

REVIVAL - GOD'S WAY

Text: Mark 2:18-22

Keyword: Revival

Key Thought: Jesus Clearly Illustrated What He Wants Us to Do.

The Church of Jesus Christ has, since its beginning, had to come to grips with many lifestyle issues. When Jesus entered a room, or a building or the marketplace, the people were forced to evaluate their lives. Those who were honest recognized that they had certain areas in their lives that needed to be changed.

Due to the increase of conviction, some of the people began to lash out at Jesus. They wanted to have the focus off of their disobedient lifestyle. These people tried to find a fault in Jesus. This tactic never works. Their efforts became futile.

We are presently seeing many changes coming to the Church in Canada. Some of it is very much needed. Some of it is devilish. God is allowing His Church to be brought to a crossroads. We must decide which way is God's way. In the midst of what God is doing there will always come a counterfeit. Already many are being deceived.

How Can We Tell What Is Not from God? Jesus Used 3 Distinctive Illustrations to Explain.

I. THE ILLUSTRATION OF FASTING (Mark 2:18-20)

II. THE ILLUSTRATION OF PATCHING (Mark 2:21)

III. THE ILLUSTRATION OF WINESKINS (Mark 2:22)

I. THE ILLUSTRATION OF FASTING (Mark 2:18-20)

The Old Testament made it mandatory for all of Israel to fast on one day of the year. The Day of Atonement was used as a day to cleanse a soul from sin (Leviticus 16:1-34; 23:26-32). Fasting was recognized as an outward sign of repentance to hasten the time of redemption.

Later on in the Scriptures we are told of additional fasts:

- 1. 4th Month** - commemorated the breaking of the tablets of the law - Exodus 32:19
- 2. 5th Month** - commemorated the destruction of the temple by King Nebuchadnezzar (and later by Emperor Titus)
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What began as a voluntary act soon became a tradition and was expected of all Pharisees.

I. THE ILLUSTRATION OF FASTING (Mark 2:18-20) (Contd.)

Fasting was also seen as a sign of mourning especially when a master died. John's disciples were probably fasting due to his death at the hands of the wicked Herod.

Jesus saw the time introduced in this text as one of rejoicing not of mourning. It was likened to a time when the wedding guests were with the bridegroom. No one should be robbing them of their time of joy. Would these Pharisees introduce a time of fasting during a wedding feast? Of course not. The guests were invited to contribute to the joy and the festivities. This was not a funeral. It was a wedding. A prolonged time of mourning was out of place. Following God is to be a joyful experience. His joy is able to give us strength.

2831 Hot Dog! Hot Dog! Hot Dog!

My favourite illustration comes from one of my own pastoral experience noted Tom Wallace. It took place at the Bible Baptist Church in Elkton, Maryland. The Sunday Morning Service was ready to begin when in came a man who never attended our church before. He looked around in awe and amazement at the great number of people packed into the large auditorium.

He came slowly down the aisle looking from side to side and seated himself on the second row from the front. As I preached he listened with keenest of interest.

When the invitation time came, I said, "*Now how many of you are not saved, but you would like to be, and you want us to pray for you? Will you raise your hand?*"

He shot up his hand and waved it back and forth persistently until he was sure that I had seen it. When I asked those who would claim Christ to come forward, he literally bounced out and darted to the altar.

He stood stiff and erect: I asked, "Sir, do you believe that Christ died to save sinners?"

"Yes, Sir, I want to do just that," he said rejoicing, with a beam of triumph about him.

When he came into the baptistry, I lowered him into the water and then out again to walk in the newness of life. He came up out of the water clapping his hands and shouting, "Hot dog! hot dog! hot dog!"

Our people roared with laughter. I quickly asked them for silence as I explained that this poor man had not been around the church and didn't know about, "Amen, Praise the Lord, and Hallelujah!" His word was "hot dog" and he was praising the Lord with the only vocabulary he knew.

Tom Wallace

I. THE ILLUSTRATION OF FASTING (Mark 2:18-20) (Contd.)

The mature saint finds ways of expressing his joyfulness which are appropriate to Biblical teaching. The Bible is full of joy. It shows us many ways to express it.

*"David wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might,
15. while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets."*

II Samuel 6:14,15

When Jesus was taken away from the people the time of fasting resumed. **In any true revival we need to know when we should be fasting and mourning as well as when we should be rejoicing.**

II. THE ILLUSTRATION OF PATCHING (Mark 2:21)

Anyone who lived in poverty would understand this second illustration. Jesus was able to identify with them because He neither had an elaborate wardrobe. His clothing consisted of a single seamless robe.

