

New Wineskins for Fresh Wine - part 2 – Why choose new if the old is just fine?

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BIG IDEA – What makes old so irresistible compared to new?

scripture focus - Luke 5:38-39 NLT “New wine must be stored in new wineskins. **But no one who drinks the old wine seems to want the new wine. ‘The old is just fine,’ they say.**”

We experience God in the framework of time. Not just any time, but our time. What is “our” time? It was the time of our youth, young adulthood and early family life. It’s that time of **experiencing everything for the first time when everything is new**. In our time we had a few cherished traditions we received from our parents, grandparents and patriarchs, but for the most part we wanted to create our own life, our own hopes and dreams. Jesus warned us about letting go of some things in preference to a new work he was going to bring. Luke’s comment suggests there are those who just like things to stay the same and miss out on seeing God do miracles with the new.

As one historian wrote, “we didn’t want our parent’s furniture.” In my generation, we had grandparents that covered their couches in plastic! And we weren’t allowed to sit on it. We didn’t want to sit on them. It was for guests that never came. Our mothers had china sets in a hutch, but we were never allowed to eat off them. We didn’t want to eat off the special china. They were for special occasions that never happened. For our wedding, Robin picked out a few sets of china for our own home. They never made it out of their boxes. We have three generations of china we don’t know what to do with!

What does all that have to do with Jesus us telling us a simple, practical truth that we choose to ignore?

Last week we talked about the new wineskin being a requirement for housing new wine.

We discovered that wineskin and wine illustration was far deeper and far more personal than expected.

Jesus' point, "if you don't change the container when receiving new content – you'll destroy both!"

The requirement to receive God's new work, His fresh outpouring of His Spirit, His ability to speak to each generation with a new glimpse, another facet of who He is becomes critical for us to let go of some traditions.

If we can understand that there is nothing inherently wrong with old traditions, just like there was nothing wrong with the wineskin when it was freshly made to hold the new wine. **However, the principle of "one time use," makes sense when it comes to ability for brand new grapes being used to make brand new wine, requires a brand-new wineskin.**

We must retire our traditions and let go of our preferences to experience the newness of God's work in each generation.

I am not talking about changing the gospel! The gospel does not change, just like God is never changing, He is the same yesterday, today and forever says, Hebrews 13:8. **How does God, who never changes, create something constantly new?** First of all, God is outside of time itself. Time is just one of the things God created.

For God, everything is now. Our past is now, our present is now, and our future is now to God.

It is said the message of the gospel never changes, but the methods of communicating it do!

Back in the day, preachers and evangelists, some called “circuit riders,” would travel by horseback from town to town. They would preach on the streets of the cities or in tents because folks wouldn’t go to a church.

In those open-air, street corners or tent meetings, the message of the gospel was so powerful that it shut down the bars and sex parlors of its day because the owners and patrons had an encounter with the living God!

John Wesley, a famous preacher in the 1700’s was unhappy about the idea of field preaching as he believed Anglican liturgy had much to offer in its practice. Earlier in his life he would have thought that such a method of saving souls was “almost a sin.” He recognized the open-air services were successful in reaching men and women who would not enter most churches. From then on he took the opportunities to preach wherever an assembly could be brought together, more than once using his father’s tombstone at Epworth as a pulpit. *

Some evangelists would pack large stadiums and amphitheaters preaching the gospel to hundreds of thousands and they would also encounter God in His forgiveness and grace. Yes, these are still happening today both here in the U.S. and around the world.

But across the eons of time, those are all methods. They are not sacred and are not required for people to come to Christ. Those may be your experience, they may be your preference, but they are not the only way God saves human beings.

Churches were quite small hundreds of years ago, then some became “mega-churches” beginning in the early 70’s. But the gospel didn’t change.

God knew we would wrestle with new ways, and new methods. I think this is one of the reasons Jesus shared the object lesson of new wineskins and fresh wine!

It's Luke's gospel - Luke, the doctor, who focuses on the wine, the fresh, new content, from a completely different perspective.

He added something Jesus said in Luke 5:39, "And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say, 'The old is better.'"

