



IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

SERIES: NEW

TITLE: NEW WINE

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 5:33-39

DATE: AUG. 24, 2025

INTRODUCTION

We are in the second week of our “New” series. Last week, we studied the event of Pentecost in Acts 2. We learned and discussed how, through the Holy Spirit, believers receive new power to live the Christian life. It was fascinating to see how the event described in Acts 2 fulfills the purpose of the Old Testament festival known as the Feast of Weeks.

Our main takeaway was this: Through the Holy Spirit, God has written His law on our hearts. We now have new power to live according to His commands.

This week, our theme is “New Wine.” At first, the title might sound odd, but the phrase comes from a parable Jesus told in Luke 5:33–39. As we explore the text, we’ll explain the imagery. In essence, Jesus teaches that, because He has come, we no longer relate to God in the old ways—through ceremonial washings, strict Sabbath observance, animal sacrifices, and other outward rituals.

Text

Luke 5:33-39

33 And they said to Him, “The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink.”

34 And Jesus said to them, “Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?

35 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.”

36 He also told them a parable: “No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.

37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins—and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.

38 But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.

39 And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, ‘The old is good.’”

Explanation:

SETTING THE SCENE

Before we dive into the passage, let’s consider the context. At this point in Luke’s Gospel, Jesus has already begun His public ministry. He has called Peter, Andrew, James, and John, and likely also Nathanael and Philip (John 1:43–51). Most recently, He invited Matthew, the tax collector, to follow Him (Luke 5:27–32).

Jesus is beginning to gain public recognition as someone who teaches with authority and has the power to cast out demons and heal the sick. Public opinion is mostly positive—people are amazed by Him.

The Pharisees and scribes, however, are intrigued but cautious. They are impressed by His miracles but begruntled by His claim to forgive sins (Luke 5:20–24) and His decision to associate with tax collectors like Matthew. They grumbled about His willingness to dine with known sinners. As the Gospel continues, their discomfort will grow—especially when Jesus challenges their understanding of Sabbath observance (Luke 6:1–11).

THE QUESTION OF FASTING

In Mark's account of the story, some "people" approached Jesus with a question about discipleship and fasting (Mk.2:18). Their inquiry doesn't seem hostile—it appears to come from genuine curiosity. Jesus was clearly different from both John the Baptist and the Pharisees.

John the Baptist's lifestyle was marked by simplicity and denial. He lived in the wilderness, dressed in rough clothing, and ate a sparse diet of locusts and honey. His message was one of repentance and preparation for the coming Messiah. John had his own disciples, and they were known for fasting. Jesus Himself said in Matthew 11:18 that John was known for "neither eating nor drinking."

The Pharisees also practiced fasting regularly. The Old Testament commanded fasting on the Day of Atonement, and Zechariah 8:19 reveals that the Jews observed four annual fasts which were reflections on the fall of Jerusalem. Interestingly, Zechariah's prophecy anticipates that those fasts would one day be turned into celebrations. Scholars note that Pharisees commonly fasted once or twice a week.

So, with both major religious groups embracing fasting, it's understandable that people would ask why Jesus' disciples didn't fast—especially after He was seen feasting with tax collectors and sinners.

THE BRIDEGROOM PARABLE

Jesus responds with a parable. He compares His presence to a wedding celebration: "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?" Weddings are times of joy, not mourning. Fasting doesn't fit the occasion. But Jesus also warns that a day will come when the bridegroom is taken away—and then His followers will fast.

By referring to Himself as the bridegroom, Jesus is making a powerful theological statement. His time on earth is a time of celebration, because God has come to dwell with His people. Jesus brings life, healing, and hope to the broken. He is absolutely worthy of celebration.

However, He also hints at what is to come. The phrase "taken away" implies a violent and forceful removal—a clear reference to His death. Jesus knows He won't remain on earth forever. He has come to die, rise again, and ascend to

heaven. After His departure, His disciples will fast—because they will long for His return.

NEW GARMENTS & NEW WINESKINS

Jesus then tells two short but powerful parables that emphasize the incompatibility of the new with the old:

1. The Garment Parable:
No one uses a patch from a new garment to repair an old one. The new fabric will shrink and tear the old, making things worse. The two pieces don't match. The message: you can't mix the new with the old.
2. The Wineskin Parable:
In Jesus' day, wine was stored in animal skins. New wine would ferment and expand, so it had to be stored in new, flexible skins. Old wineskins, already stretched and brittle, would burst under pressure. The lesson: new wine requires new wineskins.

