

Breaking with Tradition

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, this morning, with the Lord's help, turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read. The Gospel according to Mark, in chapter 7.
- Mark, chapter 7. And we'll read at verse 5. Mark 7, at verse 5. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders? But eat bread with unwashed hands. He answered and said unto them, Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.
- Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and laying aside the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such things you do.
- When we use the term tradition, or traditional, more often than not, it is used in a derogatory, rather than a complementary manner.
- [1 : 1 6] Because most things, which are said to be traditional, are often considered to be either old-fashioned, outdated, or irrelevant, and in need of revising, or they need to be changed.
- Because tradition, it's often viewed as a hindrance to progression. It's viewed as a stumbling block to true joy. It's viewed as against change.
- Tradition is against change. It's against anything different to the norm. And yet, regardless of how progressive and how modern we think we are in the 21st century, we are all still very traditional.
- Where we still have traditions, and we hold to our traditions. But with most of our traditions, we forget where they origin from. We forget that they originated from somewhere, and that there was an original reason behind it.
- I mean, take the biggest tradition that we have in our calendar. The tradition of Christmas. Now, I'm not against Christmas, and I'm not going to speak against Christmas.
- [2 : 2 6] But, I do often wonder why we have Christmas when we look where all the traditions have come from. For example, the reason Christmas is celebrated on the 25th of December is because a Roman Catholic Pope declared it so over 1600 years ago.
- So, Christmas has a Roman Catholic origin and not a Christian one. Another example is the tradition of the Christmas tree, which originated from a pagan festival in which pagans, who are idol worshippers, they decorated an evergreen fir tree as this celebration of the winter solstice, which takes place very close to the 25th of December.
- So, they amalgamated the two together. Another example is the reason why we eat turkey at Christmas. That's because Henry VIII was the first king to ever enjoy turkey for a Christmas dinner.
- And so, we followed suit. The reason we give presents at Christmas is said to be because of the wise men who arrived at the birth of Jesus with presents of gold and frankincense and mud.

but I'm not so sure if that is the real reason or even a justifiable reason to give presents at Christmas. Nevertheless, despite all these traditions and their interesting origins, we still insist on keeping to the tradition simply because it's something we've always done and it's something we like doing regardless of its origin.

[3 : 59] And that's true not only about Christmas but also about family traditions that we might have that are personal to us or also church traditions which have been handed down from generation to generation.

But when we consider the concept of tradition they are like most things there's some good ones which are helpful and there's some bad ones which are unhelpful.

But the problem of unhelpful traditions it arises when we don't know why we are doing what we're doing or that the tradition has taken over the original purpose for something that was intended long ago and the tradition becomes nothing more than a meaningless ritual.

Well, when we come to this opening section in Mark's Gospel we see Jesus condemning Israel's tradition police who were otherwise known as the Pharisees.

And Jesus denounces the tradition of the Pharisees on the grounds that it was all unbiblical where they were taking an unbiblical precept and elevating it higher than Scripture.

[5 : 11] And Jesus condemns the religious leaders of the day because of their heresy. And so as we look at this passage this morning I'd like us to consider three actions which the Pharisees thrived on.

Three actions which they thrived on. And yet it was these three actions which Jesus condemned. Because Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their fault finding, their hypocrite hiding, and their commandment creating.

He condemned them for their fault finding, their hypocrite hiding, and their commandment creating. So we look firstly at Jesus condemning the Pharisees for their fault finding.

Their fault finding. It says in verse 1 Then they came together unto him the Pharisees and certain of the scribes which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashed hands, they found fault.

For the Pharisees and all the Jews except they wash their hands often, eat they do not eat, holding to the tradition of the elders. And so what we see in these opening verses is that Mark reintroduces us to Israel's tradition police.

[6 : 28] And Mark reintroduces us to the Pharisees because, well, we've met them on a number of occasions in Mark's gospel where Jesus and the Pharisees they have clashed on various issues, issues such as miracles, who has the right to forgive sins, issues such as the divinity of Jesus, saying that Jesus is God and also they have repeatedly contested over the issue of the Sabbath.

But, whereas the Pharisees previously condemned Jesus as a heretic, it's Jesus who is here condemning the Pharisees because of their tradition.

