

“So the Pharisees and teachers of religious law asked him, “Why don’t your disciples follow our age-old tradition? They eat without first performing the hand-washing ceremony.” Mark 7:5 NLT

## lectio // Mark 7:5-23

They stepped right in it! I’m Jesus was glad they asked. Then he gave them an answer they did not want to hear! I wonder if the upper echelons of leaders begged the lower level grunts to stop asking Jesus questions - it was ruining their advantage over the people. Short answer, “For you ignore God’s law and substitute your own tradition.” Truth: “You skillfully sidestep God’s law in order to hold on to your own tradition.” Example: Moses gave you a law, but you claim a higher purpose to ignore God. I used to look at these stories and get so upset with the religious leaders, then I became a religious leader and I understood how easy it is to play this power game. Jesus told them, you’ve created your own cancel culture, “And so you cancel the word of God in order to hand down your own tradition.” We nullify, void or just ignore God’s best because we think we’ve got a better way, or higher purpose. All along masking the fact that we just find it too hard to follow God’s best, so we substitute! Then we teach courses and host podcasts on how to “get around” the rules. As humans we LOVE loopholes! It gives us wiggle room to do our own thing, make our own rules and justify it with lofty sounding nonsense. Oh, I quit looking at the faults of ancient religious leaders and started looking at my own heart - and there I found it. I want to do what I want, when I want, to whomever I want to do it to or with, and I don’t want anyone to tell me I’m wrong. We’ve gotten so good at religious games that we substitute our opinions over truth.

## oratio

Dad,

Not only have I seen friends in the family of God do this to each other, sadly, I’ve caught myself doing the very same thing. Your law was impossible to keep! And now, the law of love, “love as I have loved you,” is impossible without your constant grace and transformation. Love is hard! It’s harder than all the big ten. It’s hard because it requires sacrifice of self will and self determination. The moment I sidestep love to get out of what’s required, I void your best in me and in others. The moment I replace a cheaper, substituted version and call it tradition, I cancel the culture of grace you’ve given to all humans.

## contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root