

# Do You Have Defiled Traditions?

by Shane Idleman

---

*Shane Idleman explores the dangers of defiled traditions that overshadow God's Word and emphasizes the importance of genuine worship and giving from the heart.*

**Duration:** 50:52

**Scripture:** Matthew 15:1

**Topics:** "Biblical Authority", "Spiritual Priorities"

---

## Description

This sermon delves into the topic of defiled traditions, emphasizing how traditions can nullify the Word of God when prioritized over His commands. Using the example from Matthew 15:1-10, where Jesus confronts the Pharisees about their defiled traditions, the sermon highlights the danger of putting man-made traditions above God's Word. It challenges listeners to examine their hearts, motivations, and priorities, urging them to prioritize God over traditions and to give sacrificially with a cheerful heart.

---

## Transcript

I'm gonna talk on the topic of traditions. Do you have defiled traditions? Do you have defiled traditions? And I got that from this text. Jesus is saying by our traditions we make the Word of God null and void.

By the things we do, the rules we have, we put that above the Word of God. And let me just read where we're at and it'll kind of give you an idea. Matthew chapter 15 verse 1, then the scribes and the Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus saying, why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.

And he answered and said to them, why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God commanded, saying, honor your father and your mother. And he who curses father or mother, let him be put to death. But you say, whoever says to his father or mother, whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God, that he need not honor his father or mother.

Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Now stop there for a minute, I'm going to keep reading. But just to get this in context, these scribes, these religious leaders, the scribes wrote the tradition, the Pharisees taught them, they were saying, basically, if we could bring it up to where we're at here, instead of giving you mom or dad \$2,000 a month, \$3,000 a month to help out, I'm going to put that money into the church treasury.

And it's a gift to God. Sorry. So God says, listen, honor your father and mother, take care of them.

You're making your silly tradition override the word of God. Now I have a feeling that it wasn't equal. I don't think they were taking two or 3,000 and putting two or 3,000 into the treasure.

I think they are putting two or 300. And they're saying, look at me, look at that. There's 100.

There's 200. There's 300. Aren't I spiritual? I'm such a giver.

And that's, I'm sorry, mom and dad, I can't help you. Because what I would be helping you with, I'm giving to God. Their tradition overruled the word of God.

It was actually a defiled tradition. Defiled means unclean. It's not worthy of what God says would be of him and pure and honest and upright.

So I don't think they were giving equal. I think their whole idea was to give less and save money and get out of that whole commitment. So that's what they were doing.

Instead of giving and helping their parents and honoring their parents, they were giving that money to God, to God's work. And it's funny, God doesn't need their money. He was just saying, I see where your heart's at.

You're, I'm the scapegoat here. You're giving me a little bit and that way you don't have to help your parents. So what does Jesus say? Verse seven, turn the other cheek, be nice.

No, he says, you hypocrite! With an exclamation point. Well, did Isaiah prophesy about you? And he's going back to Isaiah who prophesied probably five, six hundred years before this time. And Isaiah was calling the nation of Israel back to God.

And he prophesied, and he spoke, and he said, these people draw near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. So it's interesting, this was happening in Isaiah's day.

Isaiah was preaching against the, I believe it was the northern or southern kingdom of Israel there. That doesn't matter right now. The whole point is, he was saying that these people, God's people, are drawing near to God by what they're saying, but their hearts are far from him.

And what does God look at? The heart, not the words. This can go like this. God says, I see your heart.

So Jesus is going way back to Isaiah and saying, listen, this is what Isaiah spoke of many, many years ago. Same thing in you. You're drawing nigh, you're drawing close to God with your lips, but your hearts are far from him.

And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. So these people were teaching, this is doctrine, and God's saying, no it's not. It's a commandment of man.

This is not what God's heart, where his heart is at. Verse 10. When he had called the multitude to himself, he said to them, hear and understand.

It's not what goes into the mouth that defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth that defiles a man. Then his disciples came and said to him, do you not know that the Pharisees were offended by what you

said? They were offended by what Jesus said. Now, as a side note, I didn't say this is the first service, I was just reminded.

Sometimes when, you know, we talk about eating healthy and you don't want a triple pounder, you know, with tons, 1,500 calories, people sometimes use this verse. Shane, it's not what goes into a man that defiles him. Well, that's true, but it's not what goes into him doesn't make him very healthy either.

So he's not talking about technically food here. He's saying you're so worried about washing your hands before you eat and the bread that's coming in, but you make that tradition of no effect. You miss the whole heart of God.

So you say, oh, you know, they're putting all these traditions on things and they're making laws that don't resemble the heart of God. And here's what a tradition is. The word does not occur in the Old Testament, but it starts to occur in the New Testament.

It's that which is handed down, basically a teacher to his disciple. So they're handing down traditions that were overruling the word of God. And that's why he answered them, why do you transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? Now you might say, well, how does that work today? Well, here's how.