And as Mark introduces this chapter, he tells us that some of the scribes and the Pharisees, they came all the way down from Jerusalem to meet Jesus. The religious leaders, they sent some investigators from their headquarters in Jerusalem to do some detective work and they were to investigate what Jesus was teaching and preaching to the people.

They were to examine the theology of Jesus and his practice. They were to scrutinise the way that Jesus preached and what Jesus taught. And as we've come to expect from the scribes and the Pharisees, they didn't like what they found.

They didn't like what they found and Mark simply tells us they found fault. fault. They found fault, which was quite normal for the Pharisees because they were really good at finding fault with people, especially when it was with Jesus because in the eyes of the Pharisees, Jesus was a revolutionary.

[8 : 07] He was this radical, he was a radical preacher and the Pharisees didn't like that. They didn't like the fact that Jesus was teaching something contrary to all their man-made laws and traditions.

And they found Jesus' teaching offensive and heretical and they saw Jesus as one who was stirring up this rebellion. In their eyes, Jesus was always testing the water.

He was always pushing the boundaries. He was always going against the grain, always trying to break with tradition. And the scribes and the Pharisees, they were worried that this new teaching of Jesus was going to cause a riot or this revolution against the religious leaders.

And the longer Jesus goes on, the more infuriated they were becoming. Which makes us realise that it was no wonder the religious leaders wanted Jesus crucified.

They had had enough of him and all his radical teaching. But as we look at this clash between Jesus and the religious leaders, what the Pharisees picked up on found fault with, it seems so petty.

[9 : 19] It seems so minor, even irrelevant and insignificant. Because Mark tells us that when the Pharisees saw the disciples eat bread with defiled hands, that's unwashed hands, they said, they asked, why are they not doing and following the tradition of the elders?

And they found fault with it. But the fault which the Pharisees found with Jesus and his disciples when they ate bread, it wasn't a hygiene issue that they weren't washing their hands.

It wasn't breaking a code of health and safety where they were handling food with unwashed hands. The issue was one of religious purity, where the religious leaders taught the Jews that the Jews were not to eat food unless their hands had been washed in this certain manner.

That before a Jew would sit down to enjoy their dinner, they would have to perform this short cleansing ritual in which they would wash their hands and then wash their arms in this specific way to make them religiously pure.

And Mark tells us in verse 4 that the Jews were to perform these religious ceremonies before eating. And even they had to perform them when they came back from shopping at the marketplace.

[10 : 43] And Mark goes on to explain that there were many other traditions which have been passed down from the tradition of the elders that the Pharisees all held to, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper vessels and dining couches.

They had to wash everything. And you know, on the face of it, without understanding the origin and the intent of the tradition, it seems quite good to encourage cleanliness.

Because I suppose it can never be a bad thing to be clean and to be hygienic. And to our minds it seems like good table manners to wash your hands before you eat.

But when we consider the origin of this tradition, they didn't arise out of a desire for hygiene and cleanliness. They arose out of a ritual of outward and external purity.

in order that they would be acceptable before God. And this tradition of cleansing which the Pharisees held to so rigidly and followed so obsessively to the letter, it was a law which God had issued to the priests.

[11 : 53] The priests who sacrificed and offered sacrifices in the temple. And before a priest could offer a sacrifice to a holy God, they had to be purified.

They had to wash themselves. They had to make themselves pure before they partook in offering the sacrifice. But this law from which the tradition of the elders originated, it was a command which was never issued to the people and it was never issued to the scribes.

It wasn't a law for the Jews to uphold. It was only for the priests. But because God had referred to the nation of Israel as a kingdom of priests, elders of the community, they extended the command and they applied it to everyone.

And so when the law for cleansing was handed down by the elders of the community and it passed by word of mouth and along the way it was twisted and added to and it was eventually written down centuries later and after it was written down, the law for ritual cleansing was then imposed by Israel's tradition police, the Pharisees.

Everything was imposed on them. But what we can see from the passage is that the tradition which was being enforced was completely different to the original law.

[13 : 16] The law was originally addressed to the Levites to sacrifice to a holy God. But it was now a law which applied to touching food before eating a meal.

And from this we can see how much the command had lost its original meaning and purpose. And yet even though they were at fault for elevating the word of God above tradition, the Pharisees continued to carry out their investigation by watching Jesus and his disciples.

