sake of tradition (i.e. - to gain social approval) we tend to conform to many
customs and cractices which are harm
ful to people and(there ore) sinfall
esfore lod; but as Christians we
should strive to do what is bast for
coople, as the highest active expression of Christianity possible in
this life,

Lates written: Petruary 3-6, 1970.

Dates and places need:

DE BUT ENLINE - 59 9 VOE

#### Introduction:

1. At the conclusion of a concert two ushers were applauding harder than anybody else. The audience was impressed with the fact that they were

pressed with the fact that they were true music lovers, and then one usher suddenly stopped applauding. The other turned to him and said in

a stage whisper, "Keep clapping, you idiot! One more encore and we're on overtime."

(from Good Reading for 12/69 as in Quote for 1-1-70)

- 2. People often appear to be doing something for one reason when actually they are doing it for another as these ushers actually were not the great lovers of music which at first they were thought to be. Sometimes a person may even fool himself, so that in honesty he will give as his reason for an action one cause, but later come to realize that he was actually moved by another, stronger, perhaps-hidden reason.
  - 3. In the Scripture that we read today Jesus was asked a question by some of the learned religious people of his day, the scribes and pharisees, and in his answer he pointed out to

Increduction:

1. At the conclusion of a concert two usbers were applauding harder than anybody else. The sudiance was impressed with the fact that they were true music lovers, and then one usher suddenly stopped applauding.

The other turned to him and said in a stare whisher, "Keep clarning, you idiot! One more encore and we're on overtime."

(from Good Rending Cor 12/60 as in two tee for 1-1-20)

2. Copis often some reason when doing something for one reason when as these ushers actually they are doing it for ano he great lovers of music which at first they were thought to be, one times a berson may even fool himself, so hat in honesty as will give as his reason for an action one cause, but later come to realize that he was established the was actually moved by a nother, atronger, perhaps adden reason.

3. In the Conipture that we read today Jesus was asked a question by some of the learned religious people of his day, the seribee and pharisees, at the answer he pointed out to

- them that they actually were not ouite as truly-religious and pious as they seemed to be; that while thinking of themselves as correct in religious detail, they actually were law breakers and irreligious people of a very bad sort. He was telling them that their motives for action were not really what they said they were.
  - 4. Since we often are engaged in the same mannerisms, the same wrongdoing, in essence at least, it is well that we try to find the message of our Lord Jesus by Making w
  - I. A synopsis of the Scripture passage that we read.
  - 1. A synopsis is, by definition, a general view of a situation; or a condensed version of a longer statement.
  - 2. One example of a condensed version of a longer process might be the statement a beautiful blonde was overheard making to a friend.

    She said, "I used to be an intellectual -- until I wised up."

them the informations and nious vite as inpurious and pious as they seemed to be; the inpurious correct coinking of themselves as correct in religious de sail, they sobusily were law breakers and irreligious people of a very end sont. He was telling them them that their motives for acid they were not really was they and they see sont.

4. The engaged in the same engaged in the same engaged engaged engaged, the engaged at leas, it is well that we that the message of our lord desus by which the

# I. A symposis of the Sorthung as sage that we need.

- 1. A synopsis is, by definition, a general view of a situation; or a condensed version of a longer statement.
- 2. One example of a condensed version of a longer process might be the statement a beautiful blonde was overheard making to a friend.
  The said, "I used to be an intellectual -- until I wised up."

- That statement certainly told a lot about both the girl and the public with which she mingled! In a few words.
- 3. We don't know just where Jesus was when this incident happened. It is related as immediately following an incident at Genessaret in which
- an incident at Genessaret in which
  those who touched the fringe of his
  garment were healed from their illnesses; so it may have happened
  there. The Scripture says that the
  scribes and pharisees, learned religious leaders of Israel, came from
  Jerusalem to Jesus. The first thing
  they did was to ask him a question,
- "Why do your disciples transgress (break) the tradition (law or rule) of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." Jewish law had been developed by earlier Pharisees to include many minute
- religious requirements, many small ceremonies and acts, which were considered necessary to the worship of God. This one to which these leaders referred, the washing of hands before

eating, sounds like an ordinary sanitation preventive measure which we will use. It is good sense to wash your hands before eating, to remove That statement certainly told a lot about both the rirl and the public with which she mingled! In a 'ew words.