I'm going to give you a few examples. God says, do not esteem one person better than another. Love the poor and the humble and hard.

But tradition says you have to wear a suit and tie to church. That's a tradition. I asked my wife, every probably six months, I get emails rebuking me saying I'm not a real pastor because I don't wear a suit and tie.

Defiled traditions, defiled traditions. I mean, how silly is that? Should we dress appropriately and be concerned with our parents? Yeah, I got it. But to put that above the word of God, it's a tradition.

And it's not a bad one. I love to preach in a suit and tie. I look forward to the opportunity.

Anytime Baptist asked me to preach, suit and tie. I love it. Certain conferences, suit and tie.

I love it. Suit and tie. Spoke in Washington, D.C. I didn't wear this.

You know, it's appropriate. But because of their traditions, you're minimizing the word of God. You're going up there and you're mocking.

No, I'm not. I come up here in fear and trembling. So be very careful what you call the word of God and what is a tradition.

Here's another thing we do. God says, worship me in the beauty of holiness. Wait on me.

But tradition says, hurry up. Hurry, we're on a tight schedule. One song, announcements, a few songs, and a quick sermon.

Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry. We have a tradition. This is the way we do our services.

Right? One song, let's do some announcements, three songs, sermon. Next, one song, announcements, three songs, a sermon. And we have this tradition of how the services should go.

Actually, the early church didn't even meet in a building. They didn't have a sound system and pianos up here and a worship team. And, you know, they probably had stringed instruments and different things.

But things sometimes we add, we say, well, this is how we have to do it. Be careful there, because where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. There is freedom there on how we worship and what we do.

Now, is there anything wrong with tradition? Of course not. Thank God for it. But let's not have the tradition be the gauge by which we measure other people.

That's where we get into trouble. And really, the word tradition could be parentheses, preference. We prefer certain things.

Here's another one. God says, I desire mercy and humility during worship. Tradition says, this contemporary music is not worship.

Contemporary music is not worship. That's tradition. But then the other side says, hymnals are outdated.

Hymns are outdated. No, they're not outdated. Hymns, they're solid theology that can be sung through all ages.

But tradition, we change, we change, it doesn't fit. And I know we've had, you know, people that come in here that are used to the traditional churches, 150-year-old Baptist churches, the organ, the hymnals. They're like, oh, this doesn't work for me.

You know, this is, what are you guys doing? You're loud, the lights are off. This is not worship. Really? Beg to differ.

Because what is worship? It's the heart on fire for God. It's the heart set towards God. You can have amazing grace on an organ.

You can have amazing grace with a band. You can have, it's the heart. Now, I see what they're saying in some of those things, because you can get too loud, too smoke and mirrors and this.

It's all about entertainment. You take away from the heart of God. I got that.

It's not entertainment up here either. So there is a balancing act. We want hearts that are looking towards God.

And sometimes the way we express that self can be different. God says, unity is your greatest asset and humility will guide you. But tradition says, we've never done that before.

The church where I came from did it this way. And see, we miss the humble heart, the humble, gracious heart there. So tradition today, I don't even know where to start.

Let me give you a few examples. When the church started initially, one guy came up and he was pretty adamant. Obviously, they don't come here anymore.

He would come up right afterwards and say, why don't you read from the Bible? Just like, you know, I teach my kids. That's been a tradition in our house and to my grandpa. Why don't you just read from the Bible? Why do you always read from your notes? Well, today I am, thank God, right? But sometimes I have the scripture on my notes and then my note underneath it and the scripture and it flows better than a

whole bunch of sticky notes and post-it notes and scribbling.

And, you know, it just works better. It's the same word of God. Actually, if you want to be, if you want to be very, you know, to the point, they didn't have this in the New Testament.

They didn't have the Bible. They had scrolls and some of Isaiah, the Old Testament, but they didn't have the Bible. So he was adamant.

You know, that's, well, that's my church used to do. Can't you read from the Bible? I mean, that's what I teach my kids and it's tradition there. Also, three areas, just to give you an idea of when we started the church, my wife, remember this, the three big areas that we had the major butting heads about.

You're not going to believe this. I kind of laugh at it now. Number one was announcements.

We'd be in that side room till nine at night going back and forth. We have to have announcements, 10 minutes of announcements. Tell the people what's going on.

What, you know, it's part of worship. You got to have announcements. And what was happening is they would start with the first song.

People would be praising God and okay, sit down, 10 minutes of announcements. Just that's just not working. It's not flowing.

Yeah, we have to have, it's part of worship. Our old church did it this way. Oh, okay.

And we would argue over announcements. Not really argue, but you know, I don't think that's going to happen. I mean, I don't feel.

And then the other thing was the, the passing the plate, you know, where they pass the silver plates across. And they said, that's a form of worship, Shane. We got to have people want to worship and how we worship.