They're watching him and inspecting his every move for one purpose. in order to find fault with everything that Jesus and his disciples were doing.

And you know, Pharisees will always try and find fault with Jesus and his disciples. Pharisees will always try and find fault with Jesus and his disciples.

Pharisees will always watch and scrutinize and examine the actions of Jesus and his disciples, but only for one purpose.

[14 : 35] So they will look pious and holy and righteous before the eyes of others, before other people. And you know, somehow we think that the concept of the Pharisee, it only belonged to first century Palestine.

Palestine. But my friend, the reality is, the concept of the Pharisee is alive and well in the 21st century in the Isle of Lewis.

It's alive and well because there are many Pharisees in our communities and in our churches. There are many Pharisees who are always finding fault with Jesus and his disciples.

There are many Pharisees who are always examining what other people are doing. There are many Pharisees who are always scrutinizing what other people are wearing.

There are many Pharisees who are always looking around and investigating and examining and inspecting and pointing at everybody else but themselves.

[15 : 38] My friend, beware of the Pharisee in you. Beware of the Pharisee in you. Because what will always be missing in the examination of a Pharisee is an examination of their own heart.

What will always be missing in the examination of a Pharisee is the examination of their own heart. For the Pharisee will always look at everyone else and ask like the Pharisees did, why do the followers of Jesus not walk according to the tradition of the elders?

Why do Christians not walk according to the way our parents and our grandparents did? Why do Christians do all these things? My friend, there are Pharisees in our island and the island is full of them.

And what's more is that many of the Pharisees like these Pharisees, they're unconverted. They're unconverted. They don't know Jesus. They don't follow Jesus.

They don't love Jesus. And yet these Pharisees can tell you how a Christian ought to live, but they won't do it themselves. These Pharisees can tell you how to keep the Lord's day, but they won't do it themselves.

[16 : 57] These Pharisees who know all the traditions of the church, but they don't know the king and head of the church for themselves. These Pharisees can point to all the faults and the flaws and the failings in the disciples of Jesus, but don't take one look at themselves.

And I'm sure some of these Pharisees are in here because what will always be missing in the examination of the Pharisee is an examination of their own heart.

And this is why Jesus went on to condemn the hypocrisy of the Pharisees because they were worshipping God with their lips, but their heart was far from them.

Their heart was far from them. And so what we see is that Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their fault-finding, but secondly, Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their hypocrite hiding.

And we see that in verses 5 to 8. Because it says, then the Pharisees and the scribes asked them, why do you not walk, why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?

[18 : 11] And he answered them and said to them, well, has Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites? As it is written, this people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching the doctrines for the doctrines, the commandments, for doctrines the commandments of men.

And laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men as the washing of pots and cups and many other such things you do. And in these verses we see that Jesus, he responds to all these accusations of the scribes and the Pharisees.

And he does so by saying, you hypocrites. You hypocrites. He says, well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites?

In other words, he was saying, you know, Isaiah was right. Isaiah put it perfectly when he described you hypocrites. This people honours me with their lips.

But their hearts are far from me. And when Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites, it's a strong indictment. It's a fierce condemnation to the religious leaders of the day.

[19 : 23] To say to all the churchmen that they were nothing but hypocrites. And as you know, to call anyone a hypocrite is a strong judgment upon their character.

It's not a very pleasant description or a positive portrayal of someone. Because a hypocrite is someone who's an actor. A hypocrite is a pretender, a fraud, a phony, a counterfeit.

A hypocrite is someone who hides behind a mask. hypocrite. In fact, the word hypocrite, it comes from Greek. It's used to portray the Greek plays which were often held in the large auditoriums.

In which an actor would put a mask over his face in order to conceal his true identity. And that by concealing his identity, the actor could assume this different character on the stage.

because when the mask was covering his face, he could present to the audience, the crowd looking on, he could present an appearance of someone else other than his true self.

[20 : 32] And you often hear that being said about all the film stars. But they're such talented actors because they can adopt their role so well. They can become the character in the movie.

They can assume the role that they've been asked to play. And what makes them such a good actor is that they can convince you into thinking that they're actually that kind of person.

But we know that in reality, the film stars are nothing like the characters which they portray on the big screen. Because they're only acting. It's all role play. It's not real. It's not true.

