
Fasting or Feasting?

Mark 2:18-22

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00:00

We're looking again today at Mark's Gospel, so please take God's Word and turn with me to Mark chapter 2. Our text this morning is verses 18 through 22.

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The parallel accounts of this message here in Mark is found in Matthew 9, 14 to 17, as well as Luke 5, 33 through 39. This text is not in the Gospel of John. But we're looking at Mark chapter 2, and I'd like to read beginning at verse 18. John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting.

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And they came and said to him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

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No one sows a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. No one puts new wine into old wine skins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins as well. But one puts new wine into fresh wine skins.

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John Phillips said, We are now introduced to some strange bedfellows. The Pharisees as a group rejected the ministry of John the Baptist. John in turn denounced the Pharisees as a

generation of vipers. But here the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees who are at odds about most things find that they have something in common.

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fasting.

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The disciples of John fasted evidently because they thought it to be a proof of their repentance. The Pharisees fasted because they considered it part of their religion.

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Luke 5:33 in the parallel count says they did this often and offered prayers. Now the context for these verses that I just read are the previous verses that we studied last time, which take place in verses 14 through 17. This is the passage where we learned of Jesus' calling of Matthew to follow him.

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We saw Matthew's response in verse 14, which says he got up and followed him. His response was immediate. He obviously had heard Jesus teach and talk about sin and forgiveness, and that's why when Jesus said to follow him, he was convicted over his sin and embraced the forgiveness that Jesus offered. We don't hear any of this.

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other than him getting up and following him, but he was obviously convicted. Jesus, as you know, doesn't accept unrepentant sinners. That's clear from how he responded to the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They wouldn't repent. And that's one of the reasons why John had called them a brood of vipers. And he also called for them to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

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Martin Lloyd-Jones said, the Holy Spirit always convicts, always. And since that's the case, we can say Matthew was convicted. You and I were convicted before God saved us, and we were

convicted by the Spirit of God. John 16, 8 says that when the Holy Spirit would come, he would convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

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Jones goes on to say the spirit of bondage and fear always precede the spirit of adoption. And that's what we see in the scripture. In the book of Acts, on the day of Pentecost, after Peter had preached to those assembled there in Jerusalem, we're told in verse 37 that they were pierced to the heart. And they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, brethren, what shall we do? And they're being pierced to the heart is conviction.

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They were convicted over their sin. They were convinced of the gospel.

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So first they were pierced or convicted for murdering their Messiah. And that's why they asked, what shall we do? We killed the Messiah, the Prince of life. What do we do? And Peter said, repent. Repent, each one of you. And be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

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So conviction is an essential part of the gospel, and it always precedes conversion. The gospel of Christ actually condemns before it releases. That's the bad news that we talk about. That's the law of God being taught to a person and showing them that they are transgressors of the law. Well we know that after Matthew

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began following Jesus that he threw a banquet and he invited Jesus and his disciples, he invited his friends, his co-workers, those who were tax collectors. The sinners part is what we all are, but that was a little phrase that the Pharisees came up with when they disdained somebody. They called them sinners as if they weren't sinners.

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Well, and we also find out that according to verse 15 that many of them were following Jesus too, just like Matthew. So they were also convicted over their sin and they repented. So there were a lot of days or jobs that now had need for employment because you had

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all these different tax collectors repenting and following Jesus and leaving their profession. And I'm sure the Jews were just clapping their hands because if you remember last time we talked about that Jews consider tax collectors as traitors to the nation, traitors to the Jews. Now I go through that just briefly because it's connected to where we are now. It's not an isolated event that we're reading.

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You have this feast going on. You have Jesus who is the guest of honor eating and drinking there with tax collectors and sinners. You have the disciples doing the same thing and then all of a sudden John's disciples and the Pharisees come up with this question.