We pull it out during songs and we worship, we pass the plate. I'm like, that's good for churches who do that. I've been to many and there's nothing wrong with it, but what about if we don't want to? Is that okay? Can we just trust God and not put an emphasis on passing plates and look at who's putting in what? Just have it.

Whoever wants to give, there it is in the back. Is there anything wrong with that? No, but here's how we used to do it. And I can't, here's how we did it, our old church.

And I keep like, oh, that drives me crazy. But what, maybe God's just saying, hey, just trust me. Just trust me.

Don't even bring it up. And the final thing was communion. Put, you know, pass it, you know, have the ushers come down to on each side, six and pass the plates.

And that's, that's good. The church I came from used to do it that way, nothing wrong with it, but they want to do it each time and explain the elements and, and make communion that, you know, and I said, okay, well, do you have somebody that can take charge of that every single Saturday? No, no, no, no. But this is how we should do it.

Well, what's wrong with communion? And if you want to get technical communion, Jesus said, when you come together, every time you come together in fellowship, like a potluck, eating together, do this in remembrance of me. That's the context is anytime you come together church, anytime you come together in fellowship and eat together, do this in remembrance of me. So what about if we did it this way, and just people would, it was like, these three things were, were dividing the church, announcements, announcements, announcements, and not this.

And this, that my whole point was, we are minoring. We're the majority of division in the church comes from majoring in the minors. Have you ever heard that phrase? We're majoring in the minors, and we're minoring in the majors.

It means that the little things that really aren't that important, become the small foxes that spoil the vine. And our major, our minor preferences are turning into major conflicts. Be careful that your battle is one that God wants you to fight.

That's what I want to get to, be careful that your battle is the one that God wants you to fight. Because a lot of things in the church, we should come together. The main, the scriptures outline four things, coming together with communion, with reading the word, with psalms and hymns, and, and there's just, there's just, there's, and there's flexibility and freedom in that.

So we have to remove our preferences as long as it doesn't, as long as it's not watering down truth. Because most of the battles are over attire, ambiance, preference, styles of worship, this, this, styles, this, we do everything. A lot of the, the battles are on that.

So the traditions, it comes from tradition. So that was the whole thing about tradition. Now what's the application of this verse? Well the application of this verse is going to be a little difficult for some, and others are going to say, amen, it's about time.

So here's the application. The context is giving, is giving. For God commanded saying, honor your father and mother, and he who curses father and mother, let them be put to death.

But you say, whoever says to his father or mother, whatever profit, money, you might have received from me is now going to be a gift from God. Then you don't have to honor your father and mother. Jesus said, you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.

So they said, no, you no longer have to pay, help your parents, whatever you give to God, that's honoring your father and mother. And Jesus saw it, it was an issue of the heart. It was a giving problem.

They had a, because, you know, and I can't prove it, but I would, again, like I said earlier, I'm pretty sure they weren't putting in the offering plate as much as they were giving their parents. It was probably a lot less. What we do, we conform our rules to fit what we want to do.

And that's what they were doing. Now, I'm going to give you a quick disclaimer. I've been listening in the past three, four, five, six months to people like John MacArthur, Jack Hayford, James McDonald, Robert Morris on this issue of tithing and giving and offerings and different things.

They think, oh, that's a good point. That's a good point. That's a good point.

So everything I'm going to talk about here is not something I came up with. I've just been pulling good points from a few different sermons on this area of giving and on the context of this passage. One of those people said, I don't want to teach on giving because of perception, but I have to teach on it because of deception.

In other words, the church and myself primarily, a lot of times, I don't want to teach on this topic because of perception. There the church goes again talking about money. You ever hear that? Oh no, here we go again.

Well, we don't have, we're not generating a building fund. We're not trying to raise money for this. We're doing fine.

It has nothing to do with that. I want to help you get the right heart with God because deception in this area leads to deception in other areas. It's been often said that our heart has a string to our wallet.

They're closely related. The heart and the wallet are very close friends. And when you try to divide those friends, fights break out.

And this is a heart check. So if we're deceived in this area of giving, if in other words, if we don't, and I'm not saying this, I'm just saying in general, if we're not giving people, if our hearts closed off and we don't give and we're not generous, that leads to deception in other areas of life because we're not doing the one thing that God told us to do, to be a cheerful giver. As soon as it comes to me, we give it to others.

And I'm going to try to unpack all of this. The number one point, if you're not putting God first in this area, you're not putting him first in other areas. If you're not putting God first in this area, you're not putting him first in other areas.

And let me just stop you right now. If you want to come up afterwards and say that's not true, it is true. It is true.

Our finances are the gauge to the heart. Somebody, I think, said where your treasure is. Somebody said that, right? Jesus, where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

They're tied, they're connected, they're married. So it affects everything. If you're not putting God first in this area, you are not putting him first in other areas.