And so when Jesus issues this indictment of hypocrisy upon the Pharisees, he condemns them for hiding behind the mask of their religion.

And he accuses them for presenting an appearance of religious righteousness. And he finds fault with their stage play and their act of holiness and purity.

[21 : 31] Jesus finds fault because he knows the heart of the Pharisees. And Jesus knew that their heart was far from him. He knew that their heart was far from him.

But just when we think that Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees as hypocrites, just when we think it's borderline that he's going as far as he can go, Jesus goes even further.

He goes further because he not only accuses the Pharisees of being hypocrites and hiding behind their religion, but Jesus goes on to quote the words from Isaiah.

And he condemns the Pharisees for their spiritual deadness. Their spiritual deadness. Because the quote which Jesus uses here is from Isaiah 29, verses 13 and 14.

And in the context of the passage, when you read it, Isaiah is prophesying about the Lord's condemnation of the Jews. Jews. And that the Lord was condemning the Jews because of their ignorance of his word.

[22 : 44] Where they have the revelation of God. They have the word of God given to them to explain to them how to worship the Lord and how to live as the Lord's people and how to be saved.

They had everything they knew, everything they needed and everything they would know how to be saved, how to have salvation. And yet the Lord was saying you're blind.

You're blind. You're blind because you're spiritually dead. Spiritually dead. And if you read the passage in Isaiah and the verses before what Jesus quotes here, all that the Lord is saying to the Jews is that you have the word of God but you don't know how to read it.

You have the light of God's truth but you're blinded to what it says. You have the gospel of life but you can't understand it because you're spiritually dead. You honour me with your lips but your heart is far from me.

You honour me with your lips but your heart is far from me. What a position to be in. To have all the privileges. To have all the promises. To have God's revelation in all its fullness.

[23 : 55] To know the way of salvation. And yet you only pay lip service to it. What a sad position the Pharisees were in.

To have all the external conduct impeccable. To always be present at worship. To always offer to the Lord what he wants. To always give your tithe when asked.

To always praise the Lord with your lips. And yet inside, inside your heart is spiritually dead. dead. Dead.

Dead. And how many of them are like them in here. You're like them in here.

Because my unconverted friend, you have all the privileges. You've been brought up in a Christian home.

[24 : 53] under the sound of the gospel. You have all the promises given to you at your baptism. You have God's full and final revelation of himself in your possession.

You have the Bible in all its fullness. In your own language. In all its clarity. There to be read. There to be enjoyed. There to tell you the way of salvation. What a position to be in, my friend.

What a position to have. But what a sad position it is to be in church every week. To be present in the Lord's house. To be willing to give your tithe to the Lord.

To be desiring to sing these beautiful psalms and take the songs of Zion upon your lips. And yet your heart, your heart is far from him.

It's far from him. What a sad position to be in. To perform all the external acts of religion. To follow all the traditions of your parents and your grandparents.

[25 : 58] To have every privilege and promise held out to you. And yet inside you're spiritually dead. Spiritually dead.

For you have no real interest. You have no great concern. You have no thought of your soul. What an awful position to be in.

When the day of judgment comes. To have spent your life hiding behind the mask of your religious acts. And to have your soul condemned.

What an awful position to be in. To have spent your life giving your lips to Jesus. Jesus. But never giving him your heart. What an awful position to be in.

To have known the way to heaven. And to wake up in hell. What an awful position to be in. And far too many of you in here are in that position.

[27 : 05] Far too many of you. And my friend let me tell you. The Lord doesn't want your outward acts of religion.

The Lord wants your heart. The Lord doesn't want your good works. The Lord wants your heart. The Lord wants you to come to him on bended knee.

Confessing your sin. And pouring out your heart before him. That's what he wants. Because that's what he says in his word. But whether you want to do that or not.

That's up to you. That's your decision. But always remember your decision will have eternal consequences. It's your decision.

It's your decision. We've seen that Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their fault finding. He condemned the Pharisees for hypocrite hiding.

[28 : 13] But lastly we see in this passage that Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their commandment creating. Commandment creating. He says to them in verse 9 Full well you reject the commandment of God that you may keep your tradition.

