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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1982 ~ Overcoming Tradition.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

The story is told of a Russian king who noticed, in 1903, that a sentry was posted for no apparent reason on the Kremlin grounds. When he enquired about this, he discovered that in 1776, Catherine the Great found the first flower of spring there. “Post a sentry here,” she commanded, “so that no one tramples that flower under foot!” It took 127 years of tradition before that order was revoked. From time to time, we all would do well to examine our traditions to see whether we really know their purpose and whether or not they accomplish that purpose.

In Mark, Chapter 7, some Pharisees and scribes complained to Jesus that His disciples were not washing their hands before eating, in keeping with the traditions of the religious elders. This tradition of hand washing was more than just washing one’s hands; there was a ritual that had to be followed in a certain order.

In Jesus’ time on earth, there were many traditions kept by the elders that the Pharisees forced ordinary people to comply with, but obeying them didn’t bring anyone closer to God. Today’s Bible Adventure drama starts with a typical case of false teaching by the Temple rulers that allowed them to steal the property of an elderly couple so that the religious rulers could increase their own riches.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

The Lord Jesus answered those Pharisees and scribes who had complained of His disciples eating with unwashed hands by quoting from Isaiah, Chapter 13:

“This people honours Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me, And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”

Jesus told these rulers plainly that they had rejected God’s commandments so they instead could keep their man-made traditions. Jesus then dealt with their tradition of ignoring God’s command to look after aging parents by promising instead to give gifts to the Temple one day in the future. One great design of Christ’s coming was to set aside the ceremonial law and all man-made ceremonies that had been added to God’s law.

Satan or Lucifer the fallen angel desires to rule this world as listed in Isaiah, Chapter 14. Satan is God’s adversary and always wants what is rightfully God’s. Satan wants God’s throne and to be higher than the angels of God. Of most interest to us, is Satan’s plan to rule the congregations of the churches, which belong to the Lord Jesus. Satan has many strategies to gather as many people to himself for hell as possible.

Some churches are so tied to their traditions that what the Scripture says is not listened to or has no effect on daily living. Some churches are under the control of controlling leaders, who gather prestige for themselves and want their own way, when instead they should be submitting to the Lord Jesus and doing His will.

Some churches are always chasing money. Their leaders sink their people into so much debt that they never get out. Paying off debts then becomes the focus and not the spreading of the Gospel.

Other churches focus on entertaining people with worldly music and many meals on the church property. Yet further churches have required their members to give a pledge of loyalty to say how much money they will give each week over the coming 12 months. The leaders claim this pledge makes it easier for them to budget but pledges do away with the church leaders living by faith and in full dependence on God.

The tradition in some churches that has existed for a very long time insists that the preacher must preach in front of a floor length curtain. And so, such traditions go on and on in different parts of the world.

It has always been Satan's aim to neutralise churches so they are unproductive in harvesting souls for Christ's kingdom. There can be many man-made rules to follow in a church. One successful way in recent years has been the selecting of bits and pieces of Scripture to twist the meaning of what it says. People are deceived when they make false conversions, adding the Lord Jesus to all other gods they serve.

Can the Lord Jesus save completely anyone who asks Him to be their Saviour and Lord? Yes, of course He can and does. But there are conditions one must follow. Firstly, the person must admit that they have done wrong before God and ask for forgiveness of this. They must believe that Jesus has the authority to forgive their sin completely.

Then the person needs to understand that any further sinning creates a barrier between themselves and God. The Lord Jesus alone is the only way to knowing God intimately and living with Him in heaven one day in the future. Jesus plus anything else, be it keeping church traditions or rituals, devalues Jesus' perfect sacrifice on the cross that obtains salvation for all those willing to believe and commit themselves to Him.

Unless we are very careful, religious rituals can create serious problems. We can give them as much authority as God's Word and in some cases, even replace God's Word. They may give a false confidence that what we do on the outside will somehow change what's on the inside. But the heart must be changed by Christ's work alone and external rituals cannot do this. The heart can be purified only by faith, which comes from trusting and obeying what is in God's Word.

So how do we go about breaking the influence of traditions and bad habits in our lives? The word 'tradition' is used for group gatherings while the word 'habit' is used for individuals.

A son in a famous family became a Christian. He was surprised that his taste for cigarettes was as strong as ever. But he was determined to quit smoking. On the third day after his conversion, he woke up with an absolutely overwhelming desire for a cigarette. He couldn't think of anything else. During that day, the desire for a cigarette intensified.

The man shared his struggle with a friend at lunchtime. He said, "I quit smoking but I don't think I can hold out. I just don't think I have the power to say no any longer."

"Oh, you don't, huh. Why don't you just get down on your knees and tell God He's a liar?"
"What? I can't do that!" replied the new Christian.

The friend quoted 1 Corinthians 10, Verse 13, which says: "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." Then the friend told the new Christian, "You need to tell God He's a liar. You claimed that verse and it didn't work."

"I'm not going to call God a liar. Besides, I haven't claimed that verse yet!"

“You haven’t? Why don’t you then?” The ex-smoker decided to claim that verse and it did work. His bad habit was soon broken.

If we make use of the resources provided by God through His Holy Spirit and Word, we can attack any bad habit knowing that we can win. We have to remember that sin begins in our mind. If we can stop yielding to sin in our mind, we can stop it in our actions.

Defeating a bad habit also requires changes in our lifestyle. We are to make no provision for the flesh when we take Christ as Saviour. This means we must avoid the company of those with the same problem that we are dealing with; as well as the places and circumstances which tempt us back to our old habits. Instead, we should become friends with more mature Christians who will encourage us and hold us accountable. Then we must learn new good habits and stick with them until they become part of our lives.

Thoughts produce actions, actions produce habits and habits produce character. But for the Christian, bad habits must be seen as spiritual issues that need to be sorted out by confession to God and forsaking them in one’s daily life.

The Apostle Paul taught in Colossians, Chapter 2, Verse 8: “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”

Have you got sinful habits in your life? Then now is the time to confess them and forsake them. In Christ, all things are possible. Trust and obey Him today for His life-changing power in your life.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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