

Lesson 2: New Cloth and New Wineskins

Reference: Matthew 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22; **Please Read:** Luke 5:33-39

Theme: Reality over Religion

Context: Jesus is asked why His disciples were not fasting and praying

Introduction:

The conversation opens up with the Pharisees, the embodiment of religious piety insinuating that Jesus lacked spiritual discipline. They could not understand why Jesus never seemed to follow their traditions- go figure!

- The religious establishment loved making all kinds of rules for others to follow
- They took the Old Covenant, built/added a whole religious institution of their making
- Like a hot knife through butter, Jesus cut right through their hypocrisy and falsehood

Matthew 15:1-3; 23:3-4, "Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!" Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them."

- Bottom line God loves people according to John 3:16 that He took away their sin
- The Pharisees went out of their way to discredit Jesus
 - o But the proof of the pudding is in the eating- taste and see that the Lord is good!

Matthew 11:18-19

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." **But wisdom is proved right by her actions.**"

Fasting

- There is no ordinance in the Bible commanding us to fast, but it has its uses
 - o Repentance: tear clothes and put on Sack Cloth and fasting- **1 Kings 21:27-28**
 - o In Acts 13:2-3 the early church ministered to the Lord by worshipping and fasting
- A useful spiritual discipline of quieting the mind/flesh and focusing on God-word/prayer
- **Question:** "Have you ever fasted in the past? If so what was it for?"

Setting Priorities

Luke 5:34-35

Jesus answered, "Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast."

- Fasting like many things can become a religious ritual rather than of the heart
- Man has a tendency to elevate observances over the passionate pursuit of the Lord
- David was an exception in his generation

Acts 13:22- "I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do."

- Reminds me of when Jesus came over to Martha's house for dinner
- Illustrates the preoccupation of people with the details and miss the main event
- Colossians 2:17, "...the reality, however, is found in Christ."
- **Please Read: Luke 10:38-42**

Question: "What do you think is the most important thing to God that we do for Him?"

A New Creation – Not about being religious

Galatians 6:15

Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

Mark 2:21-22

"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse."

- Jesus was making reference to the "New Covenant (new cloth)" He was ushering in
- Trying to repair the old with a new patch is pointless- get a brand new garment
- Jesus was ushering in a complete replacement of the old system with something new

Hebrews 8:13, "By calling this covenant 'new,' he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear."

- Human nature does not like change, there is security with what is familiar
- Religious leaders were so entrenched in the Old Covenant they were afraid of change

Luke 5:39, "And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.'"

- **Question:** "Why are people so afraid of change?"

Mark 2:22

“And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins.”

Containers in Eastern nations were made, and are still made of skins of animals. Generally the skin was taken entire from a sheep or a goat, and when properly prepared was filled with wine or water. This made it very convenient to travel over arid and desert regions. They could fill two skins, and fasten them together and lay them across the back of a camel, and thus carry wine or water great distances. The problem with old wineskins is that over time, they would become very dry and brittle. New wine put into them would ferment, and swell and burst them open. So new wineskins would be elastic enough to expand and contract without breaking and thus preserve the wine.

- Under the Old Covenant it was a works based system; all in your own strength
- *“If a law had been given that could impart life...”*- Galatians 3:21-25
 - o The purpose of the law was to frustrate mankind- can't live a perfect life
 - o With that revelation, we have only one recourse, to look for a savior!
 - o The Old Testament in Ezekiel foretold of the New Birth

Ezekiel 36:26-27

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

- **Please Read: John 3:1-8**
- The New Wine is the Holy Spirit coming in and making us a New Creation- Eph.5:18
- **Please Read: Titus 3:3-7 - Regeneration**
- **Please Read: 2 Corinthians 5:14-17**
 - o In the Greek “New Creation” is “New Species”
 - something that never existed before – a brand new nature/identity
 - 1 Cor. 3:10- old house torn down a brand new foundation has been laid
 - o In 1 Peter 1:3 God has given us a New Birth into a living hope!

Question: “What would you rather have, a religion or a relationship-reality of a new creation?”

- **Please Read: Colossians chapter 2**
- Did you know our current physical bodies cannot enter heaven 1 Cor.15:50-56
- Our spirit has been redeemed and can go to heaven, but our body still has sin nature
 - We need a new body, a glorified body – 1 Th. 4:13-18; Philippians 3:20-21