Many people who came to Jesus were poor. They would have to often make a choice of what to do with a garment that had a hole in it. If it was not worn out, they would carefully choose a piece of garment of the same type and time of life if at all possible. They would then cautiously cover the hole of the old garment with the patch.

They would never use a new garment as a patch even though it may look nicer. Once it was immersed in water and hung out to dry, the new patch would shrink and tear away from the old garment. The hole would then become even greater.

God was trying to show the people that you can't combine the old and new. It is incompatible. The Old Levitical system of Law had now fulfilled its purpose. It was time for the New Testament. The Old Law would be fulfilled in the new. The New would replace the Old. They would be so different that they could not be blended together. The Old Testament Law now had to be written upon their hearts and lived out by the grace of God.

Jesus did not want to clothe His Church with the Old cloak of formality. He knew that they needed a new robe of righteousness. The new robe would cause the church to stand as lights in a dark world. They were to come out from the world and be separated from its thoughts and actions. If the world liked it, they didn't. **If the ungodly were attracted to something that drew them away from God, then the early church stayed away from it.**

II. THE ILLUSTRATION OF PATCHING (Mark 2:21) (Contd.)

I have watched many people over the years argue with me about this issue. I tried to convince them to be different from the world. I've been given the impression that I'm old fashioned and out of touch with the voice of the Holy Spirit. I've been told that God is doing a "new thing."

I agree that God is doing something new but I often disagree with some about how to determine what is from God and what is not.

When Jesus starts something new, the world will find no peace, pleasure or attraction to it. It will take a surrendered and repentive heart to respond to what God is doing.

Jesus didn't come to warm us over . . . He came to make us new! He came to set a fire into our hearts.

Don't attempt to receive anything new from God unless you are willing to make any changes which bring you closer to the Word of God. It should improve your prayer life as well. You should notice that your healthy relationships also improve.

III. THE ILLUSTRATION OF WINESKINS (Mark 2:22)

According to the Mosaic Law priests were forbidden to drink wine while on duty (Leviticus 10:9; Ezekiel 44:21). A Nazarite was not even allowed to touch grapes (Numbers 6:5,20).

Wine was basically divided into 2 groups - fermented and unfermented (grape juice). The new was the kind that would ferment if it were not quickly drunk or preserved. Grape juice could be kept for a whole year if it was first put in an amphora (2 - handled earthen jar), sealed with a cork and pitch and sunk into a pond for 30 days.

A fermented wine was made by putting the ingredients into a wineskin until the process was complete. The Old wineskin could not contain the new wine. It would burst open and lose all the wine in a short while due to the pressure of the fermenting gases.

When we become born again, we become a new wineskin for God to fill. Our old nature is changed. Our hardened exterior becomes softened. It wouldn't make sense to put something old (full of bacteria) into us. **Every NEW VESSEL requires a NEW FILLING.**

God wants to fill us with the wine of the Holy Spirit. An old fermented life could never illustrate the new life that God brings to us. New life like new wine is full of energy ready to burst forth. It needs room to expand. **Any attempt to contain the gospel within the bounds of religion (Judaism) will cause a great loss.**

The new always disrupts the mould of the old. Yet we must be very careful to recognize that not everything that upsets the apple cart is sent from God. We must be very careful on this point.

III. THE ILLUSTRATION OF WINESKINS (Mark 2:22) (Contd.)

I do believe that God is wanting to pour out His Spirit upon the Church in such a way we've never witnessed before. This will **NOT** be the work of man. It will be a sovereign move initiated by God. It will be exactly what the Church needs.

The outcome of such a move will be remarkable. Relationships with God and others will become totally united. Differences will be resolved. True joy will be restored. Prayer will become one of our greatest desires. The Word of God will come alive. Witnessing will stop becoming a fearing thing. The Church will become highly respected. Worldly desires will fall away. Holiness will return like a flood.

The light that comes WILL dispel the darkness. Old habits WILL disappear. The hosts of hell WILL become confused and begin battling against themselves. Husbands WILL return to being the spiritual leaders of their homes. NO ONE WILL DENY THAT IT IS A WORK OF GOD.

You may wonder when this will happen? The answer is very simple.

It will happen as soon as we surrender to the known will of God for our generation. God desires for it to happen right now. Are we willing to become new and pliable in the Hands of God? If so, He can fill us with His Holy Spirit. Many changes will be immediate while others will take time (i.e. - reconciling with someone we've hurt) .

Are you hungry and thirsty for a true revival sent from God? If so, lets keep on the right track.

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Date: June 30/24

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Change my Heart - C

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