I see this all the time, cheerful. I'm not talking about lots of money because not everybody has lots of money, but I'm talking about a person who just gives to God and they give and they have a giving heart. They worship.

They have a heart of worship. They're filled with the Spirit of God, love and joy and peace and contentment. They're a Christian on fire for God.

They have the victorious Christian living. Why? Because they put that first. They got the heart right.

You can't not give to God and not help and not do anything and they hold on the money like a little hoarder like, you know, no, no, and then be a vibrant Christian. It's impossible because that the giving releases the heart. I say, Shane, you're just trying to get money after service.

No, I'm not trying to do any of that. I have a passion though to help you and in regards to having your heart released and trust me, it's been a difficult journey for me, my wife, but we always we want to put God first. He comes first and then everything else flows from that because once he doesn't have your pocketbook, you're a lot more freer to do everything for God because you're not strapped to that the almighty dollar and in case you didn't realize this, you guys live in castles in heaven compared to most of the world.

Your house, air conditioning, heating, cold water, hot water, we are so blessed. We are so blessed in this nation and it's actually pathetic and disheartening that we don't give more and I'm not talking here. I mean, can you sponsor some kids that drink out of horse troughs for water in Africa? I mean, can we sponsor some children and get them food? I mean, there should be a giving heart.

The sex trafficking that's happening in our nation, giving and helping those women come out of that. Where's our heart at? It's all on this and holding on to everything we have and retirement 401k and golden stock and watching everything, but as soon as you can release that, God said, now I've got your heart where I want it and the interesting thing is God doesn't, the passage is selling everything. That's not biblical many times.

What kind of father would I be if I said we're going to sell everything and just go live out in the desert? I don't care, kids. Go find something out there to eat. That's not, that's not good, but when you put God first, then everything else falls in place and this is a hard area because this is where it hurts.

This is, this is, man, and I read some statistics that the nation now, Americans are spending 33% of their income on entertainment, ungodly entertainment, filth and garbage and junk, 33%, one dollar out of every three to entertain us. It's amazing. If you're not putting God first in this area, you're not putting him first in other areas.

If that hurts, I wanted it to. It's supposed to hurt. These religious leaders that Jesus was talking about showed their heart.

You can see somebody's heart by their pocketbook, by their calendar, by, I often say check, let me see your calendar and your checkbook and I can tell you what's important and it's actually a trust issue. I've had to fight through this. I'm not going to write, oh, there's no way I can write that check.

I've got too many bills. The reason many times we have too many bills is because, well, let's just be honest, we have no, we don't control our spending. We have no budget.

We are, our blessing has become our curse and we just buy whatever we want and there's no restraints there. Number two, the church just wants my money. No, God just wants your heart.

This, this really cracks me up. The church just wants my money. No, God wants your heart.

If God planted this church, which I believe he did, God called me, called many of you to help. If his work, if it's his will, it's his bill. Where God guides, he provides, right? Well, there's nothing to worry about.

Lord tell you, and I like that actually. Well, you're gonna have to do something. And from day one, he's been blessing and blessing and blessing.

We're doing very well. Fine. We don't have to ask and plead and plead.

It's God's work. So we don't know, we don't actually need your money, but God needs your heart. He wants your heart.

That's all money is. It can become idolatry and it shows where my heart is. And the only way to kill that idol is to give him away.

That you have to crush that idol by giving him away. Now, I'm not saying that you rush out, you make poor financial decisions, you take on. I'm just saying it's time to restructure our life in such a way where God is first.

If you don't want to give here, I can give you 10 other organizations where you can bless pastors on the mission field. You can buy silly things to us, chickens, goats, a water well for \$1,000 in Asia. I mean, there's some things that we do, we give to these organizations.

There's a lot of ways you can give. And when we started, when I first got married, me and Morgan, we made sure it's going to be difficult, but God has to be first. And I'm not using example as we're perfect because we're not.

We sometimes, oh man, this is going to hurt. But we actually had it to where God's first, and then what kind of house payment can we afford? And then what kind of car payment can we afford? For example, if a person makes \$5,000, 500 goes to God. Do they have to? Are you under the law? No.

Is 10%? No. But it's a good number because it hurts. It hurts a little bit.

And it was funny when we're getting our loan for our house, the person said, oh, you don't have to count that. You don't have to count that kind of stuff. Just, you know, car payments and stuff.

We can get you actually qualify for much higher. Remember that? It was tempting. It's like, oh, how much higher? Oh, man.

Lord, can we go without tithing? We've done so good. And there's a battle, that battle. But I said, no, that has to come off the top.

Now, am I saying that? See, and here's the interesting thing. People come and say, well, that's not the... I'm not saying you have to. I'm saying you should want to.

We should want to pay God first. I mean, there's so many people make \$100,000, \$150,000 a year, \$200,000 a year, and they'll put \$150 in their month. Like, that's really hurting, isn't it? No.

