

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MBC:

1. Our monthly Church Workday is this Saturday from 8:30-11:30am.
2. We are having our next “Who We Are” class this Sunday during the Sunday School hour.
3. On January 18th, February 1st, and February 15th during the Sunday School Hour we will have Evangelism training classes.
4. Our ladies Bible Study, Women of the Word, resumes on January 31st. For more information, please reach out to Susanna Ontai or Angela Halfmann.
5. Our next Communion Sunday is 1/25. If you are interested in becoming a member or being baptized that Sunday, please reach out to Pastor Spencer.
6. To prepare for the preaching of the word on this coming Lord's Day, we would encourage you to meditate on the passage ahead of time. The worship service's sermon will be from 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

WHAT WE BELIEVE: *Of a Gospel Church* - We believe that a visible local Church is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his Word, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word; that its only scriptural officers are Elders (or Pastors), and Deacons (or Church Servants), whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus as well as Acts and 1 Peter. 1 Cor. 1:1-13; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; 14:23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3:5; Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 5:12-13; 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:6; 2 Cor. 2:7; 1 Cor. 4:17; Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess. 4:2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6:2; all the Epistles; Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 12:14; Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1; Acts 20:17-35; 1 Peter 5:1-5.

WISDOM: “If our religion is something objective, then we must never avert our eyes from those elements in it which seem puzzling or repellant; for it will be precisely the puzzling or the repellant which conceals what we do not yet know and need to know.” – C.S. Lewis

WORD: “Decorum at Church”, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Suggested questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. Was there anything that particularly challenged, impacted, or confused you from this Sunday's message?
2. Provided that Scripture is the ultimate authority for our faith and practice, what influence should tradition and the practice of other church have on our church?
3. Why does our appearance at church matter? What questions should we ask ourselves as we decide what to wear to church on Sunday mornings?

DIGGING DEEPER: The Role of Tradition

<https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/role-tradition>

The Role of Tradition

Ligonier

Commentators believe that Mark wrote his gospel for a Gentile audience, with many scholars theorizing that he had Christians living in the city of Rome particularly in mind. There are many reasons why commentators make this suggestion, and it is passages such as Mark 7:1–4 that point to Mark's intent to communicate with a Gentile audience. Verses 3–4 explain certain traditions the Pharisees and other first-century Jews followed with respect to the washing of hands. Since the practice was common to the Jews, a Jewish audience would need no explanation. If, however, Mark intended his gospel for a predominantly Gentile audience, the explanation makes perfect sense. Gentiles do not typically know Jewish customs and need them explained.

We will see in our study of verses 5–12 that the Jewish traditions were problematic because of the tendency to elevate them to the same status as God's Word. The very existence of such traditions, however, gives us an opportunity at this point to reflect briefly on the idea of tradition itself. As Protestants, we sometimes see the word tradition and immediately throw up our guard because of the way we have seen traditions used to deny the Word of God and bind consciences with the straitjacket of legalism. Yet, it is important to realize that tradition in itself can be a neutral or even a good thing. The tradition that some churches have of meeting at 11 a.m. for worship on the Lord's Day is neither good nor bad in itself. It usually reflects, in fact, the prudential judgment of the church's leadership. Expressions of tradition such as the Apostles' Creed or the Westminster Confession of Faith are good things, for these statements of faith can help us better understand the Word of God. All of us bring some tradition to our reading of Scripture, our hearing of the preached Word of God, and so forth. These traditions may be sound and biblically informed, or they may be unconscious assumptions or even false beliefs. But if we are not aware of our traditions, we will never be able to correct them by the Word of God.

Traditions can become legalistically binding and an enemy of orthodox biblical doctrine, but it is worth noting that they are rarely formulated with that intent. The Jewish traditions did not arise out of a desire to inflict spiritual harm on people, but out of a desire to help them not break the law of God. Yet, they came to view their traditions as on par with Scripture, and that led to spiritual disaster.

Human traditions, including the church's reflection on the Word of God, can be helpful. However, they must never be elevated to the status of divine revelation. When that happens, we become ensnared in legalism and cannot be reformed by Scripture. Let us appreciate tradition where it is helpful, but let us never elevate it to the status of divine revelation.

1 Corinthians 11:2-16

²Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. ³But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. ⁴Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, ⁵but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven. ⁶For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. ⁷For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. ⁸For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. ⁹Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. ¹⁰That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; ¹²for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. ¹³Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, ¹⁵but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. ¹⁶If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.