Why did Luke add this comment? **What is this?**

Luke is the only one that adds this strange comment and commentary. **Does this suggest that it's not just a preference for the containers we would choose to use, for example: old ones? But there are some who would prefer the old wine as well?**

I am reminded that Jesus is telling an earthly object lesson to communicate a heavenly truth!

When it comes to God constantly doing a new thing, a fresh wind and pouring out living water **does it mean there are those who would say, "the old is better?"** Oh, folks this is important.

Have our preferences in traditions have us settling for old over new and telling ourselves – the old is better?

There are a couple of familiar examples out of Exodus, when God had Moses lead His people out of Egypt and intended on them all making it to the promised land – Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey.

As the Jewish people got further away from Egypt and days from civilization itself, the **memories of their old life**, even though it was under extreme poverty and enslavement, **became more and more powerful** as they ventured out into the desert – literally into the land of nothing!

Exodus 16:3-4 NLT "“If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt,” **they moaned**. “There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “Look, I’m going to rain down food from heaven for you. **Each day the people can go out and pick up as much food as they need for that day. I**

will test them in this to see whether or not they will follow my instructions.”

[Who are “they?” – “They” are the minority making the majority of complaints! Question: Were the Israelites really sitting around staring at pots full of meat and bread aplenty?]

Exodus 16:11-12 NLT “Then the Lord said to Moses, “I have heard the Israelites’ complaints. Now tell them, ‘**In the evening you will have meat to eat, and in the morning you will have all the bread you want.** Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.’””

However, it was a daily exercise in obedience and faith!

Moses warned them...about the supernatural provisions and it FORCED them to completely depend on God.

I remind myself, “I like to THINK about being dependent on God and fantasize about faith, but I don’t REALLY want to live that way!”

When God provided food for the Israelites in the desert, he required they gather it daily. This is why Jesus had us pray, “give us this day our daily bread,” in the Lord’s prayer. God meant it then and he means it today!

Exodus 16:19-20 NLT “Then Moses told them, “**Do not keep any of it until morning.**” But some of them didn’t listen and kept some of it until morning. But by then it was full of maggots and had a terrible smell. Moses was very angry with them.”

Kenton Beeshore, former Senior Pastor at Mariners, points out that, their complaining heart created a plague in their body, and it killed them, and it says **Numbers 11:33-34 they ended up calling the place – Kibroth Hattaavah (Graves-of-Gluttony).** **Psalm 106:13-15** records the final outcome of those who get what they want, and it is so sad, “he [God] gave them exactly what they asked for,” speaking of those who died, “but along with it they got an empty heart.”

The people thought they were complaining about Moses’ leadership or he and Aaron’s inability to provide food for 2 million people. They

blamed Moses for bringing them out of slavery and into a desert disaster.

But it wasn't Moses' idea. It wasn't Moses' plan. It wasn't even Moses' responsibility to feed them. It was God's plan and His provision they were complaining about. They made God mad because God had saved them, but they acted like God could not and would not care for them and get them to where He wanted them to be.

I understand some of you are frustrated with our current situation, **our wacky culture and our country's massive political and social issues.**

I completely feel for your anger about the condition of **the** Church, even **our** church. And a few of you want to go back to what you remember were better days. Can I remind of of a couple things: 1. They weren't really better days in the past, those days had their own struggles. 2. **We cannot behave like God doesn't care about us and doesn't have a plan!**

God knows what He is doing and He has a plan! But, I can absolutely 100% guarantee - **that plan is not going to look like the past** – it will not look like “us sitting around in Egypt with a pot full of meat and bread aplenty.”

God is leading us with His plan to get us, all of us who will have faith, to where He wants us to be.

New is where God is. New is where God works. New is where we will meet God.

New requires the work of faith. New requires we believe. New requires that we leave old ways, preferences, even dependency.

