

Matthew 9:14-17

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” **15** And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. **16** No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. **17** Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

As we begin this morning, I want to ask you a question?

DO YOU LIKE CHANGE?

Most don't. In fact, the older that a person gets, the less they like change. Why? Because change brings with it a loss of familiarity and certainty. And we don't like that. Most employees don't like it when the boss changes the way you've always been doing things at work. Most members of most churches don't either. That's why you see churches change the least of almost any organization in our culture. That's why you can walk into most churches today (and other than some new paint and new carpet) everything looks the same as it did in 1976...40 years ago. People hate change.

I get that! I truly do. I don't like change for the sake of change either...but, I'm good with change if it is going to make things better in my life, my home or even here. In fact I'll say it this way: change is good if change is toward truth...but if change is not toward truth, then the change can be devastating for a life, for a home, for a church and even for entire denominations.

Today we are going to see how Jesus addressed change as we talk about: **“Jesus’ Power to Change Old from New.”**

Church family, from the time Jesus started preaching and teaching, He's been throwing up a sign to those folks listening to Him in that first century culture that said this:



You'll remember for instance...when Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount, He was constantly saying, **“You have heard it said (or taught)...but, I say.”** Jesus was constantly refuting the teaching of the Pharisees, Scribes, Teachers of the Law, and the Synagogue Rulers. He began making waves with the religious crowd of His day on that mountainside outside of Capernaum and He continued to do so as He performed miracle after miracle.

As Jesus continued to teach and perform miracles, giving indication and proof that He was indeed the Messiah...the Son of God...He systematically tore apart the system of rules and regulations and false teaching of the Rabbinical Judaism of His day...and the Pharisees became more and more livid. They became more and more determined to find a way to get rid of Him and we'll see in **verse 14**, they begin a new tactic by trying to involve the disciples of John the Baptist.

Matthew 9:14

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

You might ask: "Who are the disciples of John?" Well, they are the disciples of this man...



Do you remember him? It's been a while since we studied his life from Matthew, chapter 3. But, he was the last of the Old Testament prophets and he announced the coming of the Messiah. He said, "Here He is!!! The Messiah is finally here."

Now remember what John was doing. He was calling people to repentance. He was preparing the way of the Lord and he was baptizing people.



John's baptism was a "baptism of repentance." When people came to him to be baptized they were acknowledging that they were a sinner and they desired cleansing and were ready to commit to follow the Messiah when He came. Well again...when Jesus himself came to be baptized by John...he said, "Here He is!" He said, "I must **decrease** and he must increase," and John began the process of pointing his disciples to Jesus. John 1 records this...

John 1:35-37

35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, **36** and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" **37** The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

Those two disciples were Andrew (who would bring his brother Peter to Jesus) and Philip, who

would later become an evangelist. So here's the point: John began pointing his disciples to Jesus. But, some (it appears) remained. We don't know why.

By the time Jesus started preaching, Jesus had heard that John had been thrown into prison for telling King Herod...



...he had committed adultery. Matthew 4:12 chronicles that fact and ultimately John would be beheaded.

It could have been that John's followers were simply trying to be loyal to John. And it could have been that some **weren't** convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. After all, many thought the Messiah would come and be a conquering military figure and Jesus was anything but that. So, these disciples of John could have been disillusioned with Jesus and if that was the case...then the Pharisees might have tried to feed that in an effort to create division among Jesus' disciples, so as to begin to bring Jesus' ministry to confusion and conflict.

It's strange really...to see the Pharisees and John's disciples almost working together. Talk about odd!! See it again....

Matthew 9:14

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

It appears that the Pharisees have been to the disciples of John and are trying to use them to create dissension, disunity and contentiousness between Jesus' disciples. And here's the tragedy of that folks. All along John's disciples and Jesus' disciples are ON THE SAME TEAM! Both seeking repentance and God's kingdom.

Isn't that how Satan works. He seeks to create division and conflict in homes. He wants to get spouses fighting against spouses and children against parents and he does it in churches when he gets deacons running down the pastors or vice versa. And he did it here. John's disciples and Jesus' disciples were seeking God. The Pharisees weren't. And yet, Satan planted the seeds of dissension.