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right in the midst of their celebration. They're celebrating the fact that Matthew and as well as many of those tax collectors that were there were following Jesus. They have now been transformed. They have now been forgiven and accepted, which was something that they never experienced in their culture. But as we look at this story now and we see its connection,

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We also understand that it shows the exclusivity of the gospel over rituals, over traditions that the Jews had come up with. So in verses 13 to 17 you have a feast, and now in verses 18 to 22 you have a fast. That's the subject of both of those sections. Now during the feast,

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We hear that the scribes of the Pharisees ask Jesus' disciples, why is he eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners? And now in verse 18, a second group joins in with them, asking in the midst of their feast, why they weren't fasting. That would almost be like, you know, you're at your Thanksgiving meal.

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and you're sitting there feasting over that turkey and all those things that came along with it and then all of a sudden somebody comes up and says why aren't y'all fasting I remember one time years ago preaching on fasting the week of Thanksgiving yeah that sermon didn't go over very well it doesn't go together does it we're talking about a feast we're talking about a celebration we're not talking about morning and fasting

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So Jesus answered their first question in verse 17. He addressed their lack of personal insight into their own need of righteousness that is only available through Jesus. But first they needed to be convicted of their sin. They needed to repent and they needed to follow Jesus. See, the tax collectors knew that they were sick. They knew that they needed a physician to heal them. And Jesus was that physician. The Pharisees did not see.

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Jesus asked the physician, nor did they see that they were sick. So instead of coming to Jesus convicted of their sin, they were actually offended by them. In fact, they just mounted up one controversy after another. Evans points out that the controversy over Jesus's teaching and style of ministry was actually growing. He had already provoked controversy when he healed the paralyzed man.

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and assured him that his sins were forgiven. That's at the top part of chapter two of Mark. Jesus provoked more controversy when he was observed eating with tax collectors and sinners. That's what we were just talking about. He and his disciples now faced criticism for not fasting. This was a criticism that had been assinated by falling right on the heels of this dinner party.

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And you know what? It's not going to stop there. The next controversy will be over the Sabbath. We'll look at that next week. Both groups had two separate views of Jesus. The tax collectors and sinners embraced Jesus as their Messiah, while the Jews had rejected Him.

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Now you don't hear much about fasting today, do you?

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But this text mentions it six times. Mark mentions fasting a total of 38 times.

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Fasting occurs in the Old Testament Septuagint as well as the New Testament a total of 139 times. You say well if it's mentioned so many times, what exactly is it? Well, I think we all know what fasting is, right? It's literally abstaining from food.

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But you ought to understand that it's also connected with two other things. Mourning, I'm not talking about the morning when the sun comes up, I'm talking about mourning when you're sad. And it's also connected with prayer. So you're mourning over your sin and you're praying. And that's where fasting is connected. So let's first look at the question in verse

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we already said came from two groups, the disciples of John as well as the Pharisees. Now again that's interesting because both groups were so different they were both at odds with each other except for now. Like I read John Phillips said now they have something in common whereas before they didn't have anything in common. Now they had this common ground for which they came to Jesus. John MacArthur tells us

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that their presence is surprising in light of John's unwavering testimony regarding Jesus. As the herald of the Messiah, John the Baptist boldly pointed his followers to Jesus and even baptized the Lord after faithfully proclaiming his arrival. On that occasion, the prophets saw the Holy Spirit descend and heard the affirmation of the Father's voice. Moreover, John had not hesitated to confront the scribes and the Pharisees.

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Why then would some of his followers join them in questioning Jesus on this occasion?

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Well, even though that what happened there at Jesus' baptism is clear to us in scripture, it wasn't clear to all the followers of John the Baptist, because evidently all of the followers of John the Baptist were not present when that occurred. They didn't hear him say, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

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So the disciples of John, they didn't transfer their allegiance to Jesus. They were still faithful to John the Baptist. Now the Pharisees, they were legalistic to say the least. And they were known for their strict devotion to the ceremonial law. Both groups, we could obviously say, were upset because Jesus and his disciples were not fasting.

