

# Mooresville church of Christ

720 N. Indianapolis Road

Mooresville, IN 46158

that come from God in 2 Thes. 3:6. Here he tells us to withdraw fellowship from any brother who will not follow the “*tradition which he received of us*”. In 1 Cor. 11:2 Paul admonishes, “*Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.*” The word “ordinances” is the same as traditions. Notice they were *delivered* or handed down. They were *received* in the earlier verse. The instructions that God gave the early church must be received, practiced, and handed down without modification.

We must cling to the divine traditions. These are the acts that God has authorized. To deviate from them is to sin. To add instrumental music when the divine record only authorizes singing is wrong (Eph. 5:19). To partake of the Lord’s Supper quarterly instead of weekly is an error (Acts 20:7). To appoint women preachers is to violate the divine pattern (1 Cor. 14:34).

Those who are young and bored need to be careful that they do not release the God given traditions with the man made ones. In their fervor to enhance the worship service they often go beyond that which is authorized.

Those who are older and comfortable with the way things are also need to be cautioned. They must not become mindless about what they are doing and why they are doing it. Any activity can be done thoughtlessly once it becomes a habit. We need to keep our heart in our worship. If our actions become mindless routines then they are no longer worship. Remember the church in Ephesus continued to do the right actions after their first love was lost (Rev. 2:4-5). God requires *spirit and truth* in worship (Jn. 4:24). In Matt. 6:7 He condemns the heathens’ prayers as “*vain repetitions*”. Is our worship a meaningless routine or an authorized sincere praise of God?

**December 25, 2016**

## Assemblies

### **Sunday:**

9:30 a.m. Bible Study  
10:30 a.m. Worship  
5:00 p.m. Worship

### **Wednesday:**

7:00 p.m. Bible Study  
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**God joins law  
and love  
together.  
Do we? (Jn. 14:15)**

## Announcements

The men authorized sending a one time contribution to Ken Sils. Ken moved to Alabama from Crawfordsville to preach. The move was in part motivated by his wife’s health. Jerry has a letter which explains their need and situation.

As we prepare for a new year why not make a resolution to attend all the services of the church? This will strengthen you and your brethren.

Thank you to all the members who taught Bible classes in the last quarter. We need you. If anyone would like to take a turn in teaching please let Dusty or Marynell know.

The cold weather and icy roads kept some home from worship. If the conditions get worse Tadd and John will let us know if services are cancelled any time this winter.

# **It Is Hard To Release Traditions**

Ron Roberts

A tradition is a practice that is handed down from one generation to the next. The Greek word in the Bible is “*paradosin*”. “*Para*” means **near or beside**. A parable is a spiritual truth laid **beside** a physical story. A parallel line is a one that runs **beside** another without intersecting. “*Dosin*” means **giving up**. So a tradition is something we **give** to someone **near** to us.

## **Traditions have great value to us for three reasons.**

1. We have done them a long time. The longer we do something the more it becomes ingrained in us. Like a habit or even an addiction, a tradition can become something we never consider releasing. The more familiar it becomes the more comfortable we are with it. The longer we practice it the less likely we are to experiment with anything else.
2. The tradition was given to us by someone near to us. A parent or grandparent may have handed down the practice. To release the tradition would seem to insult the person or the memory of the person who taught it to us. The value of the tradition is bound to the value of the person.
3. The tradition has a history of success. “*We have done this thing this way for over 80 years. It has always worked. Why would we change a proven method?*”

Within the church we have a number of traditions. Often the young people become bored with religion and blame the traditional way of doing things. They want to change things to pump life back into the old church. Sometimes they are right. We can become mindless in our practices. We sing the same old hymns and no longer consider the lyrics we are singing. We keep the same sequence of 2 songs and a prayer and another song as if it was divinely inspired. We forget the source of the tradition, the reason for the practice, and the meaning that once made it significant. Perhaps we need to stir up our minds by a change or at least remembering what is behind the tradition (2 Pet. 3:1).

I preached a sermon once that had hymns interspersed within it. I would read some verses, make a number of comments, and then we would sing. This would be followed by more verses and comments and then another hymn. Several members were thrilled with the lesson. It was different. It helped them to pay attention. It got them involved.

Anyone who was disturbed by the alteration did not mention it. Of course, the second time I did this type of sermon it did not receive such rave reviews. It was not new anymore, and therein lies the danger. If we can not be excited by the Gospel and need new approaches to thrill us, then we have a significant problem.

Sometimes the young people are wrong in trying to change the traditions. They are bored because they are not spiritually minded. They want emotional hype instead of Gospel truth. They want to change things because they are excited by external methods instead of the inner spirit. Dimming the lights, clapping the hands, humming the hymns, and dynamic preachers with emotional stories are the things that arouse them. The accuracy of the message, authority for a practice, and approval of God is secondary.

Some of our traditions are handed down from men. These can be changed if a better way is discovered. We see the traditions of men throughout the denominations. They have instrumental music because they “*have always done it that way*”. They have a Christmas pageant and a sunrise service every year. Paul warns us, “*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*” (Col. 2:8). Within the church of Christ we have the tradition of a Bible class first and a worship service after. We begin with a reading, a prayer, and then a hymn. We stand for the prayer and first hymn. These things are not wrong but neither are we scripturally bound by them.

There are also divine traditions. These are practices handed down from God. They cannot be changed. Referring to the Gospel Paul wrote, “*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received...*” (1 Cor. 15:3). This is the definition of a tradition. We are given something and we pass it on. The Apostle also refers to traditions