



Sermon Series: Trouble, Part 3

Sermon Title: Out With The Old, In With The New

Date: 2/26/2023

Mark 2:18-22 NIV

Don't make the gospel an add-on to your life

The gospel of Jesus Christ is unique and exclusive, and its power is independent of needing anything else added to it. Jesus's own words will reveal that no-add on is needed because of two reasons

1) Jesus came to rescue sinners, not the righteous

Jewish tax collectors were despised because they betrayed their own people and sided with the Roman government, and essentially stole from their own people. The Pharisees approach Jesus and question Him about his disciples, not fasting. Jesus answers them, and His explanation is from the perspective of a wedding festival. It is inappropriate for guests to fast in the groom's presence, so it was inappropriate for Jesus' disciples to fast and show sorrow while He was with them. As long as they are at the wedding celebrating and the groom is with them, it is a time for joy and celebration, not sorrow fast.

Jesus was not impressed at the Pharisees' attempts to appear righteous. They had pride in their hearts, and no amount of righteous deeds could undo the sin in their lives. There is only one eraser for sin: the blood of Jesus. The self-righteous are not ready to accept that. The Pharisees would use visible things like fasting and giving tithes to determine if someone was truly dedicated to God.

Jesus came to save people who know they are sinners (**Mark 2:17**). While the Pharisees thought they were healthy, the tax collectors knew they were sinners. Many feared they were such terrible sinners that they were hopelessly beyond God's reach. But Jesus made it clear that it was just such people He came to seek and to save and that He alone can save. **Romans 5:6**

After Jesus answered their initial question by talking about the wedding feast, He gave two other parables that seem out of place – until we understand what He is referring to.

2) Jesus presented something new, not a patch for something old

Mark 2:21-22

Jesus used these everyday examples to discuss the exclusivity of the gospel - the gospel does not mix well with any other religion.

Jesus said a new patch can't be added to an old garment. If a new patch is sewn onto old clothing and it gets wet, it will shrink and tear the garment. Likewise, Jesus talks about pouring new wine into old wineskins and says that is not a good idea. A wineskin is an ancient bottle that was made out of the skin of a goat or sheep. It was sewn together, and then grape juice was poured into it. The juice starts to ferment, and it eventually becomes wine. During the fermentation process, gasses are released that stretch the animal skin. If that wine gets used up over time and new grape juice is poured into the old wineskin, there will be a problem. The juice starts to ferment, and the gasses release, but the wineskin is already stretched out and can't expand, so it bursts, ruining the juice and the skin.

When Jesus arrived, He brought a new covenant – not something to add to the old. The old covenant served its purpose – it pointed to Jesus, but the two could not and were never intended to be blended. God's new covenant is a covenant he made through his Son, Jesus. It is a new covenant in Jesus' blood. It is not based on work at all. Instead, it is based on what Jesus did. Jesus died for sins, and everyone who puts their faith in Jesus will be saved. It's not Jesus plus baptism, or Jesus plus good works, or Jesus plus religious activities like praying or fasting. **Romans 6:23, Acts 4:12**

Christ is not an add-on to your life. If you come to Christ and try to fit him into your old sinful lifestyle, it will lead to misery. Salvation is not a partial patching up of one's life; it is a whole new robe of righteousness. **2 Corinthians 5:17** In other words, you cannot come to Christ and keep living the same life you lived before Christ. A true believer will never be happy in their sin. Sin will only make you miserable.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **Why do people feel the need to contribute to their salvation?**
- **What are the consequences of using Jesus as an add-on to life?**
- **When is it appropriate and beneficial to follow traditions? Give examples**
- **What advice would you give someone who professes Jesus as their savior but continues to live a sinful lifestyle?**