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Linsky says the disciples were fasting and Jesus allowed his disciples to feast.

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In other words, the John the Baptist, their followers are his followers, and the Pharisees, they were fasting, but not Jesus or his disciples. And it's probably because in chapter 1 and verse 14, John the Baptist was in prison, and that would be a good reason for the followers of John the Baptist to fast. They're mourning over their beloved leader.

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Now the Pharisees, they would fast on their own accord, and many times when they would do it, they were flaunting their spiritual pride.

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But we do know, Mark says, these two groups were fasting. That was a regular part of their life, so much so that it became a practice in their life. The word fasting that occurs there is used in the imperfect tense, and it could be understood as a practice of fasting, something regularly that they did. Now, Scripture does support that.

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The question could actually be read back this way. They could have been saying, why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees always make it a practice to fast? But your disciples do not always make it a practice to fast.

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They're not saying Jesus or his disciples never fasted. They're just saying that they weren't fasting according to their traditions. There were other times for fasting. But the only command to fast was during the Day of Atonement. Now the Jews would fast for other occasions.

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They would fast during the judgments of God. Joel 1, 14 says, consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord. That was during the time when God was pouring out His judgment on them for their disobedience.

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Other times that they would fast was during public calamities. 2 Samuel 1 12 says that they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and his son Jonathan and for the people of the Lord in the house of Israel because they had fallen by the sword. So this was a national fast and this was because Saul and his son were killed in battle. The king and the king's son has now died so they're mourning and they're fasting. That's appropriate.

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We know according to Daniel 6 18 that they would fast during afflictions. It says, Then the king went off to his palace, spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him and his sleep fled from him. He was up all night, he was fasting. Why was that? Because he had just thrown Daniel into a den of lions who had been falsely accused. They would also fast

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during approaching danger. You remember that in Esther? Esther said this in Esther 4:16, Go assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me. Remember she was going to go in and needed to go in and see the king, but you couldn't just go in uninvited or he would kill you.

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So she said, Fast for me, do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way, and thus I will go into the king, which is not according to the law, and if I perish, I perish. She needed to do that because what was about to happen to her people.

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We know if you go into the New Testament, they would fast during the time of ordaining other pastors. Acts 13:3 says, Then when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. And then, of course, that they would always fast and pray. Prayer was always part of fasting.

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Daniel said this in Daniel 9:3 that I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek him by prayer and supplication with fasting sackcloth and ashes. You kind of getting the idea the times and when they would do this? First Samuel 7:6 says that they would do this and confess their sin. They gathered to mispudger water poured it out before the Lord and fasted on that day.

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and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Misbah.

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So they would do this as while they were confessing their sin, while they were praying. And Joel 2:12 said they would do this while they were mourning. And it says, Yet even now declares the Lord, return to me with all your heart and with fasting and weeping and mourning.

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then of course they would do it with humiliation. Nehemiah 9.1 says now on the 24th day of this month the sons of Israel assembled with fasting and sack cloth and with dirt upon them. So they would put on sack cloth they would throw dirt all over them. That's humiliation.

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So what would we say with what we just heard is the purpose of this? Well, I think we have an idea of it with what we heard. But I think we also find the answer when we look at what was commanded in the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law required fasting once a year.

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And did you know that that's the only time they were commanded to do it? All those other times were when leaders would call for it, or with national calamity, or like I said when they were repenting over their sin. But those weren't commanded.

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They only had one time when they were commanded to do this and this was done every year and that was during the Day of Atonement, the Yom Kippur. Leviticus 16, 29 and following says this, speaking of the Day of Atonement it says, this shall be a permanent statute for you in the seventh month on the tenth day of the month you shall humble your souls and do not

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do any work whether the native or the alien who sojourns among you for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord it is to be a Sabbath of solemn rest for you that you may humble your souls it is a permanent statute so on this particular day Yom Kippur the day of atonement

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The sanctuary would be cleansed of all of its impurity. It was a day when their sins were dealt with through blood rituals, sending a scapegoat into the wilderness. We heard it, it took place on the 10th day of the seventh month. And it's very interesting that when you take this into the New Testament, Acts 7:29 referred to that day as, get this, the fast.

