

**Ignoring Original Intention** Fifth Week in Ordinary Time Tuesday, February 11, 2014  
8:15 AM 1 Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30; **Mk 7:1-13** (Our Lady of Lourdes) (World Day of the Sick) (Jews and Christians are separate groups. Was that God's original intention? Of course not.)

**“And you do many such things.”**

People say that Jesus did not intend to found a new religion or a new faith, which is probably true, but he found something very wrong with what he found in Israel in his day. He found a religion that was too much **concerned with what human beings had added and not concerned enough about the original focus of doing God's will.** For this reason he now is starting to pull away from the teachers of Israel. In one way he shows respect, but in another way he doesn't because they have added too much.

In Israel at that time there were a large number of interpretations of the Torah. In fact, some rabbis said that the oral interpretations were more important than the original letter of the Law. The letter was written in Scriptures. We have them; the **“Old Testament,”** we call it. But they had **all kinds of other traditions and interpretations,** which ended up eventually in the Talmud, much of it anyway. This is what he is talking about, **the tradition of the elders.** St. Paul bragged about the way in which he kept the tradition of the elders. **It was very prescriptive of every kind of activity you could think of.** How to do! Today about purification: hands, food, beds, kettles, jugs, and so on.

The idea behind it, of course, was hygiene, cleanliness, and so on, but they carried it too far, at least according to this text, and worse, in some respects **the distinctions they made detracted from the original intention.** So if a man is responsible for supporting his parents in their old age, but he says, well, I could give this to you, but I've dedicated it to God, and thus exempts himself from his responsibilities, **Jesus finds this abhorrent.** The original intention of the commandment is ignored and annulled in favor of something else that isn't in the commandment—that's the idea.

And it ends: “And you do many such things.” So there were a lot of problems. We can see, however, that many of the people who did these things were very sincere, and so when push came to shove **there was a separation between those who followed Jesus' view and those who thought Jesus was wrong.** To this day, Jews and Christians are separate groups. Was that God's original intention? Of course not.