

The following of "Tradition"

About This Study

The verses in "PART 1" are all based on a New Testament Greek word, *paradosis*. In these passages, this word refers to teachings and instructions, whether verbal or written, that are handed over, or delivered, from one individual (or group) to another. This word can have positive or negative connotations, depending on the context. For example, it has positive connotations, when it refers to teachings and instructions that come from God (by way of the apostles and prophets). On the other hand, it has negative connotations, when it refers to man-made teachings and instructions, which claim to be from God, or which are given a greater emphasis than God's Word is.

"PART 2" contains verses which use the verb form of this word (*paradidomi* - to deliver). This word can be used in many ways, in reference to anything (or anyone) being delivered or handed over to someone (or something). It can also be used in reference to a person being betrayed or handed-over to his enemies. This part of the study focuses mainly on the verses which mention the handing-over (or handing-down) of teaching and instruction - primarily that which has been received from God.

These two related words focus on the idea of delivering or handing-down teachings, from one person (or group) to another. Other New Testament words exist, which have a greater focus on "doctrine" or on the "teachings" themselves.

The Issue of "Man-Made" vs. "God-Made" Traditions

MAN-MADE TEACHINGS/TRADITIONS - God opposes man-made traditions (teachings and instructions) which are exalted, or given priority, over his Word. He hates all man-made substitutes - teachings which nullify the teachings and instructions that come from God. We have a moral obligation to reject such traditions.

GOD-MADE TEACHINGS/TRADITIONS - These were received from God, and delivered to the people by the apostles and prophets. Now, having been put into written form (the Bible), they can be handed down from generation to generation, without fear of them being lost, or the message itself being corrupted over time. We have a moral obligation to base our lives on these "traditions."

PART 1 - Teachings and Instructions Passed from One Individual (Or Group) to Another.

A. God is opposed to people exalting man-made traditions over his Word - Matthew 15:1-9 & Mark 7:1-13.

1. Background: The religious leaders followed traditions that were passed-down to them from previous leaders - Mark 7:3-4.
2. The religious leaders verbally attack Jesus and his disciples: They question Jesus about his disciples not following these traditions - the implication being that the religious leaders considered the disciples wrong for not doing so - Matthew 15:1-2; Mark 7:1-2, 5.
3. Jesus' reply: He shows the religious leaders that they (the leaders) are the ones who are sinning. He tells them that they are breaking God's commands, for the sake of their man-made traditions. He also gives an example of how they are doing this - Matthew 15:3-9 (see also v. 10-20); Mark 7:6-13 (see also v. 14-23).

B. The effect of salvation on a person's views about "tradition": The example of the apostle Paul.

1. Before God saved him, he was eager to promote human traditions - Galatians 1:14.
2. After God saved him, his perspective was totally reversed.
 - o He warned people against man-made traditions: He told them to base their lives on Christ, and to not become ensnared by man-made traditions (and the religious systems that are based upon such traditions) - Colossians 2:8.
 - o He commanded people to follow God's teachings - the "traditions" which he (Paul) passed on to them. He praised the people when they did so - 2 Thessalonians 2:15 and 1 Corinthians 11:2.
 - o He warned people to keep away from so-called "Christian brothers" who did not follow God's teachings/traditions (referring to the teachings which Paul passed on to them) - 2 Thessalonians 3:6.

PART 2 - About the Teachings/Traditions That Were Delivered to Us (Originally From God, Delivered by the Apostles and Prophets)

A. The type of people God used, to give us these teachings (some specific examples):

1. Moses *handed down* various teachings - Acts 6:14.
2. The apostle Paul, and those with him, *delivered* various instructions to the people. The specific instructions mentioned here originally came from the apostles and other early church leaders (in agreement with the Holy Spirit) - Acts 16:4. [These specific instructions are described in the next section.]

3. The apostle Paul *delivered* many "traditions" (teachings given to him by God) to the people - 1 Corinthians 11:2, 15:3.

B. The type of teachings that were delivered/handed-down to the people (some specific examples):

1. Eyewitness accounts about Jesus' life were *handed-down* by people who saw those events - Luke 1:2. [These handed-down historical accounts were put into writing for others to read. See Luke 1:3-4.]
2. The message about Christ's death, burial and resurrection: It was *delivered* unto the people - 1 Corinthians 15:3.
3. The way of righteousness: The sacred commandments (about this way) were *passed on* to them - 2 Peter 2:21. [This passage is a warning against rejecting the way of righteousness.]
4. "The faith" - that was once-for-all *delivered* to God's people - Jude 1:3.
5. Specific instructions which were *delivered* to the people, regarding the relationship between Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews), and whether or not the Gentiles were required to follow the teachings of Moses - Acts 16:4. [These instructions were from God - Acts 15:28.]
6. The Old Testament teachings, which were *handed down* from Moses - Acts 6:14. [Some aspects of these teachings were of a temporary nature, and are not part of the "new covenant" of the New Testament. (See Hebrews 8:7-13.) This fact, which would have been preached by Stephen, was distorted by his false accusers.]

C. Misc. Verses:

1. People being *committed/entrusted* to the teaching about salvation and obedience - Romans 6:17. [In this passage, the people are being entrusted to the teachings, which, when accepted, would have a life-changing effect on them. In the previous section, it was the other way around: The teachings were entrusted to the people!]
2. People *handing-down* man-made traditions - Mark 7:13. [Within this context, the handing-down of man-made traditions was condemned by Jesus. These traditions were being given a greater emphasis than God's Word.]