

New life, new ways

The Israelites were given the hope of a promised land that flowed with milk and honey. In order for them to take hold of that new land they had to leave the old land of Egypt. Due to rebellion, they didn't enter the land immediately, but ended up wandering in the wilderness for 40 years before they eventually entered the promised land. Although they had left Egypt, Egypt was still very much alive in their hearts. In order for us to move into all that God has for us the old needs to die within us. We can't have both – Egypt and the promised land.

Matthew 9:14-17

Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁵ Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

¹⁶ "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. ¹⁷ Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

1) The insignificance of the old life

- Matthew 9:14 Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"
- John's disciples, as genuine as they were, still represented the old life under the Law
 - They unidentified more with the Pharisees than with Jesus
 - Although their question was about fasting, they would probably have questioned other practices that Jesus and His disciples did that seemed to contravene the Law and the traditions, such as not keeping the Sabbath, not washing their hands before eating, along with others.
- They lived within the rigid structures of the old wineskins that were inflexible and legalistic.
 - It was the standard by which they judged others and by which they couldn't understand any way of life outside that tight structure.
- Maybe our old lives aren't religious and legalistic, but worldly and plain sinful, or indifferent.
 - Someone who is indifferent could be someone who isn't religious at all, but neither is overly wicked and worldly in their lifestyle. However, they have no interest in following Jesus
- When someone sees Jesus and what the follows of Jesus doing, or not doing things that they're familiar with
 - Religious people can't understand why we don't think in their religious way
 - Worldly people can't understand why we don't get involved in partying, drinking, and other worldly activities
 - Complacent people can't understand why we don't just live and let live.
- From a kingdom perspective this old life is insignificant as it has no eternal worth as it focuses only on the self-life and the here and now

2) The new life is about Jesus

- Matthew 9:15 Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.
- Jesus refers to Himself as the bridegroom.
 - The word that is translated as guests is *uihos* which means son, and is often translated as *children*
 - What Jesus was saying was that His disciples were sons, or children, of God, and children of God make up the Bride of Christ, and He is the Bridegroom.
- We become children of God through faith in Jesus
 - John 1:12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.
- The Bride of Christ is the church – all the believers in Jesus
 - Ephesians 5:31-32 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.
 - Revelation 19:7-8 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!
For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.
Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”
(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.)
- Isaiah prophesied that God is the Husband of His people
 - Isaiah 54:5 For your Maker is your husband — the LORD Almighty is his name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth.
- Now Jesus takes on the title of Bridegroom to be married to His bride, the church – His people.
 - He ushered in a new life in place of the old
 - The new life found in Him is based on a love relationship between a bride and His groom
 - It is an eternal relationship
 - It is a pure relationship
 - It is a relationship of freedom and hope
 - It is a relationship of joy

3) New life and new ways

- Matthew 9:16-17 “No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”
- The old and the new cannot coexist
 - If we want the life of Jesus we need to do away with the old
 - We need to do away with the old religion
 - We need to do away with the old worldly ways
 - We need to do away with the old indifference to Jesus
- We need to be filled with the new life of the Spirit and walk in His ways, being guided by Him
 - That doesn’t mean that we have become perfect, but the Spirit shows us the right thing to do
 - He shows us where we shouldn’t put ourselves in the way of temptation due to a weakness that we may have
- The Spirit brings a transformation into our lives in accordance with the new life that Jesus has given us
 - Galatians 5:16-17 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh.