

# **Divine Precepts vs. Human Traditions**

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Let us compare the parallel accounts of Matthew 15 and Mark 7, which chronicle Jesus' conflict with the scribes and Pharisees regarding divine precepts versus human traditions. It is interesting to note the similarities and also the differences. Matthew was written to a Jewish audience, while Mark was for the benefit of the Gentiles.

By adding to and subtracting from the requirements of Sacred Scripture, Jewish leaders of the first century violated a fundamental, unchanging Biblical principle. Moses warned Israel against such presumptuousness (Deut. 4:1-2; 12:32; 18:20-22). Before the conquest of Canaan, God stressed the necessity of being fully obedient to the Law, and not turning aside from it to the right or the left (Josh. 1:6-8). This theme is echoed in the Wisdom Literature (Prov. 30:6), and also in the Prophets (Jer. 26:1-6). Jesus Christ affirms the principle in our present context, and it is later highlighted by the inspired apostles (1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 8-9; Rev. 22:18-19).