You reject the commandments of God that you may keep your tradition. And so in these words Jesus continues his accusation and his condemnation of the Pharisees by pointing out that they not only find fault with everyone else and act like hypocrites but they also create commandments to suit themselves.

And they do so by rejecting the authority of God's word. And that's what Jesus says in verse 9 You reject the commandment of God that you can keep your traditions.

The Pharisees rejected the authority of God's commandment in order to uphold all their man-made laws and traditions. And in this statement from Jesus we see that even the original purpose of tradition had been lost.

because the original purpose of tradition it was called the fence of the law where the original intended purpose of tradition was to protect the laws of God and to ensure that the laws wouldn't be broken by the Jews and tradition was to be this fence around the law used to stop the Jews from trespassing the laws of God.

[29 : 44] And in a sense the original purpose of tradition it was a good one. It had a good purpose it had a good intention but as with many things the original intention was lost over time.

Because where tradition was meant to put a fence around the law it was the law that was actually putting a fence around tradition. And it became more about upholding the traditions than it did about upholding the laws of God.

And we see that even here when he speaks about Moses he says in verse 10 Moses said honour your father and your mother and whoso curses father or mother let him die the death.

And here Jesus he quotes the word of God he quotes from the fifth commandment in Exodus 20 and then the explanatory teaching on the fifth commandment in Exodus 21 all about honouring your father and mother.

So Jesus quotes the word of God to them but then he condemns them for seeking to elevate and promote their man-made traditions above God's law.

[30 : 57] Because he says in verse 11 you say if a man shall say to his father or mother it is Corban that is to say a gift by whatsoever you might be profited by me he shall be free.

and you suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother making the word of God of none effect through your tradition. And what we see here is that Jesus takes the most basic of all responsibilities and he uses it to point out the selfish nature of tradition because Jesus talks about the responsibility of looking after your own parents.

And in his example Jesus draws attention to the contrast between what God taught and what the tradition of men taught. Because in those times there was no pension there was no benefit system there was no care homes to help ageing parents.

So honoring your father and your mother involved the full responsibility of looking after them in old age. Whether that was housing or feeding them or clothing them or medical care whatever it was the commandment to honor your father and mother and mother it involved helping them with everything you had.

But Jesus also indicates to us the loophole that the Pharisees had come up with in order to avoid upholding this commandment and escaping I suppose the responsibility.

[32 : 28] And the term which Jesus uses as we read it's the term korban which is an Aramaic word meaning a gift to God. And the point which Jesus was making about the tradition surrounding the fifth commandment is that if you have property or if you had had savings which rightfully and morally you should use to support your aging parents but if you wanted if you wanted you could declare your property and your savings korban it belongs to God.

it's a gift dedicated to God and by declaring it korban you're removing it from having to use it to help your parents. But the really clever part of the tradition or the really deceitful part of the tradition is that when you declare something to be korban you didn't have to hand your house over or your money over straight away you could keep it for yourself.

probably until you died. And with this Jesus is showing us not only the selfish nature of the tradition of the elders but also the selfish nature of their hearts that they would create a command in order that their own parents couldn't take anything from them.

But you know the real reason Jesus gave this example was to emphasize that for the Pharisee upholding the traditions which men had written it was far more important than upholding the laws which God had given.

And with this Jesus he condemns the Pharisees for their commandment creating. Jesus condemns them for their heresy their heresy of suppressing the truth of God's word and elevating tradition.

[34 : 22] Jesus condemns the Pharisees for detracting and diminishing the authority of scripture and affirming and exalting all the traditions of men.

And this is interesting because Jesus indicates to us their progression in heresy. He says to us in verse 7 that the Pharisees were teaching the commandments of men as God's word which means that they were corrupting God's word.

Then Jesus says in verse 8 that the Pharisees were laying aside the word of God. And Jesus he continues he progresses in his teaching and he explains then in verse 9 that the Pharisees were rejecting the word of God.

And then in verse 13 Jesus affirms that this progression in heresy has only one outcome. It makes the word of God of no effect. Where it dilutes the word and it robs it of its power.

And you know this progression that Jesus sets before us of corrupting and laying aside and rejecting and diluting God's word it will always lead us astray.

[35 : 38] It will lead us into error. And as a church and as a denomination we need to watch against it. because if we move one inch from the word of God we open the floodgates to everything else.