3. Le don't know jest where Jesus was when this incident harryened. It nessos: so it may have heroened there, The soristure save that the scribes and phorisees, learned redistons leaders of Lerel, came from Jerusalem to Jesus. The fir t thing hey did was to tak him a question, deinel bands when they ent. " Jours! reiline vd beceleveb need bar wal religious re uirements, many small ceremonies and octs, which were con-God. This one to which these leader released, the weshing of hands before esting, sounds like in ordinary sanion the left, some winder the noited urilings to ore esting to mean

grime and germs so that they do not get on the food as it is handed into your mouth. But the scribes and Pharisees did not know about germs. The ruling was an adoption for the average God-fearing layman of a form of priestly showmanship. The priests would take a bowl of water, usually an elaborate bowl of gold or other precious substance, and with the water in it ceremoniously, and so all could see apply it to their wrists and hands, usually the back of the hands, so It really wasn't a cleansing ceremony. That was then always done before they would \*xx publicly eat the food that had been sacrificed on the altar, often eating it in front of lots of hungry people. Later, by the time of Jesus, they insisted that everyone use this particular form of washing before he ate - as a sign of his devotion to God. It really didn't have much actual usage or value.

4. Jesus lived in this type of environment, and he respected most of the laws, and kept them. However, if you care to check it out you will see that he seemed to set a higher

roug mouth. But the scribes and Pharisees did now know shout rerms, orm of oriestly shownenity. The priests would take a bowl of water, other precious su stance, and with Word end willegro . should bus adair of the hands, who is really ment to d cleansing coremony. That was xixx sacrificed on the slage, often esting it in front of lots of bunery people. La er, by the time of Jesus, they Les e simoof his devotion to col. Invior doun over timbib vileer t usage of value.

4. Jesus lived in this lyde of environ ant, and he respected most of the laws, and kepter and lovever, if you care to alock it out for will see home be seemed to set a dirier

value on defending and being just to those close to him. So when the disciples were attacked by the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus defended them by showing THEM how THEY broke

them by showing he how THEY broke the laws about which they talked. He referred to one of the oldest and most-respected of the laws, the commandment that says "honor thy

father and thy mother that their days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." He told them that they were not honoring or supporting their needy parents, but taking what should have been spent or used for them and giving it to "God," (to the temple, to "religious" projects), and then saying to their parents, "What you would have gained from me is given to God." In other

from me is given to God." In other words, these leaders who accused his disciples of breaking a minute point of religious practice were themselves breaking a major religious law, a law of God, in order to keep a lesser

(though not unimportant) commandment.
They were trying to keep manmade tradtion and custom, and were ignoring
God's law to do so.

5. Jesus ended his defense of his disciples and by quoting from

Ž

d those close to it. So then scrides and Ph of sees, Jesus decended e loud Will Word L T Matrons vo ment the laws about Which they talked. He referred to one of the oldest and most-rested of the laws, the blod of "cod drovin bot via brol sup crting their needy parents, but "God," (to the temple, to "religious projects), and then sading to their parotts, " hat you would have cained from melia given to dod. " In other cords, these leaders who accused his brocking a manor religious law, a law of God, in order to keep a lessen dion and custom, and were ignoring

is disciples and by custing from

The very source that the scribes and Pharisees used to justify their actions and accusations, their Seripture:

"This people honors me with their lips,

but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men."