No. You just spent that on a Bose speaker for your car. I mean, nothing hurts.

God says, David said, I'm not going to give God anything that doesn't cost me something. See, there's a cost there. And God will open up tremendous doors, and sometimes he doesn't.

Because we're not giving to get. I don't say, I'm giving this, and I better get this, because that's TBN preacher. You know, you got to give the... You know, I'm not... But that's the heart.

Lord, you have my heart. But then God, a loving Father, gives. I mean, we could stand up here for a half hour and tell you all the things where he opened this door and this, and we thought this, and we thought we'd have to owe this, and this, and just tremendous blessings of God.

Two weeks ago, though, a funny thing did happen. There was a family who found out about who needed a washer and dryer. So I said, okay, let's give them ours.

So I got them ready to clean them up. Gave them our washer and dryer. Okay, pray, Lord, I know you're going to just put... Somebody's going to email us, hey, I've got this nice, you know, brand new washer and dryer we're moving.

Do you want... You know, I'm just praying, Lord, I know you're going to do this. And day two, day three, day four, was it day six? She goes, should I take the laundry to my mom's? Yeah. It's day seven.

Oh, man. But the whole time, I'm reminded of what God opened a financial door two months ago that could have bought four washers from things that he did. So he's... And I kept going, but I'm wanting, you know, okay, Lord, I just drop it from heaven, have a Lowe's truck break down my front yard.

So he's practical. He's very practical. And he'll just begin to bless your life.

And I don't say that like a TBM preacher. I'm not joking. But I truly believe in the principle of sowing and reaping.

If you sow a gracious, giving heart, God wants to abundantly give. There's nothing wrong with that. There's nothing wrong with saying God loves a cheerful giver.

If you bless others, God will bless you. And I'm not talking about having a million dollars in the bank account. I'm talking about a washer and dryer lasting 13 years, and a car not breaking down, and the kids health, and the favor of God and everything he takes.

I mean, we make less than people I know who are strapped, they can't make it. I'm like, what's wrong with them? Why can't they make they make so much more money, yet they're strapped every single month, we don't know how to do it, because it's a favor of God. He opens and closes doors.

And that's all I'm trying to get you understand is once you can get that pocketbook out and where it should be in the hands of God. And life is just I mean, you're not you're not held by that. You're not held by that.

Somebody gives you, you know, get money. And then there's all these emotions. Should I tithe on my tax return? Should I tithe on my net? Should I tithe on my gross? I found that, well, I better not say that.

How can I word it to where the majority of the time, how's that? The majority of the time, I found that those people who ask those questions are not good givers. They're looking for every little scapegoat they can find every little red tape there. You get down to give God, can I give God after the net after I pay my taxes? After I pay all my bills? Sure, you'll have \$18 left over tithe off of that \$1.80. Well, your Lexus is 600 a month.

What happened there? But so we ask these questions, do I tithe? I'm just, I'm just, you know, what God loves a cheerful giver, figure out what works for you. We personally, we try to just off the gross. Well, here's what make God get tax return.

Let's tithe off that too. Let's, let's, let's just, let's just test God. And it's been amazing.

And again, I'm not, we're not a good example to use because we fight the flesh too. We're not perfect. But I'm saying once you, once we let that go and we give God first, we try to go off our, here's the funny thing.

I don't think God's going to be upset if you give 10%. I don't think he's going to be upset if you go off the gross. I don't think he's going to be upset if you tithe on your tax return.

You're, we're misunderstanding this whole process here. God's not, there's not some little box. We got to should I tithe off my net, but not, he's just saying, give whatever you can give as a cheerful giver.

He knows our situation. Some people are in tight spots financially and they can't give 10% off the gross. That would hurt right now, but you can give 1% and pray, Lord, help me give labor.

That's what we started. We start a little and want to get 10% or 15%. I think last year we were able to do 15%.

I'm not saying, oh great. I'm just saying, because God has opened the doors, we have to just give back. In one hand, out the next.

Does he allow us to keep some of that? Of course. How do you pay bills? Should my family take a horse and carriage to work? I mean, to church? No, we can't afford that. Well, Amish, I guess in Pennsylvania, you could get away with that.

But here, you want to provide. Men want to provide, but there's nothing that provides better for your family than a giving heart. I know so many men, they think that they're providing for their family by ruling their home and they're hiding everything.

They're putting it in stock or this, and they're like this guarding the safe. They're just, oh, you're not touching Fort Knox, and their heart's not a giving heart. I truly believe that a husband and wife should be on the same page on this, if it's possible.

If it's possible, you have access to this, we have access to this, what should we give? We give together. So be very careful in this area as well. The church does not need your money, but God wants your heart.