The point of both parables is the same: Jesus brings something entirely new. His life, death, and resurrection usher in a new covenant—a new way of relating to God. The old rituals, as important as they once were, cannot contain the fullness of what Jesus has brought.

Some of those old practices—ritual washings, sacrificial systems, strict Sabbath rules—have fulfilled their purpose. Jesus has replaced outward ceremonies with inward transformation. He hasn't come to patch up the old system—He's come to establish a new one.

A NEW WAY TO RELATE TO GOD

These parables are incredibly significant because they reveal a profound truth about how God now relates to humanity.

Because of sin, there was once a massive barrier between God and mankind. Under the Old Covenant, that barrier could only be crossed through a complex system of animal sacrifices, clean and unclean laws, separation from sinners, and other religious practices. But none of these could truly change the human heart.

What humanity ultimately needs is a Savior—One who can fulfill righteousness on our behalf, and One who comes to us, rather than requiring us to climb up to Him.

That's exactly what we have in Jesus:

- God dwelling among us
- Fulfilling all the righteous requirements of the Law
- Opening access to God by faith—not by law-keeping

Through Jesus, we now relate to God in a new way.

THE TRAGIC RESPONSE OF THE PHARISEES

Jesus ends His teaching with a sobering statement: “No one, after drinking old wine, desires new, for he says, ‘The old is good.’”

Here, Jesus addresses the Pharisees' likely response. Despite all the blessings He offers—grace, healing, joy, forgiveness, freedom—many will cling to the old ways. They will prefer tradition and ritual over transformation and relationship.

Ultimately, the Pharisees will reject Jesus altogether. They will sentence Him to death, not because He did wrong, but because:

- He welcomed sinners
- He refused to bow to their strict interpretations of the law
- And most importantly, He claimed to be God

They will, in the end, “take away the bridegroom.”

Discussion Questions:

- Are you someone who embraces new things easily, or do you prefer familiar, traditional ways of doing things?
- Have you ever resisted something new at first but later came to embrace it? What changed your mind?
- Has anyone experienced a time of fasting they're willing to share about?

- We can be honest: Is fasting something you think about regularly, or is it something you rarely (if ever) consider?
- What do you think Jesus' bridegroom parable teaches us about the purpose of fasting?
- What stands out to you about Jesus in this passage?
- Do you think this passage offers insight into how we should view traditions versus embracing new ways of doing things in our faith? Why or why not?

Conclusions or Application:

JESUS KNEW

One important observation is that Jesus was fully aware of what He was doing—as well as how the Pharisees would respond to Him. Jesus knew that His ministry would fulfill the old covenant and introduce a new way of relating to God. He understood that some would believe and follow Him while others would find Him offensive. To the Pharisees and others, His actions seemed rebellious—even blasphemous—and would ultimately lead them to seek His death. Jesus knew the bridegroom would be taken away. He knew that some would prefer the old wine to the new. Yet Jesus obeyed the Father and pressed forward with His mission.

It is amazing to consider that nothing surprises Jesus—not even those who reject Him or seek to harm Him.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO CHRIST RETURN

This leads us to Jesus' teaching on fasting. While He was with His disciples, fasting was unnecessary because the very purpose of fasting is to seek the presence of God. Since Jesus is God in the flesh, His disciples already had the full presence of God with them.

However, Jesus clearly taught that fasting would return with purpose after His departure. Today, followers of Jesus fast because we long for His return. Jesus even gave specific instructions on how to fast (Matthew 6:16-18), and we have examples of the apostles and early church fasting (Acts 9:9; 13:2-3; 14:23).

It is incredible to think that once Christ returns, fasting will no longer be necessary. In heaven, there will be no more need for repentance, sorrow, or longing for a greater experience of Jesus' presence. All pain, sin, and mourning will be abolished. God will dwell with man, and we will forever be with the Lord. Then we will feast; not fast.

So, while in this life we do experience the "new wine" Jesus brings, we continue to look forward to the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise—eternal life with Him.