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I also believe those verses give us the purpose, too. It says in verse 29 that the purpose of their fasting was to humble themselves. Notice the phrase there, you shall humble your souls. Well, that's translated in other versions. One has it as deny yourself. Another one has it as afflict yourselves.

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Jewish study Bible says that the word literally means to deprive your throats. I thought that was interesting. What are you doing when you deprive your throats? You're fasting. But the act itself was to show penitence for their sins by not working but fasting and even possibly wearing sackcloth.

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David said in Psalms 69, 10, and 11, when I wept in my soul with fasting, it became my reproach. When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became a byword to them. And just pointing out that when he was weeping and he was fasting, he had also clothed himself with sackcloth.

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Now the fast began on the evening of the ninth day, and it ended on the evening of the tenth day. And then it was succeeded by general fasting. But the day itself had served as a reminder that the daily and weekly and the monthly sacrifices made at the altar of the burnt offering were not sufficient to atone for sin. They had to keep doing this every year.

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It would only be in Jesus Christ that true forgiveness of sin could be found. We don't have to be saved over and over and over. We're saved one time and that's enough.

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But you know it's interesting that the Pharisees...

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These religious leaders that were doing everything they did for show and praise of men, that's why Jesus said they have their reward, the reward was the praise of men, they fasted every Monday and every Thursday.

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and they would use that time as a platform to flaunt their false devotion.

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It's like in Luke 18 12, the proud Pharisee he's praying. There's two men that go into the temple. One's a Pharisee, the other one is what? A tax collector.

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The Pharisee is looking at this tax collector and he is comparing himself to them.

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And he says in Luke 18-12, I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes of all that I get. See, he's very proud of that.

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But that was the very thing that he needed to do anyway.

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Yet the tax collector wouldn't even look up to heaven, but he beat his breast and he said, God, be merciful to me a sinner.

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See, Jesus here is confronting their superficial spirituality.

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in the Sermon on the Mount. This is where he taught that fasting and prayer and almsgiving were to be done in secret and that were to be done to honor God, not impress other people. Turn with me to Matthew chapter 6 for just a moment.

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Notice verse 16.

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Jesus said, whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full, but you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

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They weren't doing that.

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these judgmental religious leaders.

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We're so full of pride.

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They were so judgmental of others. In their desire to keep the law, they had added so many things to it. They made it actually a burden.

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And that's usually what legalists do. When you're caught up into legalism, you are a burden to others. Because you impose things on others many times that are not even part of Scripture. It's your interpretation of it.

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Now, I believe that most likely the feast that Matthew threw at his house occurred on a Monday or a Thursday when the Pharisees fasted. And I think that's why they came asking that question. Of course, the ultimate reason as to why they would do anything would be to try to trip Jesus up, right? Try to discredit Him.

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But notice in verse 19, Jesus now begins to answer their question about fasting. Notice what he says at verse 19, While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. In other words, you don't...

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Fast at a feast.

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Their previous feast was a celebration of Matthew's conversion. It was a joyous occasion like a wedding. Weddings during that time usually lasted a week. And you didn't fast during those times. You know what you did during those times? You partied.

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And I know when I said that, the wrong thought comes up with that word party, because see, before I came to Christ, that's what I did every day. That's not what we're talking about. You're celebrating. You're celebrating at a wedding. You're celebrating the bride and the bridegroom, right? This is their day. It's inappropriate to fast at a wedding.

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You see, that's what Jesus meant in verse 19 when He talked about the presence of the bridegroom in verse 19. As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. Again, because this is a time of rejoicing. This is not a time for mourning.

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Fasting in a wedding would be improper with the spirit of the occasion. That's why in Matthew's account In Matthew 9 15 it says the attendance of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them. Can they?