And this progression of heresy which Jesus highlights here it's the progression which many false religions have taken. Because the Jews were not the only religion to elevate tradition above the word of God.

The Roman Catholic Church does the same. the Roman Catholic doctrine teaches that tradition taught by the church or taught by the Pope is to be held on the same level or elevated above the word of God.

But it's not only the false religions of Judaism and Roman Catholicism that elevate tradition above the word of God. Islam is a false religion which encourages its teacher its followers and its teachers to teach that they're to read the Old Testament and read what Jesus taught because Jesus is considered a prophet like Muhammad.

But on top of the Quran Islam is a false religion with this highly complex system of regulations and practices and traditions and as a Muslim if you follow them so perfectly and to the T you will please Allah.

[37 : 08] But Jesus condemns the heresy of the Pharisees and ultimately he condemns the heresy of all these false religions and false teaching because Jesus stresses to us that the word of God contained in the scriptures of the Old and the New Testament is the only rule to direct us on how we may glorify God and enjoy him forever.

And my friend if we attempt to corrupt or lay aside or reject or dilute any part of God's word it will lead us astray. It will lead us astray.

And what Jesus is emphasizing to us and to the Pharisees is that the message of the gospel is not Jesus plus. It's not Jesus plus tradition.

It's not Jesus plus the ideas of men. It's not Jesus plus all our religious righteousness. It's not Jesus plus our good works. It's not Jesus plus our church attendance.

It's not Jesus plus our creeds and our catechisms. It's not Jesus plus the Pope. It's not Jesus plus Mary. It's not Jesus plus the Quran. It's not even Jesus plus our thoughts and feelings. My friend, the message of the gospel is faith in Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone.

[38 : 32] Alone. That's it. Because he exclusively declares to us on the pages of scripture, I am the way, the truth and the life.

No man comes to the Father except through me. And my friend, if we come to God any other way apart from the cross of Jesus Christ, we are making the word of God of none effect.

If there is anything or anyone that is standing in our way and holding us back, we are making the word of God of none effect.

If we cannot confess Jesus Christ as our saviour because we think we're a good person, we're making the word of God of none effect.

If you cannot confess we cannot confess Jesus as your saviour because your heart is hard, we're making the word of God of none effect. If you're not listening, you're making the word of God of none effect.

[39 : 39] If you're sleeping, you're making the word of God of none effect. if you think you know it all already you're making the word of God of none effect my friend don't put anything in front of coming to Jesus don't put anything in front of coming to him for your salvation nothing instead here's a suggestion for you here's a suggestion for you why don't you break with tradition the tradition that you've had all your life break with this tradition why don't you break with the tradition of leaving here the way you always come in break with that tradition and let this word change your life break with that tradition and let it transform your heart break with the tradition of always leaving here the same way you come in and let this lamp be a light to your feet and a light to your path let this Jesus be Lord over your life let this Jesus be the one that you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth because the promise of scripture is if you believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord and confess with your mouth that God raised him from the dead then you shall be saved then you shall be saved break with tradition leave differently leave differently leave differently may the Lord bless these thoughts let us pray

O Lord our gracious God we give thanks for thy word we bless thee that it is the power of God unto salvation that it is not the power of man nor the wisdom of men but it is above and beyond our asking or our thinking Lord the God who speaks to us through thy word help us then to be listening help us then Lord we pray O to respond to thy truth go before us we ask thee bless this day to us bless thy word to our souls and keep us we pray for Jesus sake Amen Psalm 119 is our closing item of praise Psalm 119 at verse 57 it's page 404 in the blue book the psalmist is one who broke with tradition and decided to follow the Lord and that's what he talks about here

Psalm 119 at verse 57 thou my sure portion art alone which I did choose O Lord I have resolved and said that I would keep thy holy word with my whole heart I did entreat thy face and favour free according to thy gracious word be merciful to me I thought upon my former ways and did my life well try and to thy testimonies pure my feet then turned I these verses in conclusion to God's praise Amen of my sure portion art alone which I did choose O Lord I have resolved and said that I would keep thy holy word.

With my whole heart I didn't leave thy face unfavorably.

According to thy gracious word, in mercy put to thee.

[44 : 44] I thought upon my former ways, and did it my other try.

And to thy testimony is pure. My faith eternally died.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.