(v. 8-9)

- 6. Jesus used the word "tradition" twice in this Scripture to refer to these "doctrines of men," Once, he asked, "Why do you transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your traditions" Again, he said, "for the sake of your tradition, you have the sake of your tradition.
- much attention, too, to "the traditions (or customs) of men", thereby ignoring God's law and hurting other people.

have made void the word of God."

ther from the Old or New Testaments, believe that fidelity in marriage is a demand of God's law, and that the

the very source that the scribes that Pharises used to justify their actions and accusations, their scripture:

"Inia people honors me with their

but their headt is for from me; in vain do they worshit me, ceanning as docurines the precents of men."

0\_0 .7)

o. Jesus used the word "tradition" buice in this Scripture to refer to these "doctrines of men," Once, the sked, "they do you transgress the commandment of God for the sake of our traditions" Again, he said, "for the sake of your tradition, you have made void the word of God."

much ettention, too, to "the ureditions (or customs) of men", there over norths foo's law and hurtime other meonle.

1. People of Biblical faith, whother from the Old or New Testaments, believe that fidelity in marriage is a damand of Jod's law, and that he practice of pre-marital sexual in-

dulgence is morally wrong and harmful, both to those who practice it and
to society. We think that "God's
law", if you will, demands chastity
before marriage and fidelity after
marriage.

2. Yet, according to "the traditions of men", if you can get pleasure of a sexual nature with no harm to any but the mutally-consenting persons involved, that's all right. Such is far from the case actually. For one thing, you can never be sure that you are not harming some innocent but very concerned person.

3. One incident from the news of our national capitol not long ago illustrates what we're talking about. In some Washington traffic surveys cars were photographed, their license numbers were traced, and questionnaires were sent to the owner's homes. One was sent to a wife whose husband had been driving her car one day, and the guy had a

hard time explaining to her how he had come to be in the wrong traffic jam in the wrong part of town.

practice of pre-marical, sexual indul cance is morally wonky and harmful oth to those who or otice it an
to society. We think that "God's
Law", if you will, demands chastity
helore marriage and "idelity after
m Triage.

2. Let, becarding to "the traditions of men", if you can set
pleasure of a sexual nature with
no narm to any but the mutellycon enting persons involved, that's
all right. Buth is far from the
case actually. For one thing, you
can never be sure that you are not
narming some innucent but you are
corned person.

9. One incident from the news of our national capitol not long ago illustrates what we're talking about. In some mashington traffic surveys came were photographed, their license numbers were traced, and questionnaires were sent to the owner's homes. One was sent to a wife whose husband had been driving her car one day, and the guy had a her car one day, and the guy had a had come to be in the wrong traffic in the wrong newt of term.

- 4. Or, consider the matter of making a profit in business. The "traditions of men" today seem to stress making the most you can out of anyone and any circumstance. Christian ethic, the law of God, applied to business, would seem to insist that honest goods or service be given for a reasonable profit, enabling the merchant or worker to live comfortably, but not charging far beyond what his product is worth, not charging all the traffic will bear. We think that the spiraling forces of inflation are based to quite an extent on greed, on people not thinking about the welfare of those they serve, on the attitude of getting all you can while the getting is good. Eventually, we earnestly think, such conduct will backfire to the diadvantage of the
  - 5. Another story, humorous we hope, illustrates that. It is about a gorilla who weaked into the door of a hamburger joint. The guy behind the counter ran into the back room when he saw the ape, "There's a live gorilla out there" he stammered

one who without conscience over-

charges.

Matthow 15:1-9

4. (r, consider the matter of making a profit in business. The of anyone and any circumstance, Christian stric, the law of ned, applied to business, would seem to de given for a messonable profit, live comfort bly, but not charging the older eds lie animumno don besr. We think that the spiraline quite an extent on greed, on people hose they serve, on the attitude es time is good, eventuelly, we sarnestly think, such conduct will ent lo enatorette of entitlese of the charges.

f. Another story, homorous we hope, illustrates as that. It is about a confile who walked into the door of a namburger joint. The guy behind the counter run into the back room than he saw the sea. "There's a live corils out there," he stammered

to his boss. "He just walked in and ordered a hamburger."

"Serve him," said the boss. Wand just give him \$1 change from that \$10 bill he's got in his hand."

