

Scripture Reading:

Luke 5:27 “After these things [Jesus] went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me."
28 So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. **29** Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. **30** And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" **31** Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. **32** I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."
33 Then they said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?" **34** And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? **35** But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days." **36** Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. **37** And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. **38** But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. **39** And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.' "

New Wine Skins for the New Wine

Here at Church of the King, we enjoy a good FEAST!

Not emulating the world which loves to party, but rather looking to the Old Testament Saints who followed God's commands to feast & have festivals. We stand with a long line of Church traditions from the earliest believers breaking bread house to house, right up to our present day observance of Thanksgiving as a national holiday.

- **We encourage our families and members to obey the command to be show hospitality**
- **We hold our fellowship meal after worship each Sunday [or picnic as we will today!]**
- **We enjoy gathering for special feast days**
- **We have a fellowship meal as our annual meeting**
- **And will begin our own annual family camp as a church festival time this fall.**

All of this to say that our account today centers around a feast and ends with Jesus instructing us to learn from a parable about putting new wine into new wine skins. Hopefully, all of our festive experiences will help us to learn well!

This morning's account should also remind us of how Dr. Luke began chapter five:

- **Peter is called to be a disciple**
- **Peter leaves all to follow Jesus**
- **Peter is to become a 'fisher of men'**
- **NOW:**
- **Matthew is called to be a disciple**
- **Matthew leaves all to follow Jesus**
- **Matthew immediately goes 'fishing for men'... with a feast!**

So keeping all of that in mind, let's take a closer look at this morning's text from the Gospel of Luke:

First in verse 27 we have another STRONG reminder of how our salvation is a gift from God from start to finish:

“Luke 5:27 “After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me.””

Just as Jesus met Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus and told him that he had a job for him to do, Jesus now comes to Matthew with a call to be a disciple.

➤ **Reminding us again that we love God because He first loved us!**

Verse 28 “So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.”

This was much the same as Peter, Andrew, John and James leaving their fishing boats: Not abandonment, but proper priorities!

Verse 29 “Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.”

What took place? “A Great Feast” with a “great number” of guests

Why it was given? To honor Jesus

[Matthew now shows what it means to be a fisher of men!]

Who attended? A large number of publicans and others: Matthew wants his friends to meet Jesus... Do we??

We also have the disciples of Jesus, some disciples of John and of course the critics: Pharisees and Scribes.

➤ **They come looking to discredit Jesus and ask two questions:**

Verse 30 “The Pharisees and their scribes complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus gives them a quick answer:

Verse 31 “Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

- **Jesus has no time for useless debates, which is a lesson many of us need to learn today:**
- **He is not going to engage them on the level of whether they are “better” than these sinners, but simply makes the point that He is there to be the Savior of the lost.**
- **IF they consider themselves to be “righteous” then they will not think that they need to be saved.**

The critics of Jesus have no way to deal with His answer so they quickly try to change the subject with another attack: This time the attack is directed at the disciples and these false shepherds even use the disciples of John to make their argument:

Verse 33 “Then they said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?" [too much JOY!]

There is an important lesson here about being used by those who do not have good motives: John’s disciples did fast and they were having some honest concerns with some of what Jesus was doing as we shall see in chapter seven: BUT they should never have joined with the Pharisees in questioning what Jesus or His disciples were doing.

Even if we are concerned for what a brother or sister in Christ might be doing, we should never gossip or join with the world or the devil in attacking them: If we are concerned, we should and must approach them through legitimate means.

- **Our Lord now gives them a direct answer to the 2nd question and takes this opportunity to teach His disciples an important lesson:**

Verse 34 “And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? 35 But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.”

- **Jesus does not question the need for fasting, but rather explains why now is not the time for His disciples to fast and then quickly makes an important application:**

Verse 36 “Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old.”

- **The first part is a little hard for us to understand in our modern age with miracle fabrics:**

I don't even think that jeans shrink anymore, but I can remember the day where you had to buy clothes a little on the large size knowing that they would shrink on the first washing: The point that Jesus is making here is that you cannot improve something that has grown old by trying to patch it with a new piece of cloth. IF the pants are worn out, it is time to replace them!

- **The next example also involves an item called wine skins that would not be very familiar to us: Even the wine bags that we may have seen are not quite right: We know bottles, they had skins! [explain the use of animal skins and the stretching]**
- **With that in mind, see the important point that Jesus is making:**

Verse 37 “And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. 38 But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

- **It is easy to see the point that Jesus is stressing: If you put the new wine in new wine skins then both are preserved.**
- **If you try to put new wine in an old wine skin, you ruin the old wine skin AND lose the new wine.**

Should these teachers and defenders of the Scriptures have known what Jesus was talking about? I certainly think so:

Listen to the words of Jeremiah the Prophet:

Jeremiah 31: “10 "Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, And declare it in the isles afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, And keep him as a shepherd does his flock.' 11 For the Lord has

redeemed Jacob, And ransomed him from the hand of one stronger than he. 12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, Streaming to the goodness of the Lord-- For wheat and new wine and oil, For the young of the flock and the herd; Their souls shall be like a well-watered garden, And they shall sorrow no more at all."

