



YES  
NO  
MAYBE

^| What challenges does the church face as it tries to make Jesus more relevant to the world?

**READ Mark 2:18-22 [NIV]**

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?"

19 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. 20 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.

21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. 22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."

^| Have you ever tried fasting? What was your experience?

**Î THE QUESTION JESUS WAS REALLY BEING ASKED...**

° (v. 18) **Were Fasting** [ἤσαν νηστεύοντες- *esan nesteuontes*] Fasting, as a religious observance, was prescribed in the Law only once in the year, on the great day of atonement. But the traditional code of the rabbis had multiplied this indefinitely. Twice in the week (Mon. & Thurs.) was the boast of the Pharisee. And the importance attached to this empty piece of religiosity made it a part of the formal religion of the period. The three main pillars of Judaism were prayer, alms-giving, and fasting.

° (vv. 13-17) **Where has Jesus just been?** Might this be the cause of the questioning? What religious quandaries might the people be wrestling with as they look at Jesus

**Î HOW JESUS RESPONDS...**

∞ (v. 19) "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them?"

^| THE PARABLE:

° (v. 21) **New Patch** [ράκουσ ἀγνάφου- *pákous agnáthou*]. How has this metaphor been explained to you in the past?

1 My vacations have typically been to the same traditional place year after year.

2 I don't like it when they change up the order of the worship service in the bulletin.

3 If I went on a fast, I would prefer to abstain from something other than food.

4 Most churches are irrelevant to Jesus.

5 Jesus' teachings were absolutely incompatible with the Jewish religion of his time.



\ ° (v. 22) **New Wine** [ οἶνον νέον - οἴνον νέον]. And how has this element of the parable been explained to you in the past?

∞ What do you think Jesus was trying to express about the character of God here?

° What are the main things that the church would struggle with if we put this Kingdom Tale into practice?

1 How many of my religious practices feel like a chore to me?

2 What can I do to allow God to do things differently in my life than I expect?

3 What do I understand more clearly about God's character, now that I've looked at this Kingdom Tale?

MY  
PRAYER

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NOTES