



Old and New
Matthew 13:51,52

The new year is a popular time to evaluate the old in our life and start something new. It's important to periodically do that with our spiritual and church life too.

The Parable of the Homeowner

In Matthew 13 Jesus taught a large crowd many parables about the Kingdom of Heaven. The Parable of the Sower explains the different responses to the message of the kingdom. The Parable of the Wheat and Tares explains how there will be conflict between the children of the kingdom and the children of the enemy until the end when they are separated. The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven explain how the kingdom will grow rapidly. The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and Priceless Pearl teach about the great value of the kingdom. The Parable of the Net teaches evangelism without discrimination because of Jesus' future judgment. In the Parable of the Homeowner Jesus says, "Every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom treasures new and old" (Matt 13:52). The teachers of the law (scribes) in Jesus' day knew the word of God but didn't invest it in the lives of the people. They were also more concerned about preserving man made traditions and interpretations than seeing the Word of God unleashed to change people's lives. When Jesus taught, he supplemented the truth of the Old Testament with new revelation and clarification. He also corrected and rebuked those who had misinterpreted, misapplied or added traditions of men to the Old Testament. Like a scribe we must know the truth of the old and new testaments. But like a disciple we must share that truth so that others become disciples too. As Warren Wiersbe said, "As Christians we should be *conservative* but not *preservative*." In other words, we are stewards of the truth passed down to us, but we must share it with others so they can become disciples too. To accomplish this, we use both old and new treasures.

Old

God told his people in Jeremiah's day to return to the old paths (Jeremiah 6:16). Some old treasures we should never abandon. Some of the old (historical, classical, tried-and-true) we must keep: the gospel, evangelism, spiritual disciplines, confession and repentance, obedience, loving God and loving others. Some of the old (obsolete, broken-down, outdated) we need to be willing to let go of: preferences, man-made traditions, what makes us comfortable, nostalgia.

New

The new (fresh and original) treasures we need to pursue: methods and strategies, vision, ministries, cultural trends that help make disciples, technologies that enhance ministry, something we've never done or tried before. The new (in vogue, recent, novel) we need to avoid: new "truth", new for the sake of being new, new cultural trends that contradict God's word or hinder making disciples.