Themes of new things:

John 13:34 – new commandment

Jeremiah 31:31 – new covenant

1 Corinthians 5:17 – new creature

Romans 6:4 – new lives

Colossians 3:10 – new self

Ezekiel 47:12 – new fruit

Isaiah 65:17, 66:22 – new heavens and earth

Ezekiel 11:19 – new spirit

Revelation 21:2 – new Jerusalem

Isaiah 62:2 – new name

Ephesians 2:15 – new man

Isaiah 42:10 – new song

Jeremiah 31:22 – new thing

Revelation 21:5 – all things new

May God continually give us a new heart, like Ezekiel wrote in **Ezekiel 36:26**, “**I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.**”

Hanging on to old traditions and trying to put a new move of God into them ends up destroying both the tradition and the fresh work God wants to do in us and in His Church.

OLD WAYS REQUIRES NO FAITH!

In the next few weeks, I will be talking about our plan to move forward. I will share about the new mission and vision for Life Center on September 24 and talk about the launch of a brand-new direction for our new year on January 7, 2024.

NOTES

Scriptures

Luke 5:39 NLT “But no one who drinks the old wine seems to want the new wine. ‘The old is just fine,’ they say.”

Isaiah 43:18-19 NIV Isaiah begged Israel to continue to expect new coming from God, ““Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing

a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

Exodus 16:3-4 NLT ““If only the Lord had killed us back in Egypt,” they moaned. **“There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted.** But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “Look, I’m going to rain down food from heaven for you. **Each day the people can go out and pick up as much food as they need for that day. I will test them in this to see whether or not they will follow my instructions.”**”

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Numbers 11:33-34 NLT “But while they were gorging themselves on the meat—while it was still in their mouths—the anger of the Lord blazed against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah (which means “graves of gluttony”) because there they buried the people who had craved meat from Egypt.”

Psalms 106:13-15 MSG But it wasn’t long before they forgot the whole thing, wouldn’t wait to be told what to do. They only cared about pleasing themselves in that desert, provoked God with their insistent demands. He gave them exactly what they asked for— but along with it they got an empty heart.

Ezekiel 36:26 “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

Questions

- Q: What was your parents or grandparents’ furniture styles?
- Q: Did you want to have the same style furniture as they did? Why/Why Not?
- Q: Explain how the world was different for your parents or grandparents?
- Q: Are you someone or do you know someone who just wants to keep things the same? In what ways?
- Q: Do you agree or disagree with the phrase, “Old is better.” Why?
- Q: Do we find ourselves glorifying the past? In what ways?

Q: Why would God invite us to the “new” theme so often throughout scripture?

Commentary

Strong’s Concordance

Luke 5:39 old vs new: palaios: old, ancient. neos: young, new, fresh. Better: chréstos: serviceable, good, useful, gentle, pleasant, kind

Basic Bible Interpretation: A practical guide for discovering Biblical truth

Matthew 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-22 and Luke 5:33-39. Conflict between Jesus’ concept of the kingdom and that of the Pharisees. The New Cloth and New Wineskins, The Rude Children.

Expositor’s Greek Testament

Luke 5:39. The thought in this verse is peculiar to Lk. It seems to be **a genial apology for conservatism in religion**, with tacit reference to John and his disciples, whom Jesus would always treat with consideration. **They loved the old wine of Jewish piety, and did not care for new ways. They found it good (χρηστός), so good that they did not wish even to taste any other, and could therefore make no comparisons.** This saying is every way worthy of Christ, and it was probably one of Lk.’s finds in his pious quest for traditions of the Personal Ministry.

Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the whole Bible

Luke 5:33–39: The incongruities mentioned in Lu 5:36–38 were intended to illustrate the difference between the genius of the old and new economies, and the danger of mixing up the one with the other. As in the one case supposed, “the rent is made worse,” and in the other, “the new wine is spilled,” so **by a mongrel mixture of the ascetic ritualism of the old with the spiritual freedom of the new economy, both are disfigured and destroyed.** The additional parable in **Lu 5:39, which is peculiar to Luke, has been variously interpreted. But the “new wine” seems plainly to be the evangelical freedom which Christ was introducing; and the old, the opposite spirit of Judaism: men long accustomed to the latter could not be expected “straightway”—all at once—to take a liking for the former;** that is, “These inquiries about the difference between My disciples and the Pharisees,” and even John’s, are not surprising; **they are the effect of a natural revulsion against sudden change, which time will cure;** the new wine will itself in time become old, and so acquire all the added charms of antiquity. What lessons does this teach, on the one hand, **to those who unreasonably cling to what is getting antiquated; and, on the other, to hasty reformers who have no patience with the timidity of their weaker brethren!**

