

## **A Tradition of Hope**

Series: Sustainable Faith: The Word

Romans 15:4 NIV (0938)

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Tradition *“the handing down of beliefs, opinions, customs, and stories, such as from parents to children, especially by word of mouth or by practice.”*

### **I. The biblical view of traditions have often been misunderstood**

#### **a. The negative side of tradition**

Matthew 15:3 NIV <sup>3</sup>*Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?”*

Mark 7:6-8 NIV <sup>6</sup>*[Jesus] replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. <sup>7</sup>They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ <sup>8</sup>You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”*

Colossians 2:8 NIV <sup>8</sup>*See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.*

#### **b. The positive side of tradition**

Mark 7:9-13 NIV <sup>9</sup>*And [Jesus] said to them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! <sup>10</sup>For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ <sup>11</sup>But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban’ (that is, a gift devoted to God), <sup>12</sup>then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. <sup>13</sup>Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”*

### **II. The biblical tradition of hope**

#### **a. The Old Testament and hope**

Psalms 25:4-6 NIV <sup>4</sup>*Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; <sup>5</sup>guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. <sup>6</sup>Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.*

Psalms 33:18, 20-21 NIV <sup>18</sup>*But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, ...<sup>20</sup>We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. <sup>21</sup>In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. <sup>22</sup>May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you.*

Romans 4:18 NIV <sup>18</sup>*Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”*

### **b. The New Testament and hope**

Romans 8:18, 23-24 NIV <sup>18</sup>*I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us...* <sup>23</sup>*[we] who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.* <sup>24</sup>*For in this hope we were saved.*

1 John 3:2-3 NIV <sup>2</sup>*Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* <sup>3</sup>*Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.*

### **c. The historic church and hope**

Martin Luther *Everything that is done in the world is done by hope.*

## **III. Defining the tradition of hope in our day**

### **a. The need for conscious decisions regarding the tradition of hope**

Romans 15:4 NIV <sup>4</sup>*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

### **b. The power of hope to transform a culture**

1 Peter 3:15-16 NIV <sup>15</sup>*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,* <sup>16</sup>*keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.*

CHARLES COLSON *When the church transcends culture, it can transform culture. In the Dark Ages, reform did not arise from the state but from communities of those who remained uncompromising in a compromising age.*