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Morning was associated with fasting, not with the joyous occasion of a wedding. Listen to some of these other verses that talk about the joyous occasion of a wedding. Song of Solomon 3 verse 11. Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and gaze on King Solomon with the crown with which his mother has crowned him on the day of his wedding and on the day of his gladness of heart.

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Isaiah 62 5 says the bridegroom rejoices over the bride.

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I think the two happiest days of your life should be your wedding and your new birth.

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John the Baptist said in John 3 29, he who has the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom who stands and hears him rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. You rejoice at a wedding. They were rejoicing at this feast over Matthew's conversion.

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Did you know that Jewish custom actually exempted the attendance from certain religious observances, including weekly fasts?

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And one of the reasons that was forced because you didn't want, at a wedding feast, people like the Pharisees showing up fasting and bringing gloom onto the joyous occasion. Because they were there for the whole purpose of people looking at them and seeing how spiritual they were.

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There's an old Jewish document, it's called the Magalint Tanit. I'm not sure if I'm saying that right, but it means the scroll of fasting. And it gave instructions about fasting. And one of those instructions was, fasting is forbidden on all days devoted to happy celebrations. And so what was the wedding feast? It was a happy celebration. What was Matthew's feast? It was a happy celebration.

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Therefore there was to be no fasting during that time. It was a celebration. It was a feast. It was not a time to fast. Now Jesus said, right now the time is to rejoice, not mourn.

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But notice what happens in verse 20 with the absence of the bridegroom. He says, but the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. See, the present celebration in verse 19, that's provisional. For Jesus had not yet suffered and died. But when He's taken away from them, verse 20, then they will fast.

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Notice the verb taken away in verse 20. It conveys the idea of a sudden violent snatching away. It's interesting that Isaiah spoke of this. Isaiah 53, 8 says, by oppression and judgment he was taken away. And as for his generation who considered that he was cut off from the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due.

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So you have there in Isaiah 53, 8 this phrase taken away. It's the exact same phrase when you go to the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, and you compare it with Mark chapter 2. Same phrase. The second phrase, cut off, that means to be killed. So both are talking about death. Isaiah is saying that the Messiah would be killed

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for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due." And so Mark's reference to the bridegroom being taken away is really a reference to Jesus' death. And it's the first reference that Jesus makes of his death in the Gospel of Mark.

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And Jesus says, when this happens, then they will fast. It won't be a ritual, it won't be a Monday, Thursday show. It will be a heartbreak, it will be a grief. You remember just even leading up to the cross in John 14, Jesus is telling them that he's going to leave and they're sobbing already. And he tells them, let not your heart be troubled.

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You believe in God, believe also in me. And then he talks about going to prepare a place for them.

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but they were heartbroken to hear that he was leaving.

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That's exactly what you see in Luke 24. Let me have you to look at Luke 24. We have two men who were talking to Jesus on the road going to Emmaus. And Jesus asked them in verse 17, what are these words that you were exchanging with one another as you were walking? Obviously he walked up behind them, could hear them talking, and they stood still.

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looking, what's it say? Sad!

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One of them named Cleopas answered and said to him, Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days? And he said to them, What things? And they said to him, The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who is a prophet, mighty indeed in word, in the sight of God and all the people, and how the chief priest and our rulers delivered him to the sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that it was he who was going to redeem Israel.

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Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. But also some women among us amazed us when they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body. They came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb.

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They were sad.

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And here they're walking to the road to Emmaus on a journey.

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And they're sharing these things with each other. And they're bewildered over the events that have taken place because they believe that Jesus was the one that was going to redeem Israel, but now he has been put to death.

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You know the rest of the disciples weren't any better. They went into hiding. They were afraid. Along with being sad. Now what would have accompanied this time? Exactly what Jesus says here in verse 20. When the bridegroom is taken away, then they will fast.

