

Luke 5:33-38

³³ And they said to Him, “The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers, the *disciples* of the Pharisees also do the same, but Yours eat and drink.” ³⁴ And Jesus said to them, “You cannot make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? ³⁵ But *the* days will come; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days.” ³⁶ And He was also telling them a parable: “No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined. ³⁸ But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹ And no one, after drinking old *wine* wishes for new; for he says, ‘The old is good *enough*.’”

1. The Pharisees and scribes attack Jesus for his lack of pious commitment.
 - a. This was the 2nd half of a two prong attack on Jesus’ character.
 - i. 1st: Who Jesus associates with (**Luke 5:27-32**)
 - ii. 2nd: Jesus lack of religious zeal.
 - b. They attack Jesus and his disciples because they do not fast.
 - i. They compare Jesus to John the Baptist.
 1. The Pharisees were not that happy with John the Baptist.
 - a. We might read it as “*Even* the disciples of John fast...”
 - ii. They compare Jesus to themselves.
 1. The Pharisees participated in ritual fasts to prove their commitment to God and his Law.
2. The Fasts of the Pharisees.
 - a. Fasting in the Old Testament:
 - i. Fasting occurred at various times in the Old Testament.
 - ii. The law only required fasting once a year, on the Day of Atonement.
 1. **Leviticus 16:29-31**
 - a. “afflict your souls” in the KJV = fasting
 - iii. Four days of fasting were established to commemorate the destruction of the temple.
 1. **Zechariah 7:3-5**
 2. **Zechariah 8:19**
 - b. The Pharisees fasted on Monday and Thursday.
 - i. This was due to a Jewish tradition which held that Moses ascended Mount Sinai on Monday and descended on Thursday.
 - ii. Apparently John’s disciples also followed this pattern.
 - iii. This was rightly seen as an act of extraordinary commitment.
3. Jesus’ two responses to the Pharisees attack.
 - a. The wedding feast:
 - i. Jesus changes the idea of fasting from an act of piety to a response at times of great sorrow or crisis.
 1. This is more in line with the concept of fasting in the OT.

- ii. To illustrate this idea he compares this time to a wedding feast.
 1. Jesus is represented as the bridegroom, the disciples as the wedding guests.
 2. It would be inappropriate for the guests to mourn and fast when the bridegroom is present for it is a joyous moment.
 3. However, soon the bridegroom will depart and the wedding guests will fast.
 - b. Mixing Old and New:
 - i. Jesus uses two everyday examples to illustrate this point:
 1. First: Any garment is weakest at its seams.
 - a. A piece of clothing made of an old piece and new piece of fabric will never be as strong as a solid piece.
 2. Second: New wine cannot be kept in old wine skins.
 - a. ****Note:** Wineskins were made of animal organs which were tanned.
 - b. New wine (that which had not fully fermented) had to be placed in new skins because the fermentation process produces gas which causes the skins to stretch and bloat.
 - c. Old wine skins have already been stretched and therefore have weak spots and cannot undergo additional stretching.
 - d. No one that has developed a taste for new wine will be satisfied with new wine.
4. Interpretation:
 - a. Jesus always refused to offer “Christianity Plus.”
 - i. Jesus refused to burden his disciples with extra-biblical requirements for salvation and holy living.
 - ii. Jesus rejects the two day fast because the Law didn’t command it.
 - b. If the true genuine Gospel is forced to mix with the Old Law or Tradition, the Gospel will be destroyed.
 - i. Galatians 5:2-6**
 - c. Some people love the Old Law and their Traditions more than they love the Gospel.
5. Conclusions:
 - a. “Christianity Plus” is not Christianity at all.
 - b. We must draw a huge black line between the Canon of Scripture and our opinions, preferences, and traditions.
 - c. We must be careful not to judge others by a rubric that God will never judge them by.

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