- The coming of Messiah and His Kingdom is a joyous event!
- Jesus, the "new wine" has come and Matthew was right to give the feast and the disciples were right to enjoy the feast, knowing that God was calling sinners to salvation!

And it was not an isolated promise in the Old Testament – Listen to the prophet Hosea in a passage that comes after the Church of the Old Testament is described graphically as the harlot wife:

Hosea 2: "19 "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy; 20 I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the Lord. 21 "It shall come to pass in that day that I will answer," says the Lord; "I will answer the heavens, And they shall answer the earth. 22 The earth shall answer with grain, with new wine, and with oil; They shall answer Jezreel. 23 Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, And I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!' "

- When we come to celebrate the Lord's Supper this morning we will see the Prophet Isaiah make the same point, so I think you can see that these Shepherds of Israel should have understood the point that Jesus was making!
- And finally, Jesus returns to the first concern that His critics had raised about Jesus hanging around with publicans & sinners

Verse 39 "And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.' "

The Pharisees and their Scribes liked things the way they were, having lived their entire lives with the old wine of national Israel:

- They enjoyed comparing their “righteousness” with the sins of the publicans!
- They wanted God’s great plan of salvation to ONLY involve the people of Israel and wanted to shun the Gentiles, something we will see over and over again in the Book of Acts.

It is important to remember here that Jesus is NOT saying that the old wine was not wine: He is addressing what we must do with new wine!

Last week we saw Jesus send the man healed of leprosy to the Priests as Moses instructed honoring the “old wine” of the Old Testament

In Romans 3, we find Paul showing the advantages of the “old wine” in being a Jew, saying, “Much in everyway! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.”

But now as those very oracles had foretold, Jesus has come as the New Wine and for that we need New Wine Skins:

- New wine skins like Peter and Matthew, all the rest of the Disciples save Judas and all those who God calls to be new creatures!

These blind leaders of the blind wanted to keep enjoying the old wine, ‘because it is better,’ not knowing that the old wine skin was nearly empty as their day of visitation quickly approached.

- Jesus has used a simple parable to teach a simple, but profound lesson, but it is one that we must not miss as well, lest we be no better than the Pharisees who saw themselves as the righteous ones.

Jesus has come to save His people from their sins, and this means that we are new creatures: We should reflect on putting new wine into new wines skins when we read these various admonitions from the Apostle Paul about our new life:

- **II Corinthians 5:17** “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”
- **Col. 3:9** “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, 11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor

uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.”

- **Romans 6:4 “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”**
- **II Peter 3: 13 “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”**
- **Revelation 21:1 “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.**
- **Revelation 21:5 “5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."”**

I can certainly stand humbly before you this morning and say that I DO NOT understand all that is implied in these verses: But that is why Jesus taught with parables... To get us to think about and ponder such things!

- **We will grow and mature as we do and then apply what we learn**

I made the comment at the beginning that our feasts and festivals were not emulating the world: It is not that we see them having fun and try to figure out some “safe” Christian way to have some fun as well. Like all of the sin and wickedness of this world, they are perversions of God’s good creation: The creation that God declared VERY GOOD as He began His day of rest!

The world’s parties are a perversion of the feasting and joy that God’s people should enjoy in His presence and part of our calling is to reclaim these things: To put the new wine in new wines skins!

Jesus has come to save His people from their sins and to establish His kingdom:

- **This does not mean that we become something other than men, but new men.**
- **We do not look for new promises of salvation, different than what was given to Adam or Noah or our father Abraham, but to Jesus who is the new wine that fulfills these promises!**

- **This does not mean that we seek a Kingdom that is somewhere other than God’s glorious creation: We are Christ’s servants and ambassadors as He ushers in the new heavens and the new earth: The restored heaven and earth that He created in Genesis chapter one.**

These are concepts that we can spend a lifetime getting our minds and arms around and yet we see examples all around us:

- **With each sunrise we see a “new day” where night has passed and a new dawn brings the new day.**
- **With each week we gather together and see God renew His Covenant with us as His people!**
- **With the birth of each new covenant child we have God’s promise of new life – an immortal life that will outlast any THING!**
- **With each person who turns from their sin and trusts Jesus we have a “new birth.”**
- **With each new marriage we have new life in a new family**

In each of these cases we must desire that we walk in the newness of life offered to us in the Gospel.

We are not looking to “Christianize” the corruptions of the world or to try and dress up our sin nature:

- **We are looking to Jesus as the one who makes all things new.**

Is there a good book I can recommend to show you how?

It is right here: The Word of God

This is where we will learn to be the ready and willing servants of Jesus the New Wine carried in the New Wine Skins!

Communion Meditation: Our HOPE!

Is. 25 - 1 “O Lord, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, For You have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.

- This is why we confess our faith before approaching this Table:
Declaring that we believe what God has said and done!
- Then in verse six Isaiah uses the picture of God’s Kingdom being a mountain where there is new wine!



6 And in this mountain The Lord of hosts will make for all people A feast of choice pieces, A feast of wines on the lees, Of fat things full of marrow, Of well-refined wines on the lees. **7** And He will destroy on this mountain The surface of the covering cast over all people, And the veil that is spread over all nations. **8** He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken. **9** And it will be said in that day: "Behold, this is our God; We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; We have waited for Him; We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."