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You can read the rest of the story there of the two as they got there to Emmaus. They come in, they ask Jesus to join them because it was toward the end of the day. That was part of hospitality. And the interesting thing about that is that Jesus took the very things that were theirs to make a meal and it says He took bread and broke it. And you know what He was basically saying by doing that?

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It's now time to eat. You have been fasting, it's now time to eat. Because the bridegroom is now in front of you. Now he didn't reveal himself until he broke the bread. They recognized him when he broke the bread with them. And then he immediately vanished.

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Same is true with the other disciples. They're morning, they're fasting.

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When do they see Jesus again? After first He appears to them, explains to them that a spirit does not have flesh and blood as you see me.

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We even see on another occasion when he is on the beach, they're out in the sea, they had been fishing all night, caught nothing. They're told to throw the net on the other side. They haul in such a load that their boats are sinking. They grab it and pull it all to the shore. Nobody dared question who it was there at the shore cooking them breakfast. It was Jesus.

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You see, at the time they couldn't see the meaning. The absence of the bridegroom has actually caused the church to fast, awaiting his return.

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Again, the only command in Scripture to fast was Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. That's it. That didn't mean you couldn't fast for other things, you could. But it wasn't commanded. So what does that mean? If it's not commanded, don't impose it on somebody else, making them think that it is.

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You know, we see that in the book of Acts. In Acts 13, 2, it says they fasted while they were ministering to the Lord. It says, while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul "for the work to which I have called them." So they were fasting. And then they fasted when they had appointed elders in the church, Acts 14, 23, when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

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You see, they fasted for other reasons.

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If we're trying to make a decision and really want the mind of God on this, we may call for a fast.

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Now Jesus concludes with two parables and I remember for the longest time reading those two parables trying to figure out how they fit in with everything else he has just said but I think I figured it out with a lot of help from my friends as I'm studying. I remember years ago I was pretty new in Christ, a few years old in the Lord and I was at a place that I worked at and

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Interestingly enough, one of the bosses there had asked my boss if he could pull me away from work for a little while to ask me a Bible question. You know what his Bible question was? These two verses. What do they mean? I'm scratching my head. I didn't know what they meant. But I enjoyed the time away from work to try to figure that out.

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But look at these two parables. Verse 21, no one sows a patch of untrunk cloth on an old garment, otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. And then the second parable, verse 22, no one puts new wine into old wine skins, otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins as well, but one puts new wine into fresh wine skins.

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Now again, what is he talking about and what does it have to do with what he already said? Or does it have anything to do with what he already said? I read some commentaries that actually separate those two verses and say they have nothing to do with what we just looked at. Then I read some other ones that say, well, yeah, it does. Context. Even in the translation that I have up here, which is the New American Standard, verse 21 is treated like a new subject.

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How do I know that? Well, they would treat new thoughts with making the number bold. You might have that in your version as well. Verse 21 is bold, bold print.

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But you know what, that's not the first time they've gotten that wrong. I've seen verses that break up a thought, and it, this new verse that they broke up, they're trying to put it with a different thought, but it's part of the previous, especially if it's in the middle of a statement. Well, both parables are teaching the same thing. They're contrasting what is old with what is new.

42:51

In verse 21, you have an old garment with the new patch. In verse 22, you have an old wineskin with new wine. Both are problematic. If a garment had been washed several times and has shrunk, and if it is then ripped, it cannot be patched with new cloth. If it is the new cloth, when it would shrink, it would make the tear

43:21

It would make it worse.

43:25

So the best thing would be, if you had a tear in your garment, would be to just throw away the garment and get a new one.

43:36

I was somewhere the other day and this guy came in, I think I was at the doctor, and this guy came in and I noticed he had a split in his shirt going down his back. And I was thinking, does he know that?

43:48

Must have been over at one point and went rip.

43:53

I was just thankful it wasn't on the back side of his pants.

43:59

So the best thing to do then would be just throw it away, discard it. And the same would be true with old wine skins, because in the ancient world, the standard wine skin was made of goat skin. And here's what they would do. They would kill the goat.