As I was studying this, I found it was interesting. I went to Timothy, and actually one of the qualifications to be a leader in the church is not to be greedy. Elder quality, I think even deacons, they don't, it says they can't have, be greedy for gain, or another translation, be greedy for money.

They can't be. To lead the church, they can't be greedy for money? No. Well, here's interesting.

How do you know if they are or aren't? How would you know? By what they give. In other words, if you have somebody that says, I want to be an elder in a church, make 100,000 a year. When was the last time you gave? Oh, I don't really give.

I give my time. Bible says not qualified, how I read it. Because you're holding, you're greedy.

And this is an issue we all struggle with. Me too. We got our first tax return in how many years, 10 years? See, that's the other thing he did.

I said, oh, do we have to tithe on this too? Come on, Lord. Man. And that's why I was driving, thinking, oh, like he's going to be upset if I do.

And then we do, and another door opens. He just keeps opening doors. It's amazing.

Now there's seasons where he closes doors. I don't want to think you live in some constant state of blessing. You also live sometimes in the valley, where, Lord, I'm going through this, and I don't know how I'm going to make it, but I'm still going to give to you.

I'm still going to honor you. I don't know how. I can't foresee the end.

I need to make some changes, though. And I would also throw this out there. I've counseled people too on financial counseling, and their bills, and their budgeting.

Nine out of 10 times, those who are really hurting financially are not wise with their money. There's budget. What's a budget? Oh, budget means you have this much, and you should spend this much.

Oh, well, I just kind of, you know, at the end of the month, hope it works out. That's not wisdom either. See, guys, and I believe, that's why I like the 10%, the rule, not rule, there we go again.

But 10% is a good rule of thumb, because people say, we're not under 10%. No, we're, of course not. We're under a cheerful giver.

But wisdom says, I should give 10. I should save 10. It's a good, solid number that really helps, because if you look at that 10% over the course of your lifetime, if you're in your 20s, you start saving 10%, you are going to be very, very well off when you retire.

And if you give 10%, you're going to really, really help the church, or help other people, and help other families in need. And recent statistics are about 15 to 25% of the church actually give. So if you take a normal church in America, it's about 80 people and under, let's just say 100 to be on the safe side, only 25 people actually give to the church.

And so that's why, you know, that this is a huge issue, because it does affect a lot of our hearts. We make rules that benefit us is the third point. I will give to God what makes me look good and what is manageable.

By our traditions, that's what they were doing. Whatever makes me look good and what is manageable, that's what I'll give to God. So we make rules that benefit us.

The fourth point, you're not really giving to God, it's already His. Once you understand this, this will help big time. You're not really giving to God.

Did you know it's already His? It reminds me of on my birthday, my kids wrap me presents. Guess what they wrap? I open it, go, oh, a pocketknife. Wow, thanks, Shane.

That is so cool. Thank you. And I go, this is mine.

Why are they wrapping my stuff? Or they'll wrap my shoes. Look at that. And they're so excited.

They're so excited. I'm sitting there, oh, thank you. This is my stuff.

You're not giving me anything. But that's the same with God. You have to understand that.

Every breath you take, every heartbeat is a gift from God. Every breath from your lungs, every dollar, everything is a gift from God. It's His.

It's all His. And anybody that says he's not, oh, boy, we've got some serious issues we need to work through, it's called pride. I'm a hard worker.

No, God gave you the ability to work. Everything is His. So if you start, if you look at the check that comes in, Lord, this is yours.

What do you want me to do with it? It changes everything. Because the mentality right now is this is mine. I think I'll just, that's God's.

But it's all His. And He doesn't need it. He doesn't want it.

God and money have, it doesn't even matter. It's a gauge to check and test our heart. That's what it is.

Money is, God created it. It's not evil, right? Shane, the Bible says money's evil. There's a couple words before that.

The love of money is the root of every evil. We have to have it because it's a way we exchange. I give you this, you give me that.

And it's a measure of the heart. I want a lot of it so I can do this or a lot of it to do this. It's everything to do with the heart.

So keep that mind. You're not really giving to God. It's already His.

Anyway, that helped me a lot because you think, okay, I got to give. Well, it's His already. How much do you want back? And I don't want people to leave here thinking Shane teaches, you know, 10%, the tithe.

You know, I'm just saying it's a really good place to start because it hurts. And most people don't even give that much. It's good to get that.

Okay, if a car payment's this, my tithe is this. You know, it's good to match. I mean, it's got something.

I mean, putting \$20 in there, you think, you know, we think, hey, that's not, God's like, well, I still see your heart. I still see your heart. Now, I know it's difficult because we have a lot of people in here, spouse is a believer, other spouse is not an unbeliever.

You don't want to, you know, you don't want to cause waves at home either. I think in that case, you need to respect the spouse and have a, I'd rather have a united home than somebody, you know, spending a lot of money or giving a lot of money and the spouse is upset at it. They're mad at the church.

