



THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Rejection by Religious Leaders: Trusting God’s Commandments, Not Tradition

Session Number: 22 | Week: 4 | Day: 1

Bible Passage

Matthew 15:1-20

Introduction

In Matthew 15:1-20, Jesus addresses the issue of trusting in the commandments of God rather than the traditions of men as the source of help from the defilements of life. When the Kingdom of God suffers violence, our natural reactions may lead us to rely on the dark world, self-help, or cultural traditions. However, Jesus teaches His disciples that these human rules are burdens that weigh down people's souls and hinder their growth and productivity as Kingdom citizens. He promises rest for those who come to Him, acknowledging the burdens they carry, and warns against the dangers of bad, erroneous, and cultic teachings.

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will have:

- Understood that the rule of God on earth (the Kingdom of Heaven) is only possible through the commandments of God, rather than the traditions of men passed down through generations.
- Appreciated that the religious rules of men are one of the burdens on the heart and obstacles to the Kingdom of Heaven, alongside witchcraft and racism, by learning about the call to come to Jesus for all who are burdened and heavy-laden.

Session Outline

- **My help comes from the Lord.**
- **Trusting the commandments of God.**
- **Avoiding the traditions of men** that are not aligned with the commandments of God.

Connecting

- Study together in a group of two or more people.
- Begin with a prayer, asking God to bless your understanding.
- Read the passage at least twice using different Bible versions, then retell the story among your group members.
- Share the challenges and blessings from the previous day.

Comprehending

What do the verses mean?
(In small groups, attempt the following questions):

- What did you discover about God, His people, and the enemy in this passage?
- In your view, what is the difference between the commandments of God and the traditions of our forefathers? What is blasphemy (defilement)? What defiles a person? How is the heart of a person defiled?
- Read Matthew 15:1-2. What is the Pharisees’ view of defilement?
- Read Matthew 15:10-12; Matthew 15:15-20. List three truths concerning Jesus’s teaching about defilement.
- Read Matthew 15:3-9. List three things Jesus said about the commandments of God and the traditions of men (human rules).
- What is the danger of teaching the traditions of men as the commandments of God? (Matthew 15:6-9)
- What valuable lessons have you learned that would help you overcome the bad traditions of men, and that you would share with your mentees and target audience?

Committing

- Engage with the Bible—read, study, memorize, meditate, pray, listen, and live it out.
- List three lessons you learnt as an agent of change that you would practice and teach others about
- Take time and worship Jesus with the attributes revealed about Christ now.
- Engage SPACEPETS model, to do something after the session. Look for:
 - **Sin** to confess
 - **Promise** to claim
 - **Attitude** to change
 - **Command** to keep
 - **Error** to change
 - **Prayer** to make
 - **Example** to copy
 - **Truth** to obey and
 - **Something** praiseworthy

Communicating

- Identify one person and share the lessons you learnt in this session?
- Visit or call a new believer and Pray with them over the issues they are struggling with. Issue of attending the church.
- Form another group and repeat this study.