"Jesus questioned about fasting"
Mark 2: 18-22

<u>Some background of the tradition during Jesus' life:</u>

When they fasted

From the Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary: (pg. 148)

- The Law only required fasting on the Day of Atonement, but after the Exile in Babylon, 4 other days were added. And by Jesus' day or The New Testament times the stricter Pharisees fasted twice a week (Mon. & Thurs.)

Days that fasting was prohibited.

From the Complete Jewish Study Bible: (Hendrickson Bibles, Pg. 1443)

- During certain feast days including Weddings & when the Messiah comes that mourning & fasting are prohibited in the Jewish practice.

Let's read Mark 2:18-22 together...

Looking back at verse 18-20:

○ *The practice of fasting is based out of a desire or longing for God, or Jesus. Jesus' disciples were in His presence daily, so they had no need to fast.*

• *Jesus also hinted that He would be taken from them and then they would fast. I think this could be understood as, taken to be crucified and or His ascension into Heaven.*

○ *Which would mean that fasting until Jesus returns is still appropriate for His followers today.*

The parables in verse 21 & 22 are good examples of a new reality of worship and relationship with God through the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.

When we allow the Holy Spirit to truly direct our lives, our actions, and decisions it is like the fermenting of a new wine. He truly changes us from the inside out. Over time we look back and honestly can say, I used to be a different person.

Longing for and seeking Jesus is a powerful part of our growth as Christ followers and fasting is one way to help us in the process.

- Fasting from food is not the only type of fasting, though I think everyone should try it a few times before saying I can't or all a think about is eating.

- You can fast from anything that you normally do or enjoy that would keep you distracted from hearing God.
  o TV
  o Radio
  o The internet/social media

The key is to say "No" to something for something better!