They're mad at God. Be very careful in that area and take it to God because you don't want to overdo something and hurt your marriage as well. In the same way that we are not under the Sabbath, we are not under the tithe, but that does not mean that there are not benefits from the Sabbath.

Think about that. We're not under the Sabbath. When people say we're not under, what they mean is in the Old Testament, they were, there was something called under the law.

You, you're not sitting under, it's really authority over you. So to be right in God's eyes and right standing, you had to follow the law, the 10 commandments. You're under the law.

That's your standard. Well, guess who could do that perfectly? Nobody. That's why Jesus is so important.

He fulfilled that for me. He's the bridge. He's my righteousness.

I can't fulfill that law, so I trust in you because you can. So, but the children of Israel had to do these things. They were under the law.

You have to keep a Sabbath. You have to give, actually it wasn't 10 percent. It's probably like 30, 32, 33 percent.

Somebody will tell me, I'm sure afterwards, but the Old Testament had strict guidelines. You know, you're under this, you're under. So now we get into the New Testament and people say, oh, I'm not under that anymore as if they're excited about it.

You're not under that anymore. But think this, think this through. Just think this through.

We often say the Bible doesn't teach first fruits. First fruit was, you know, if they, the fruit, the apple, okay, you get a whole bunch of apples off your apple tree. Okay, you got a whole orchard of apple trees.

Lord, this first fruit I'm giving to you. And then 10 percent, they say the Bible doesn't teach first fruits or tithing in the New Testament as if God would punish us or be displeased if we gave more. Think about that.

They say we're not under the law, we don't have to give 10 percent as if God would be upset if you did that. It's almost like I don't have to give 10 percent or I don't have to give 15 or I don't have to give my first fruits. I don't have to, I don't have to give.

I don't have to. No, but you should want to. We're missing the whole argument, folks.

And I hear people say, I don't have to. Well, your heart's wrong right there. Anybody says, I don't have to do that.

Yeah, have to what? According to what? But God's not going to be upset if you do do that. Giving to him again should come first. And those who don't give often say, I can't afford to give.

You want to say exactly, exactly. Many times because we're living in deception. If we're not giving to God first, I truly believe that there's a dynamic taking place, sowing and reaping, where we're not going to receive the blessings of God abundantly as we could if we were sowing seeds of righteousness, sowing seeds of giving, of a good giving heart.

I believe that God blesses that. If you don't believe that, I need you to show me a scripture. You give bountifully, you'll receive bountifully.

You reap, you'll sow. Whatever you give, you'll, I mean, there's, you know, press down, good measure, running over, all those things. Old Testament, I got it.

But those principles still apply. And lifestyle changes will need to take place in order to put God first. If you want to begin putting God first in your life, it might mean driving the used car instead of a new one.

It might mean the 2,000 square foot home instead of the 4,000. It might mean not going on 12 vacations a year, just three. I mean, lifestyle changes might need to take place in order to put God first.

The funny thing is though, we don't suffer because of that. We are blessed because of that. We thrive because of that.

Do you know when people go on tons of vacations, they're angry the whole vacation? I got to get back home, pay off this charge card, \$6,000, angry. It's like, it wasn't even worth it. Begin putting God first and making serious lifestyle changes.

And on this issue of 10%, it's a burden to some, but for most, it's far too little. And the only reason why I mentioned tithe is I don't believe that we're under it, right? I don't believe that, okay, you have to be giving 10%, but I truly believe it's a wonderful number to start with because it hurts and it's sufficient. And I believe it has to cost us something.

Somebody making \$100,000 a year, if they're giving \$10,000 away, it hurts. \$200,000 a year, they're giving away \$20,000 a year, it hurts. Now, they don't have to.

They don't, well, it's exactly right, but that should flow from where our heart's at. And then Jesus again said, these people draw near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Why was their heart far from them? Because the heart wasn't giving.

They were saying the right things, tradition, tradition, tradition, but the heart was wrong. Now, the title of the message with defiled traditions, here's the scariest thing for me about traditions, is that many people are not saved in the church in America, and they think they are because they go through the motions. They follow the traditions of Christianity, and they say the right things.

A lot of people go to church, they go through the traditions. It's very traditional. Well, traditional doesn't mean godly all the time.

Thank God for traditions. I love traditions that have been handed down since the first century. But if people are trusting in traditions, oh, the church has a stained glass, I've been raised in this church all my life, my parents were Christians, it won't fly.

Tradition, you can't trust in traditions, you have to trust in Christ and his finished work on the cross, and that alone. There's millions of people just going through the traditions, right? They go and they sit, they're not different, they don't know God. Traditions.

You ever see the beat? Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Traditions. Presbyterian church, they've got it down since John Calvin, 300 years, they go through their traditions.

