

ALL THINGS NEW
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Mark 2:18-22

1. Last week we looked at the events that took place related to Jesus calling Matthew to follow Him.
 - a. We saw Matthew's response.
 - b. We saw that Matthew gave a big reception designed to introduce Jesus to others.
 - c. We saw how Jesus responded to the accusatory question leveled against Him by the Pharisees.
2. Jesus made it clear that a prerequisite to being saved was recognizing that we are unrighteous sinners in need of a Savior regardless of our social or religious status.
3. It is important to remember that the righteousness that God requires is not an exalted form of human righteousness, rather it is the righteousness of Christ.
4. In the passage we are looking at today Jesus was approached by some of John the Baptist's disciples who, according to Matthew 9:14 asked, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

I. The question.

A. It was a sincere question.

NOTE: It is not clear whether Pharisees were actually present.

B. John the Baptist had pointed Jesus out to his followers, but he did not cease his ministry, nor did all of his followers leave him to follow Jesus.

C. These followers of John were confused by the fact that Jesus and His disciples were not following the traditional Jewish customs.

NOTE: The Jews had many traditions that committed Jews took seriously, one of which was the need to fast twice a week. So the question was, "Why are we obeying the traditions of the elders, but you and your disciples are not?"

D. The Jewish leaders of the day taught, among other things, that pleasing God involved fasting twice a week, praying certain prescribed prayers, and almsgiving.

E. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus pointed out that religious activities were worthless unless they were properly motivated. Matthew 6:1-18

F. The Lord reinforced this truth in Mark 7:1-8.

The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, 2 and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. 3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; 4 and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.) 5 The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the **tradition of the elders**, but eat their bread with impure hands?" 6 And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: **'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. 7 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'** 8 "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men."

G. We need to be careful that we do not fall into the same trap by equating pleasing God with religious activities and ideas that have their origin with men rather than with God?

NOTE: What we do is important, but why we do what we do is of utmost importance.

II. The questions answered.

A. A paraphrase of Jesus answer would be, "There is no need for My disciples to fast at this time because this is a time for rejoicing and not fasting."

B. He went on to say that the day would come when fasting would be called for.

C. Fasting must be the outgrowth of genuine spiritual concern, and not just some sort of commitment to religious traditions or the expectations of men.

III. The unasked question answered.

A. Jesus always saw, and still sees, what is behind the questions people ask or the statements that they make.

NOTE: It is often difficult to determine where a person is coming from, or what their motivations are, by what they say and do.

B. Jesus knew that these sincere followers of John the Baptist needed to understand that a whole new day had dawned.

NOTE: John, his disciples, and even Jesus' followers held to the idea that the Messiah would come and fix what was wrong with Judaism.

C. Jesus made it clear that God was doing a new thing, and not just patching up the old.

D. New wine called for new wine skins, and what Jesus came to accomplish was distinct from what already existed.

E. He was not setting aside the Old Testament, rather He was fulfilling it.

APPLICATION

1. In Luke 5:39 we read the following statement by Jesus, "And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is good enough.'"

a. Both John's disciples, and the Pharisees, were in danger of missing out because they preferred the old to the new.

b. We need to remember that man's estimation of what is good enough will not suffice when we stand before God.

2. From a personal perspective we need to understand that God is not in the business of patching up the old, but rather He makes all things new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

3. If we would be "in Christ" we must recognize and turn from our sin by repenting towards God, and secondly we must embrace, by faith, Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

4. Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin, and by them we are born again into the Kingdom of God.