

Mark 7:6-8

⁶ And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. ⁷ 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.' ⁸ "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men."

Here Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees and Scribes, because they are questioning why His disciples do not wash their hands according to the traditions of the elders, before they eat bread. What is imperative to understand, is that this practice of washing hands was passed down from father to son, and not through the Law of Moses. Yet it was a common practice for these religious leaders to recognize that their traditions were every bit as binding as the Law of Moses. They were in fact more mindful of their own traditions, than they were of God's law. Have you ever wondered just how many traditions of men have been passed down through the ages from the times of Christ until now; which are commonly practiced, yet not Biblically based? Recently, I discovered one of the most alarming traditions that the Christian church has followed for close to 1700 years. This tradition has been passed down as an edict through the Catholic Church, and initially by the Roman Emperor Constantine, who is also known or commonly recognized as a Pope of the Catholic Church. It was Constantine I, who reigned from 306-337 AD, and who ordered during his second meeting with the council of Church Bishops in Nicea, that Saturday no longer be recognized as the Sabbath, but rather Sunday. And I quote: *"On the Venerable Day of the Sun (the sacred day of the Sun-god, Sunday) let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost... given the 7th day of March, 321.*

First of all, I believe that we are to worship our Lord seven days a week, and not simply on only one. Yet clearly in God's Word we are commanded to honor the Sabbath day, as it is holy to our God. So why does the church corporately worship on Sunday, especially when it is clearly not the Sabbath? Would it shock you to learn that it was because of this edict passed down by Constantine I and the Catholic Church? Yet if you are of a Protestant Denomination or Faith, then why do we still honor this Catholic edict today? The Protestant faith literally dissented from the laws and faith of the Catholic Church. These early church fathers protested the Catholic Church. Yet this tradition is so rooted or grounded that the early church fathers never returned to Saturday as Sabbath Worship. It may shock you to know that the reason they never did, was to continue in their abstinence from the Jewish faith! They were so determined in having absolutely nothing to do with Judaism, that the day for corporate worship was changed. Sunday was chosen as a political compromise or marriage between the pagan Sun Worshipers and the Christians. Is it possible that we have evolved into a people just like these Pharisees and Scribes, who are more mindful of our traditions of men, than we are in obeying God's Law?