Don't let him do it in your life, sir. She's your wife. Remember when you met. Remember how much you love her. And don't talk to me about falling out of love ma'am... This isn't a Nicholas Sparks book we're reading... People decide to stop loving. Love is a decision, ma'am... If you think you don't love him anymore...that's not because the ooey gooey butterflies stopped in your stomach, it's because you decided to stop loving that imperfect man that you decided to love a long time ago. Oh don't forget: You're on the same team! Don't forget that! The Enemy is Satan...not one another.

Well, the Pharisees sowed that seed of doubt by saying, “Hey, Disciples of John...go ask Jesus’ disciples why they don’t do it like we do.”

You see, the disciples of John who hadn’t transferred over to Jesus were still deeply entrenched in the Rabbinic Judaism that the Pharisees taught. They fasted twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays. Yet, the Law only required one of day of fasting on the Day of Atonement. In fact, Jesus taught that fasting should be done in private (not in public like the Pharisees) and the New Testament writers teach that fasting should be done when you are seeking clarity or direction or discernment. Jesus never commanded that we fast a prescribed amount of time each week. Yet, these disciples of John still appeared to be stuck in that old system and they asked, “Why don’t you do it like us and why aren’t you doing it like we’ve always done it?”

You see, these folks were stuck between two worlds. They were stuck between religion and Jesus. They were stuck in the routine of religion. They saw religion as a matter of “doing” instead of *being*.

Let’s put it in today’s context: People who get tied up in religion say you have to read this version of the Bible. You can’t wear make-up. You have to sing a certain type of music and only play a certain number of instruments. You have to raise your family this way and if you don’t do it like me, then you’re wrong. They get very tied up in very tight, rigid standards that are often unbiblical... and they cling to traditions on how “we” do things. And so, people come to church and do their routine and that’s it. It just becomes habit... It becomes religion and not a relationship.

It’s Sunday and here we are...



...we go to church and then after church we go do this and then we go do that... It’s Sunday...it’s what we do? Well, are you worshipping God anywhere in that routine? You can come in here and go through the motions and your heart be as cold as ice to the things of God. Going to church doesn’t make you spiritual. Worshiping Jesus does. Coming to Him and seeking Him and His ways is what separates cold, routine “worship” from true and genuine worship.

And you see, this has been Jesus’ point from the time He started preaching. He’s been teaching: you’ve got to leave religion: Judaism and come to Him. It’s no longer about a system of religion; it’s about a relationship with Jesus.

Do you, today, have a relationship with Jesus or are you just here out of routine? How ‘bout you teenager? Are you here today because mom and dad made you come or because you wanted to come? Yeah I know...you made a profession of faith when you were younger... Great! Was it real or ritual...just checking it off your list of things to do? Do you love Jesus? Deep down you know if

you do and mom and dad...deep down you know if they do. Some you aren't real...you've just got religion.

Listen...religion will send you to hell, ...only a relationship with Jesus will get you to heaven. I hope you hear that today and take that heart!

And so, Jesus now...gives three examples of what He's talking about.

1. **A wedding**
 2. **Patches on garments**
 3. **Wine in wineskins**
-

The first one is a wedding... Look at verse 15.

Matthew 9:15

15 And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

In essence Jesus said, "Fasting right now...when I'm here...would be like fasting at a reception of a wedding." How dumb would that be? Could you imagine fasting at a wedding reception with this spread?



Jesus said, "I'm here...don't fast now. Wait until I'm gone and then fast, mourn and pray." And in about 2 years from the time He uttered that phrase, Jesus would be crucified and then His disciples wouldn't feel like eating... Because their stomachs would be in knots and they could do nothing but mourn.

No weddings are festive...joyful times aren't they...



People celebrate! And that's picture of Christ and His church and it points to our future celebration with Him at the grand reception in heaven at the Marriage Supper of Jesus as recorded in Revelation 19.

But I know...right now it's hard isn't it? This life is hard. We go through many seasons of life.

Solomon tells us in Ecclesiastes that there is...

Ecclesiastes 3:4

a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

And one day our weeping and mourning will turn to laughter and dancing in heaven...celebrating with Jesus in His kingdom at the magnificent wedding banquet prepared for His bride, the Church.

