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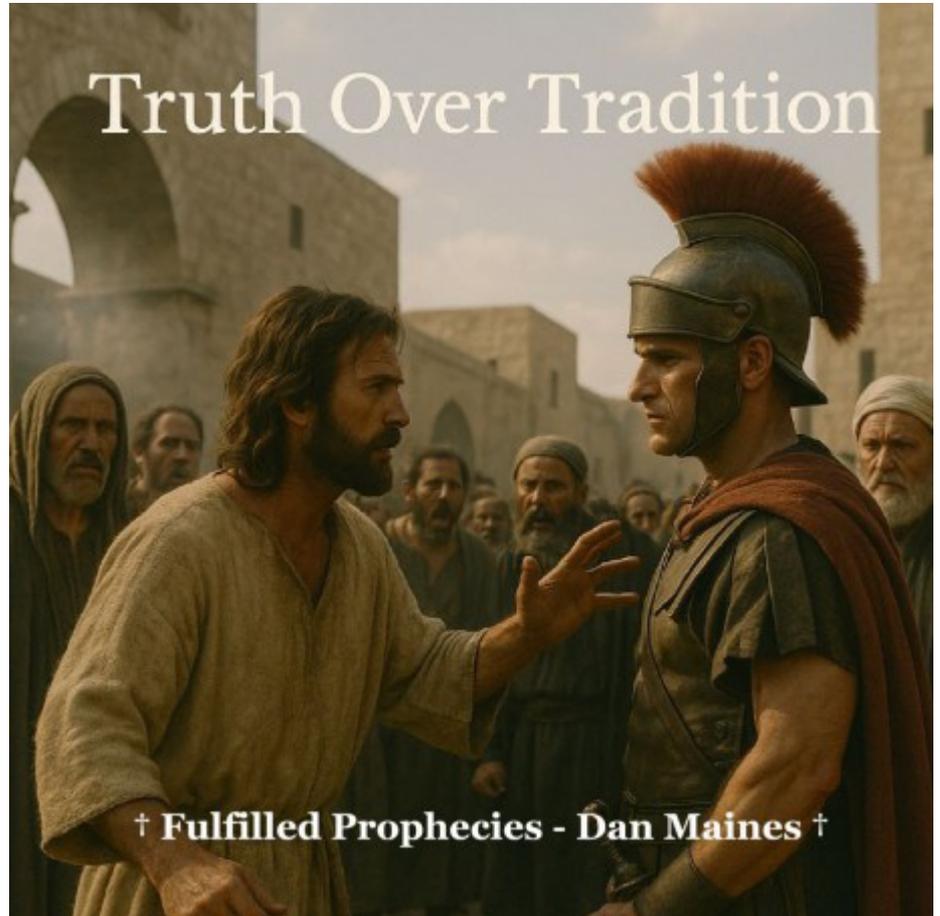
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Truth Over Tradition



By Dan Maines

Truth Over Tradition

Introduction

† Christian tradition has shaped how most believers think before they ever open the Bible for themselves. We approach Scripture with pre formed conclusions, inherited opinions, and long standing assumptions. Most people aren't even aware this has happened to them, and even fewer are willing to admit their church might be wrong. Yet Scripture itself warns us about being molded by the traditions of men rather than the word of

God.

† The earliest generations of Christians weren't driven by creeds, councils, or denominational loyalty. They were driven by what Jesus and the apostles actually said. The only way to recover that clarity is to be willing to set aside everything we've been taught and let Scripture speak for itself. That takes humility. It requires us to be willing to be wrong before we can become right.

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

† Jesus didn't leave room for reinterpretation. He defined the time frame plainly and directly. The phrase this generation meant the people living at that time, the same way it means everywhere else in Scripture.

† When tradition collides with Jesus' own words, we must decide who we're going to believe. The issue isn't interpretation, it's authority.

† If Jesus was wrong here, then His authority collapses. If He was right, then tradition must yield.

Matthew 10:23

But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next, for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

† Jesus tied His coming to the ministry lifetime of His disciples. He didn't speak vaguely or symbolically about timing.

† This statement only creates tension if we force it into a future Jesus never placed it in.

† The disciples didn't misunderstand Him. The church did, centuries later.

Matthew 16:27-28

For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds. Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

† Jesus located His coming within the lifetime of some standing before Him.

† The simplicity of Jesus' words is only lost when tradition intervenes.

† The problem isn't Scripture, it's what we've been trained to ignore.

John 21:22

Jesus said to him, If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.

† Jesus again anchored His coming to the lives of His contemporaries.

† This wasn't metaphorical comfort, it was real expectation.

† The early church lived with confidence, not fear, because they trusted Jesus' timing.

Matthew 26:64

Jesus said to him, You have said it yourself, nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.

† Jesus spoke this to the high priest, not to future generations.

† Cloud coming language comes directly from Old Testament judgment imagery, not physical descent.

† Those who pierced Him would see it, exactly as Revelation affirms.

James 5:7-9

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The

farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient, strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged, behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

† James didn't mean near for thousands of years.

† Standing at the door doesn't describe delay, it describes imminent action.

† The first century audience understood exactly what this meant.

Hebrews 10:37

For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

† Scripture couldn't be clearer.

† Very little while doesn't stretch across millennia.

† Delay only exists when tradition rewrites time.

Revelation 1:7

Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the land will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

† Those who pierced Him lived in the first century.

† Tribes of the land refers to Israel, not the globe.

† This is covenant judgment language, not a modern end of the world scenario.

Hebrews 9:28

So Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

- † Scripture only speaks of a second appearing once.
- † That appearing completed redemption, it didn't restart it.
- † The destruction of the Old Covenant system finalized salvation's transition.

Historical References

- † Early Christian writers understood Christ's coming as fulfilled judgment, not postponed hope.
- † Josephus documented the covenantal collapse of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 with striking alignment to Jesus' warnings.
- † Eusebius affirmed the early church fled Jerusalem based on Christ's prophecy.
- † Clement of Alexandria and Lactantius spoke of fulfillment, not delay.

How it applies to us today

- † We don't live in fear of an end that never comes.
- † We live in confidence that Christ kept His word.
- † Freedom in Christ grows when tradition loses its grip.
- † Truth doesn't change, but our willingness to accept it must.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

- † Matthew 24:34; Matthew 10:23; Matthew 16:27-28; John 21:22; Matthew 26:64; James 5:7-9; Hebrews 10:37; Revelation 1:7; Hebrews 9:28
- † Josephus, Wars of the Jews; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Clement of Alexandria; Lactantius

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