

THE GOSPEL OF MARK "Old vs. New"

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. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. ⁽²²⁾ And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins."

FASTING

*The only regular fast that is found in the OT law is the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16:1-34 . But Zach 8:19 indicates four additional fasts and Esther 9:13 adds another.

*The Pharisees fasted twice a week, Luke 18:12. It seems that John's disciple followed some strict fasting as well. The fact that the people new that they were fasting goes against Jesus later warnings about visible fasting Mt 6:16-18.

"BRIDEGROOM"

*The Old Testament portrays Yahweh as the bridegroom of Israel, and the use of marriage imagery for his relationship with his people. Isaiah 54:4-8, Isaiah 61:10, 62:4-5, Hosea 2:14-20, Jeremiah 2:2, 31:32, Ezekiel 16:7-14

*The present behavior of the disciples should reflect the present situation. The disciples stood in the presence of the Christ, the son of God. It was therefore a time for rejoicing, not mourning; feasting, not fasting.

***So what should we be doing now that we are in the presence of the Resurrected Christ? Should we be feasting or fasting or both?**

"TIME WILL COME"

*The theme of the cross has been introduced. It is for us to know that this was not going to take him by surprise, he knew what was coming and yet he went anyways. The 'taken away' alludes to the violence that will be involved.

"OLD"

*The 'old' is not old as in a point in time but means 'old in point of use, worn out.'" The worn out garment, weakened by use and age, would not furnish the new patch with enough of a grip to keep both together. The old wine skin was also worn out and would burst.

"NEW"

*He came to introduce the new, not to patch up the old .

*Jesus is the patch and the new wine. His is not an attachment, an addition, or an appendage to the status quo. He cannot be intergraded into or contained by pre existing structures or containers.

*The principle is a broad one, as applicable to the constricting influence of Christian traditions as it is to the context of the first century Judaism.

*Are the things that the church does 'worn out' and is there something 'new' that Jesus desires to do with His church . . . His bride?

Notice that they were being watched as are we. Live a life that demands an explanation.

"The church is a whore but she is my mother."
Saint Augustine

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

⁽¹⁷⁾ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!