Well, Jesus gives a second example. This time it's clothing (a garment and a patch)...

Matthew 9:16

16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made.

Do you remember as a kid wearing patches on your blue jeans? I do.



Now people want holes in their jeans...but, I remember my momma patching mine.

In the first century, most of the garments were cotton or wool and we know both of these will shrink. If you had an old robe and got a hole in it, you wouldn't stitch a new piece of cloth in that old garment. Because when it got wet or you washed it, that new piece of cloth would shrink and pull away causing another hole. You have to use an old piece of cloth to patch an old garment. What's Jesus' point?

Jesus is simply saying to the Pharisees, "What I'm teaching will never fit into your system. There's no way that my message of internal holiness brought on by faith and repentance can ever fit in your man-made system of external rituals. It'll tear apart.

Listen, Jesus was teaching a new way. A way that could not be confined to legalistic, ritualistic Rabbinic Judaism. He was not trying to reform Judaism. He was saying, "There's no connection with what you've been teaching and what I've come to bring."

Now listen church...Jesus did not come to abolish the Law, remember? He came to fulfill it. The Pharisees and Rabbis of Jesus' day had stripped the Law of what it was intended to do. The Law was given to us by God to be a mirror to show us our sin and our need for a Savior. The Pharisees had taken the Law and dumbed it down into something they could DO. They turned God's law into an outward performance and yet, they were vile and unrepentant and unchanged on the inside.

The ways of the Pharisees were unmixable with the ways of Jesus. No church family, Jesus didn't come to patch us up...He came to make us whole! The Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that you can be born again...made new...regenerated...changed completely...not patch job of your old life...but instead, giving you a new life in Him! I don't know about you, but I'm glad of that!

Please turn with me to 1 John 3. As you are turning there...

Let me ask you a question? Are you new or have you just tried to patch up your life? What system are you using to get to God? If it's not Jesus...you'll never get there. You'll never get there by trying to be good or following a bunch of traditions or man-made rules. Jesus is the only way!

Now, would you like to know if you're truly born again? Would you like to know what the Bible says about a person who has truly met Jesus?

1 John 3:4-10

4 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. **5** You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. **6** No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. **7** Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. **8** Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. **9** No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. **10** By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

Are you practicing righteousness? You see, that will be your desire if you are truly saved. Oh...you'll still sin and make mistakes...but you won't live in those sins.

You'll have such a craving and a desire for Jesus that it leads you NOT TO PRACTICE sin, but to practice righteousness. And you see, church, that's what receiving Jesus by faith into your life does to a person. He gives you a new heart and new desires. Your heart changes and it's in your heart...the soul of who you are, that Jesus makes new. Religion only controls the brain and the rituals and habits that we might in our flesh WILL ourselves to do. But, you can't WILL yourself to be cleansed and made new... You have to come to Jesus for that. Anything else is just a patch job that's only going to look like this...



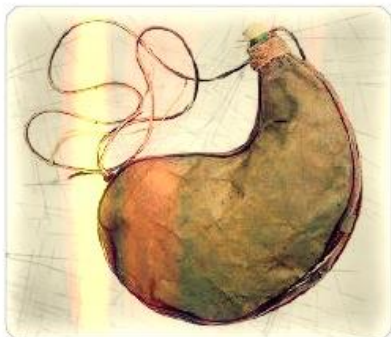
a huge gaping hole. No you need a new garment...you need Jesus!

Last example...wineskins...

Matthew 9:17

17 Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

Do you know what a wineskin is? It's what the first-century people used to store their wine. They would take an animal...like a goat and use the hide and tan it and make a wineskin that looked like this:



Now here's the situation...you could never take an old wineskin and put new wine in it because the old skin would split if you tried to do so. It would split because it had already been stretched to it's maximum when the wine was originally placed in it. So you had to put new wine in new wineskins so that the new skin had enough elasticity to handle the expansion from the fermentation process of the wine. That make total common sense to us all.