As they're ordaining gay clergy, they're going through the traditions. Methodist, same direction. Calvinist, Calvinist, Presbyterian, American Baptist, same thing, they have all these traditions, traditions.

But your traditions are making the word of God of no effect, and in vain you are worshiping him, because we're putting traditions over the word of God. Then the disciples came and said to him, do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying? I love these types of verses, these are the verses I want to shout from the rooftops. Do you know Jesus offended people too? Everybody says Christians are offending, they're narrow-minded, they're bigoted.

Well, Jesus offended people, the truth defends, because when you're living in darkness and the light says, hello, I'm light, the darkness hates it, they're offended. And Jesus didn't go, oh, I'm so sorry, how can I

reword that? Hmm, I don't care. He just said they're blind leading the blind, they'll fall into a ditch.

Jesus, you've offended them, good, good. It's okay to offend if it's done in love. That's not giving angry people permission to offend, it's giving loving people permission to speak the truth of God boldly.

And that's what today's battle is about, is it not, being offended? It's actually love and compassion that prompt us to share the truth. I like what Jeremiah said, oh, that my head were a spring of water, my eyes a fountain of tears, I would weep day and night for the slain of my people. The God that doesn't offend is not the God of the Bible.

Let me say that again. The God that does not offend is not the God of the Bible, because the true God crushes hypocrisy, removes pride, exposes lies and kills sin. He hurts to help.

Everything that offended them, they needed to hear. And I looked at this briefly this week. This isn't the first time Jesus offended people.

You realize that, right? He was saying, you whitewashed tombs, you look good on the outside, but you're full of dead men's bones on the inside. Wow, you guys think I'm hard? I mean, entire cities did not repent. He offended cities, he offended people.

But everything that offended them, they needed to hear. That's why I often say, if you don't like what I'm saying, it's because you need to hear what I'm saying. So the next time you're offended at scripture, look and say, Lord, is it my heart wrong? It's very healthy.

God will say, yeah, let me show you where to improve. So instead of getting upset and taking out on God or out on the messenger, take it to heart and say, it's okay to be offended. I'm offended a lot and it helps me change.

Because without that offense, we don't change. And you know what the definition of offended is, right? You're just hearing something you don't want to hear. You're being challenged in an area you don't want to be challenged on.

So I'm offended, I'm hurt, I'm upset. I don't know if you saw in the Facebook, but Charisma News or Charisma Magazine or something like that picked up a sermon clip I gave on gay marriage. It's had like 30,000 views this week.

And there's people are just, man, they're upset, bigoted, narrow-minded, arrogant, holding to the old. I'm like, guys, it's not about hate. Why do I feel love in my heart? It's not about bigotry.

I want all people to be saved. And I'd love to throw a challenge out there. The next person who says that, let's meet, let's get a lie detector to test and see who the real hater is.

Think about it. Those who are saying we're haters are actually the ones holding the hate. Those who are saying we're bigoted are actually the bigots.

Because I want these groups saved and set free. The people want me killed. Shut your mouth, silence the messenger.

So think about that. Who's the real hater? Let's take a lie detector to test and see. Because I know my heart is not towards hate, it's towards love and wanting people to be set free.

But it must offend you before it helps you. The truth will offend before it helps. There's no way around that.

To speak the truth in love will offend our traditions and beliefs not anchored in Scripture. Anything that's not anchored in Scripture, when it comes to the light, will be offended. So I'm going to close with this.

Let's somehow let the excuses end tonight on this area of giving or tradition or whatever it is. If there's areas in our heart, let them end tonight. There's an interesting worship song I came across last week.

I want to share the lyrics with you. It's called Clear the Stage. He said, shine the light on every corner of your life until the pride and lust and lies are in the open.

Then read the word and put to the test the things you've heard until your heart and soul are stirred and rocked and broken. Because you can sing all you want to and still get it wrong. Worship is more than a song.

It's interesting, I thought of this. Jesus said, in vain they worship me. How many people are coming to church and worshipping God in vain? You come in and you go through the motions, but folks, it's in vain.

I remember this for the first service, but when I was in construction, 2005, I had to dig a 500 foot long block wall footing, 16, 17, 18 inches deep. And when I was done the other day, it looked perfect. It was nice.

Got all the dirt out of the way. It looked very nice. Next day, I found out the stakes, the markers were two feet off.

So the inspector came out there. He said, you just did all of that in vain. But don't we do the same thing? Not everybody, but a lot of people, they come to church.

Listen, I speak at churches. I've been to a lot of churches. They come to God and they worship him in vain.

That's why I often say they come in as if they're doing God a favor. Folks, uh-uh. We're here to worship the one true and living God.

We cannot come here and worship God in vain. What does that mean, Shane? Your lips draw an eye into me. You say the right thing, but your heart is far from me.

And God knows our hearts. It's time for heart surgery.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/rslaWp1Erow.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/do-you-have-defiled-traditions/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**