



# TRADITION: Past Connecting & Future Reaching

## COMMIT TO MEMORY:

*I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.*

2 Timothy 1:5 ESV

LESSON 1, TRADITION | 1 Corinthians 11:2

## Points to Ponder

*1) Did your family have any meaningful traditions at certain times of the year? What made them meaningful? Do you still practice them? Why do you still remember them?*

*2) What role do traditions play in your life? ... in teaching habits to younger people? Are there any reasons not to have traditions?*

*3) Do we value traditions today? Why or why not?*

*4) Read Joshua 4:1-7. Why was it important to build a memorial? What value did it have?*

## Conclusions to Consider

*1) What can you do in your home to instill traditions that reinforce biblical truths?*

Tradition. The *Los Angeles Times* called it "groundbreaking." The *New York Times* described it as "electrifying." It is the opening number for the 1964 Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. The play's main character, Tevye, explains the roles of the classes, the jobs and the people of their village. The song details how their society tries to stay the same while the world around them changes.

Perhaps more than any other in our lifetime, the year 2020 has forced us to look change squarely in the face. Practically every part of life has been affected or altered because of the COVID pandemic. We heroically try to redefine "normal" as life goes on.

But tradition has been with us since the beginning. What will things look like when longstanding traditions of the holidays cannot continue? The year 2020 will be remembered as the year we lost traditions. As Easter approached, church buildings closed to help slow the spread of COVID-19. The year closed with the traditions of Christmas and New Year's altered greatly. In the middle, we experienced – pun intended – a taste of a less than full family Thanksgiving.

But even before COVID-19, culture was subtly pressuring traditions to adapt or change. Political correctness became a treasured commodity. Censoring or re-writing history proved the easiest way to eliminate traditions that proved less than acceptable. Rather than explaining traditions, churches shied away to assure visitors would feel comfortable, connected and understanding. Hundred year old hymns were replaced by modern songs.

The Bible speaks of the importance of tradition on several levels. Throughout both the Old and New Testaments, we are reminded of the continuing covenant relationship between God and the Jewish people. God is the God of "Abraham, Isaac and of Jacob" (Exodus 3:6 ESV). The same concept repeats in the New Testament (Matthew 22:32).

People were led to set up monuments and memorials so that the stories of God's providence and care could be told from generation to generation (Deuteronomy 6:12, Exodus 12:14, Joshua 4:1-7).

Consequently ancestors and lineage were important parts of education and practice in both Testaments. The entire lineage of Jesus can be seen through both Joseph and Mary in the gospels (Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38).

Paul speaks about the importance of traditions on more than one occasion in his epistles. In 1 Corinthians 11:2 Paul commended the Corinthians for remembering him in everything and for keeping the traditions exactly as Paul has passed them on to them.

Later he wrote to Timothy and reminded him that his sincere faith grew from the belief and traditions that passed on to him by his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5).

When the next generation wanders to you and asks, "Can you please tell me what these stones mean?" Will you be able to answer?