Cambridge Bible for schools and colleges

This verse is peculiar to St Luke, and is a characteristic of his fondness for all that is most tender and gracious. **It is an expression of considerateness towards the inveterate prejudices engendered by custom and system: a kind allowance for the reluctance of the Pharisees and the disciples of John to abandon the old systems to which they had been accustomed.** The spirit for which our Lord here (as it were) offers an apology is the deep-rooted human tendency to prefer old habits to new lights, and stereotyped formulae to fresh truths. It is the unprogressive spirit which relies simply on authority, precedent, and tradition, and says, 'It was good enough for my father, it is good enough for me;' 'It will last my time,'. The expression itself seems to have been a Jewish proverb.

Ellicot's Commentary for English Readers

Luke 5:39 No man also having drunk old wine.—This addition is peculiar to St. Luke, and calls accordingly for distinct notice. The interpretation of the imagery is not far to seek. **The old wine is the principle—in spiritual things, the religion—that animated the man's former life.** In relation to those immediately addressed, it represented the motive-power of the Law in its rigid and Pharisaic form. **The new wine, as in the Notes on the previous parables, is the freer, nobler, life-power of the gospel.** It was not to be wondered at that **men accustomed to the older system should be unwilling to embrace the new, as thinking it stronger and more potent than they could bear.** The words are spoken in a tone of something like a tolerant pity for the prejudices of age and custom. **The old is better.—The better MSS. give simply "the old is good,"** the adjective partly implying the sense of "mild." It is not the same as the "good wine" of the miracle at Cana ([John 2:10](#)). It is doubtful, indeed, whether the Jews attached the same value that we do to the mellowed flavour given to wine by age. New or sweet wine, drunk within a year or so of fermentation, would seem to have been the favourite delicacy ([Nehemiah 10:39](#); [Proverbs 3:10](#); [Hosea 4:11](#); [Haggai 1:11](#), *et al.*), though men of weak constitutions might shrink from its effects, as the **Pharisees were shrinking from the freedom** of which our Lord set the example. Not altogether without significance, as bearing on this passage, is the fact recorded by St. Luke ([Acts 2:13](#)), that **the first workings of the Pentecostal gift led men to speak of the disciples as "full of new wine."**

Internet Links

[Stuff it: Millennials nix their parents' treasures!](#)

The new heart by Charles Spurgeon, 1858

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”
Ezekiel 36:26. suggested further reading: Matthew 9:10–17

The promise is that he will give us new hearts and right spirits. **Human nature is too far gone ever to be mended.** It is not a house that is a little out of repair, with here and there a slate blown from the roof, and here and there a piece of plaster broken down from the ceiling. **No, it is rotten throughout, the very foundations have been eroded; there is not a single timber in it which has not been eaten by the worm, from its uppermost roof to its lowest foundation; there is no soundness in it; it is all rottenness and ready to fall. God does not attempt to mend; he does not shore up the walls, and repaint the door; he does not garnish and beautify, but he determines that the old house shall be entirely swept away, and that he will build a new one. It is too far gone, I say, to be mended.** If it were only a little out of repair, it might be mended. If only a wheel or two of that great thing called “manhood” were out of repair, then he who made man might put the whole to rights; he might put a new cog where it had been broken off, and another wheel where it had gone to ruin and the machine might work anew. But no, the whole of it is out of repair; there is not one lever which is not broken; not one axle which is not disturbed; not one of the wheels which act upon the others. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot, to the crown of the head, it is all wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. The Lord, therefore, does not attempt the repairing of this thing.

[God has a plan](#) – by Blair Parke

[Preparing For A New “God-Thing”](#) – by Jack Hayford