44:18

They would remove its head, remove its feet, take all the organs out, remove everything out of it. They would sew up where the feet are, sew up where the neck is, that's where the wine would get poured in, and they would use the whole size of that gope for the wine skin. And they would put the new wine in there and as the wine would ferment it would emit gases and it would cause the skin to stretch.

44:48

So you didn't want to do that with an old wine skin that had already stretched. Because what would happen? It burst. And then you would lose not only the wine skin, but you would also lose the wine that you had just put in there and that started fermenting.

45:10

So the question here, putting new wine into old wine skins and patching an old garment with a new cloth, they're just as inappropriate as fasting at a wedding feast. So what is Jesus saying here? Well, the old here was the tradition. Let's think metaphorically for just a moment. The old was the tradition and the rituals of the Pharisees.

45:36

The new was the kingdom of God that Jesus was offering. The old was a system of works that could never save. The new was the internal gospel of repentance that offered forgiveness of sin.

45:54

The new could not be connected or contained in the old tradition of self-righteousness and ritual. So the old ritual, the ceremonial fastings that were practiced by the Pharisees and practiced by John's disciples, they weren't fit for the new wine of the new covenant era.

46:15

They had no part with the gospel. So again, what Jesus is preaching metaphorically is new wine. New wine skins. What he is saying goes against the traditions of the elders, goes against the oral traditions, goes against the ceremonial traditions. They had to abandon that. And essentially, when you read the book of Hebrews, that's what you're seeing.

46:47

But yet you also see in the book of Hebrews that there were some that didn't want to leave those traditions and they would bring them in along with bringing in Christ and they were just tacking on Christ to already traditions that they were doing. You can't do that. There has to be an abandonment of the old to embrace the new. Now isn't that true with our salvation?

47:15

When you came to Christ, what did you have to do? You had to abandon your old life, didn't you? That's the old wine skin. You didn't tack Jesus on. You abandoned the old and you embraced Jesus. You embraced His new way of life, His teaching.

47:41

See, it's impossible to be a Christian and keep the old ways.

47:49

Salvation is a casting off of the old, it's putting on the new. 2 Corinthians 5, 17, If anyone is in Christ, he's a new creature, old things have passed away. Behold, new things have come.

48:06

Isn't that true?

48:09

So my question for you this morning, have you cast off the old?

48:16

Have you cast off your old life? Have you traded it for the new life that's in Christ? Like Jesus said in Matthew 16 26, what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? You have to make an exchange. I give up my rotten, filthy, wicked, sinful life to have the righteous life of Jesus.

48:45

I have to abandon myself, have to deny myself, take up my cross daily and follow Jesus. I'm abandoning the old to embrace the new. So you have to exchange your life for Christ. If you're not willing to do that, you can't be saved. Again, that's what it means to lay aside the old self and to put on the new self which is in the likeness of God has been created in true righteousness and holiness of the truth. Ephesians 4 24.

49:14

You have to make that exchange.

49:18

If you're here today and you've never made that exchange, I call you to repent and come to Christ to make that exchange right now. Trade your filthy rotten life for the perfect righteous life that the Lamb of God provides. The moment that you are born again, you're given the righteousness of Christ.

49:44

you become a new creature. Again, old things have passed away, all things have become new.

49:52

And so my prayer is that that describes you following the new life.

50:00

Let's give Him praise as we pray now. Father, we thank You for what we learned from this passage this morning. We thank You that all things have become new in Christ. We thank You that when You came, You totally bankrupt their system of works. You totally bankrupt everything about what they were doing. And You offered them something new, something totally different.

50:30

but something permanent, something lasting. And you're still offering it today. I pray for every person in here, Lord Jesus, that they belong to you, and that they are your child that you have saved, that you have given the new birth to.

50:52

Lord we just praise you this morning for that new birth. May we tell others about the great things that you have done in us and we pray all this in Jesus name. Amen.