

A TIME TO FEAST, A TIME TO FAST

Pastor Lucas Almeida—Central Baptist Church—August 14th, 2022

Mark 2:18–22

(ESV)

[18] Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" [19] And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. [20] The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. [21] No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. [22] And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins."

INTRODUCTION

When someone comes to a relationship with Christ, everything must be new!

2 Corinthians 5:17—*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

Jesus' invitation: "I'm doing something completely new; no vestiges of old religion can remain, and if you want to be a part of this you must abandon everything and follow me."

THE WISDOM OF CHRIST (VS. 18-20)

- **Pharisees** = zealous observants of the law / similar to the Scribes / many were Scribes
- **John the Baptist** = Jesus' first cousin / zealous wilderness preacher / last of OT prophets

Fasting is simply to abstain from food—and sometimes water—for a season in order to engage more intentionally in spiritual activities (i.e. prayer, confession, repentance).

The Old Testament had many accounts of fasts, but only one was required (Lev. 16).

The Pharisees practiced fasting twice a week.

Jesus had a high view of fasting, but for Jesus, fasting begun in the heart (see Isaiah 58).

Isaiah 58:3

*[3] 'Why have we fasted, and you see it not?
Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?'
Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,
and oppress all your workers.*

For Jesus both fasting and feasting are important spiritual practices.

James 5:13—*Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.*

Isaiah 53:8

*[8] By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?*

THE EXCLUSIVITY OF CHRIST (VS. 21-22)

Jesus didn't come to improve an old system of religion; he came to do something completely new.

A covenant is a relationship that is grounded on promises.

Jeremiah 31:33–34—*[33] For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. [34] And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*

- The New Covenant promises an internal transformation.
- The New Covenant promises relationship with God.
- The New Covenant promises the forgiveness of sins.

Hebrews 8:13—In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Luke 22:20—*And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."*

The New Covenant is for those who are made new in Christ.

Christ invites us broken, bruised, spiritually bankrupt; and he makes us new; he transforms us through his love and for his glory.