

Psalm 79:13

So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, Will give You thanks forever; We will show forth Your praise to all generations.

One thing most of us learned about God as kids is that, you should pray right before you eat. You know, the good ol' "God is great, God is good. God we thank You for this food. Amen."

But, have you ever started to eat, then remembered that you forgot to pray. So you stop and pray, thinking God won't bless your food because you didn't pray, or maybe you just feel like you are a sinner and bad because you didn't thank God first. If you said yes, you have become legalistic, taking on something that the bible never says to do (Pray before each meal).

† **Mark 7:3-4 (NLT2)** *(The Jews, especially the Pharisees, do not eat until they have poured water over their cupped hands, as required by their ancient traditions. Similarly, they don't eat anything from the market until they immerse their hands in water. This is but one of many traditions they have clung to—such as their ceremonial washing of cups, pitchers, and kettles.)*

Sure, Jesus gave thanks before He distributed the bread and fish to 5,000 and 4,000 men, but we do not read anywhere in the bible where it says to pray before each meal. Actually, in some cultures they pray after the meal, giving thanks for what they had eaten. So which one is right, and which one is wrong? Neither.

Now, don't get me wrong, because we have so many things to be thankful for. But are we so trained to be thankful all the time for the food we are about to put in our belly's, and not thankful for other things?

What if you gave thanks before you walk onto your job every day?

What if you give thanks before you start your car, or before you fill it's belly with gas?

Do you give thanks before you turn on the AC (It's been in the 90's where I live so I am thankful for our AC).

Do you give thanks for your bed and sheets and pillow and blankets before you crawl into bed each night?

Do you give thanks for hot water and soap and shampoo before you jump in the shower?

I am not trying to say that you need to do these things, because that would be legalistic as well, because the bible does not teach to pray before you do them. But you know what, if you forget to pray before you eat, God is not angry with you and you won't get food poisoning. But if it is something you do, keep doing it, because we seem to spend more time asking from God, then thanking God.

Also, don't turn man made traditions into the gospel, because so many have and there are lots of sayings that are not biblical, based upon a man made tradition or saying.

“You gotta fight fire with fire.”

“God helps those who help themselves.”

“Jesus is knocking on the door of the hearts of unbelievers”, based upon what Jesus was saying to one of the churches in Revelation 3:20, which means He was talking to believers, not the lost.

Jesus has a warning for us about doing such things:

† **Mark 7:6-8 (NLT2)** *Jesus replied, “You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.’ For you ignore God’s law and substitute your own tradition.”*

This week or weekend, look at some of the “spiritual” things that you do, and see if you can find them in the bible. If not, then it's man made and you are not bound to keep them.

† **Colossians 2:20-23** *Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations-- "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," which all concern things which perish with the using--according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.*

If the things you do and say are in the bible, then great, because you are not just a reader of God's word, but a doer as well.

† **James 1:25** *But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*