But you ask, “What does Jesus mean?” Well, that's the \$64 million dollar question. This verse has been used by so many people to justify anything and everything in Christian work, ministries and even churches. They begin something new that might even questionable or even downright anti-biblical...but, rationalize it to you by saying, “Hey...this is new wine in new wine skins...deal with it.” And you think, “Well...who am I to say anything.” Folks if it's anti-biblical...then it's anti-Jesus and if that's the case...then **they're trying to pour new wine into old wineskins**. And that's going to be a disaster!

Listen carefully, there are times when the method of how we deliver the Gospel must change with the times...but, the message must never change. Do you get that? We might go from singing in choir robes accompanied by only an organ and a piano, to no choir robes and a Praise Team and there's nothing wrong with delivering the Gospel in that way to this current generation. I mean I've even lost my coat! But, when you use this passage to justify some new manifestation of the Spirit or some new work of God that lifts up a man or a ministry above Jesus...then you've got a problem.

The cults get started like this. You get wild and outlandish things that begin to happen. Like this guy...have you ever seen this guy?



That's Canadian born, Todd Bentley of Fresh Fire Ministries. Back in 2008 he went to Lakeland, Florida to host a crusade and claimed to have had an angel give him a new message from God. He supposedly had the gift of healing and **he did** many, many bizarre things on stage like punching people in the stomach or even in the face because told him to and this was a "new wine" and a "fresh impartation and anointing of God," being given to the church.

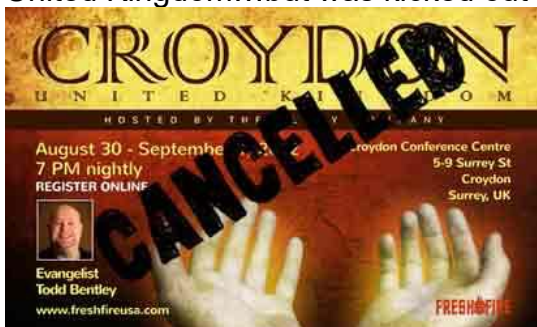
He would take his message from Lakeland, Florida to Virginia Beach, VA and he said this:

Two weeks ago at the Greater Glory Gathering Virginia Beach, the Lord spoke to me about contending for a greater outpouring of his presence, signs, and wonders. During this prophetic experience I saw the Revival Healing Angel that had visited us in Lakeland, Florida.

Todd Bentley

QuoteAddicts

And he calls that NEW WINE! Well, he was eventually exposed as a fraud... He could never provide one shred of evidence that he actually healed anybody. He ended up leaving his wife in a messy divorce and ultimately, he tried to go to the United Kingdom...but was kicked out of there too. See it... "Cancelled."



All of his shows were cancelled...and he has drifted around all over the place and do know where he's spending a lot of his time today? He's here...



Pakistan. And look at the crowds that are coming...



Amazing! I just shake my head.

Listen to me church, there are all kinds of ministries out there on TV and in stadiums and just because they are drawing crowds...doesn't mean they're of God. These people preach this "new wine" and they dupe millions and if you question what they're doing, they'll say, "You're behind the times...you are missing out on the new wine God is pouring out on the new Church."

Folks, that's of man...that's not of God. That's the kind of stuff Jesus warned the Pharisees about and it's what He warned the people about who were being misled and fleeced by the Pharisees.

Paul warned the Galatian churches not to be deceived by a different gospel:

Galatians 1:6-8

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— **7** not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. **8** But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

Church family...there is no new wine today. Why? Because the new wine was Jesus. As Jesus spoke to those disciples of John he told them that He was the new wine... Therefore if you try to take Jesus and put him into a old wine skin...that skin will break and you'll lose Jesus in the process. No system of religion can hold Jesus that's not built on His Word.

Listen, we need nothing more than the Word of God to guide us and the Holy Spirit to teach us in what the Scripture already says. Jesus is the new wine.

The question is: are we like the Pharisees and even those disciples of John who were still looking to religion and something new that they could do to get to God or will we look to Jesus and Jesus

alone for our salvation.

What will it be today for you? Do you know the Word of God well enough to be like a Berean and sniff out this kind of stuff like the Todd Bentley's of the world? Or will you be duped and tricked by "another gospel."

Church, you and I don't need anything new. We need what Jesus brought in the first century...salvation through the cross and the resurrection power of the new embodied in Jesus Christ, who was broken and poured out wine for us.
