

Mark 7-8

Giving Up Your Life

1. Think about the most inspiring Christian people you know. What makes them stand out?
2. If you were to ask random people on the street, what would they say is the essence of being a Christian?
3. What is the difference between a tradition of men and a command of God? Give some examples of each.

A NOTE ABOUT CORBAN:

Corban is a particular "tradition of men" that Jesus picks on to illustrate how the Pharisees have "let go of the commands of God while holding onto the traditions of men". Corban means "dedicated to God". It was a good tradition that involved dedicating some money to the temple, for the Lord's use. Unlike a regular donation, the money was pledged to be given sometime in the future, perhaps as part of a will. But this tradition was being abused. The law of God commands people to honor their father and mother, but rather than support their parents in old age, the Pharisees were using the excuse that all of their money was "Corban" and therefore unavailable for alleviating their parent's poverty. Meanwhile, they could still use the money, investing it and keeping the interest. So Corban was a tradition of men that was being upheld out of selfishness and greed only to break the direct command of God.

4. Can you think of some "traditions of men" that are upheld out of legalism? What is the effect of this? (Try to think of some that we do in our own circle and not just those that you see others doing)
5. Where do you think our Christian culture tends to lie on this scale? Think of some examples.



6. Does this mean all traditions are bad? What are some good traditions that we have and how can we avoid turning them into legalistic additions to the gospel.
7. What will happen to Jesus (8:31)? How is this compatible with him being the Christ?
8. Why does Jesus call Peter Satan?
9. Read 8:34-38. What does it mean to deny yourself and take up your cross? Why is this a cost worth paying?
10. What are some ways in which we are called to deny ourselves in our day to day lives?
11. Imagine yourself in a hypothetical evangelistic conversation. Discuss how you might present the gospel to someone using this passage around the three questions: Who is this Man? What has he come to do? What does he want of me?