The counterman went back out and did as he had been told. As the gorilla munched on the hamburger, the waiter said, "You know, we don't get too many gorillas in here."

To this the gorilla replied, "Iom not very surprised -- at \$9 a ham-

burger."

6. You can bet your boots that when people have a choice of services and goods, they'll remember the people who were fair and honest. The crooks, the greedy, hurt everyone --including themselves.

7. We could use other "horrible examples " to illustrate that we of today are too prone to adapt to the standards of the world around us, instead of bravely and sometimes sacrificially sticking to our Christian standards. We think that a good case still can be made that

to his boss, "He just walked in and ordered a hamburger,"

"Serve him," said the boss. "and just give him \$1 change from that \$10 bill he's got in his hand."

ine counterman went back out and did as he had been told. As the gorfile munched on the hamburger, the weiter said, "You know, we don't get too many gorillas in here."

To this the gorilla replied, "Ifm not very surprised -- at '9 a hamour er."

6. on can bet your boots that when people have a choice of service and goods, they 11 remember the people who were fair and honest, The crooks, the greedy, hart everyon --including themselves.

examples ', o illus rate that we of today are too arone to adapt to the standards of the world around us, instead of browely and sometimes secrificially sticking to our Christian standards. We think that a sometime to an estandards of the think that a sometime estandards.

#### XXXXXXXXXX

III. as Christians, we should strive to do what is best for people, as the highest active expression of Christianity available to us.

1. There is a story about the architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, who had the courage to institute what were startling new forms of building. He introduced some ideas which are often copied, and which have started other architects off in dramatic new concepts. Once during a trial, Frank Lloyd Wright was called to the witness stand and sworn in under oath. The county attorney asked, "Your name?" "Frank Lloyd Wright." "Your occupation? asked the attorney. Wright then drew himself up so that his long white hair and his elegant 19th century clothing made his quite a striking figure. and said. "I am the world's greatest living architect." Later, appalled at such seeming immodesty, a friend asked,

"How could you ever say such a thing?"
"I had to," Wright answered. "You see, I was under oath."

(from Pagaent, 11-69)

XXXXXXXXXXX

LII. as Christians, we should strive to do what is pest for people, as the lighest active expression of Christianity evailable to us.

L. There is a story about the architect, Frank Nove Wright, who ere often copied. . and which ita wisl, Frank Nove bear the sworm in under ooth. The county attorney seked, "Your nime?" "Fre love Levent," "Your occupation nedt in int . ventoffs edt bewee century elothing made his duite o striking figure, and said, "I sm the world's gre test living architect." later, appalled at such "How could you over say such a thi

see, I was under oach."
(from Porsent, 11-69)

people do.

- 2. If you've seen some of Frank Lloyd Wright's work, such as his contributions to the Florida Southers campus at Lakeland, you may or may
- not agree with him as to how great he was. But the point we would make here is that he had the courage to express his ideas in architecture, in spite of the fact that they were quite different, and in so doing he did contribute to the aesthetic aspects of many localities. You may not like what he did, but many

  - 4. After all, in what other ways do you have in which to do God's work on earth, than through and for other people? Sure, you can pray

2. If you've seen some of Frank look which is work, such as his contributions to the Florida Souther campus at akeland, you may or may now egree with nimes to how wreat news. But the point we would make here is that he lad the course to done so it that he lad the course to in spite of the fact that they were in spite of the fact that they were nuite different, and in so doing he did contribute to the sesthetic appears of many localities. You many not like what he did, but many poole do.

J. Mimil rdy, as Christians we apout a buy a to be that which our faith makes us pelieve. If we take seriously Christ's commandments to love other people second only to our love for Jone, then we're going to live quite different lives than we will if we simply try to follow "the braditions and coving the greatesu pleasures and coving the greatesu pleasures for ourselves.

