**Matthew**

*Is Christ Enough?*

*Matthew 9:14-17*

14 ¶ Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? 15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. 16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. 17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved. (Matthew 9:14-17)

18 ¶ And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? 19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. 21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. 22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles. (Mark 2:18-22)

33 And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? 34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? 35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. 36 And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old. 37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. 38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. 39 No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better. (Luke 5:33-39)

Background

* This conversation was likely based on Jesus having the meal with Matthew, while the disciples of John and the Pharisees were fasting (likely one of the two times that fasted a week).
  + I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. (Luke 18:12) in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican.
* Benson Commentary - “In the law, we find only one fast-day enjoined, namely, the tenth of the seventh month, on which the national atonement was made. But the Jews, of their own accord, observed many other days of fasting; (see Isaiah 58:3;) and in our Lord’s time, days of this kind were more frequent than ever, especially among the Pharisees, who, it seems, generally fasted twice a week; Luke 18:12; and therefore as Jesus did not pretend to teach his disciples a more lax kind of doctrine than that of John and the Pharisees, the disciples of the latter were surprised to find them overlooking so essential a duty.”

Nothing is Better than Being with Jesus

* Benson Commentary - As it would be improper for the guests at a wedding to fast and weep while the marriage solemnity continues; so it would be equally improper for my disciples to fast and mourn at the time when I am personally present with them to give them joy.
* Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore. (Psalms 16:11)
* 38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. 40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. 41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. (Luke 10:38-42)

Don’t Add New to Old

* Elliott Commentary - The old garment is the common life of sinful men, such as Matthew and his guests; the new garment is the life of holiness, the religious life in its completeness; fasting, as one element of that life, is the patch of new cloth which agrees not with the old, and leads to a greater evil, a “worse rent” in the life than before. No one would so deal with the literal garment. Yet this was what the Pharisees and the disciples of John were wishing to do with the half-converted publicans.
* Illustration – “They just need to simmer! Most get it eventually.”
* Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The Outcome of Adding New to Old

* The Situation is Made Worse
  + 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith. (Galatians 3:10-11)
* It Destroys the Recipient (i.e. Bottle)
* The Old Way is Better

How Should We Respond?

* 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 ¶ *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 15 And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; (2 Peter 3:10-15)