4. Lafter all, in which to do God's ork on a rth, than through and for other people. Sure, you can pray

- and worship publicly and privately, and should. You can contribute to the programs and building budgets of churches and other places of praise and worship, and should. But to do something whenever possible takes
  - money, and time which might well be used for ourselves. To go further and give time and money which are really needed for ourselves is getting into the realmost true sacrifice, and to begin to become Christlike.

5. Such giving of time, money and abilities mixkx in this day in which

we livex might mean working for a lower wage because the job being done is more worthy than the higher-paying one. It might mean sticking with your marriage when people you know are getting divorced for much lesser cause than you think you have. It might mean standing up for racial equality when the neighbors around you or those who empky you (like you

mixing. It might mean a willingness to give up most of our attembbiles in order to lower air pollution and

do me) are firmly against much

highway congestion.

end worship ublick and nrivately, and should. You can contribute to be program and building budgets of churches and other places of praise and worship, and arould. But to do something whemeverwheathing to do something whemeverwhostiole takes somebody else whenever possible takes money, and time which might well be used for our elves. To go further and rive time and money which are really needed for ourselves is set in and the really of true snorther.

bilities winkx in this day in which
we live; might mean workin for a
lover wase because the job being
done is more worthy than the higherpaying one. It might mean sticking
with cost marriage when becole you
know are setting divorced for much
lesser cause than you think you have.
It might mean standing up for racial
equality when the neighbors cround
you or those who emply you (like you
mixing. It wisht mean aswillin ness
no ne) are firmly resinst much
to five up nost of our subemoniles
hadray convestion

## Conclusion:

- 1. "Why do you transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?" Jesus asked the scribes and Pharisees. If he were on earth
- in the flesh today, maybe he would ask me and more-highly placed church professionals the same thing. Maybe he would ask you key laymen in our church!
- have to admit that we do a great deal of our activity because it is "traditional," expected of us, the custom, what we've always known. We would have to confess that we are quite often very uncomfortable with

2. If we were honest, we would

- or fearful of the unnsual and the unknown. We know that we are too thoroughly intimidated by and indoctrinated with the liking of things as they are, because things as they are put is in pretty good positions, really.
  - 3. As Christians, we believe that tradition may have some values, but that any part of it which hurts people should be discarded. We believe this because his breaking

### Conclusion

L. "Why do you trem gross the commendment of God for the salte of your
tradiction" Jesus asked the soribes
and Pharises. If he were on earth
in the flesh today, maybe he would
ask me and more-nighty placed church
professionals the same thing. Mayoe
he would ask you key laymen in our
ehurch!

2. If we were honest, we would have to somid what we do a rest owal of our activity because it is "traditional," expected nof us, the custom, what we've always amount we yould have to confess that we are quite often very uncomfortable with or feerful of the unusual and the unknown. Is mow thatk we are too thereoughly intimidated by and indoctrinated with the liking of animas as they are, because things as they are not because things as they are not in orethy are put is in pretty rocarcestions.

3. As Chri lians, we believe that tradition may have some values, but hat any mert of is which hunts recons a should be discreted. We believe this occurse his breaking.

with many traditions about 1940
years ago got Jesus into xxx trobble,
and he is the example for the man of
Christian faith. We remember, however, that the trouble he got into
ended up with him resurrected and
victorious.

to break with traditions and customs which are harmful to people, to any people. Let us as Christians strive to do what is best for people, all people of all places and races. Rax When you get right down to it, here on earth the only possible way you have to serve God is through other people. As Christians, then, we should strive to do what is best for people, for this is the highest active expression of Christianity that is possible in this life.

with many treditions about 1040 years ago got Jesus into xix trouble, and he is the example for the men of Christian Faith. We remember, however, the the grouble he rot into ended up with him resurrected and victorious.

4. Let us, then, commit ourselve to break with traditions and customs which are h raiful to ecople, to any people. Let us as Christians strive Lo do what is best for people, all people of all places and races. Xxx con you got right down to it, or went one only possible way you have to serve dod is through other people. As Christians, then, we should strive to do what is best for peorle, for this is the highest active extression of Christianity that is possible in this life,