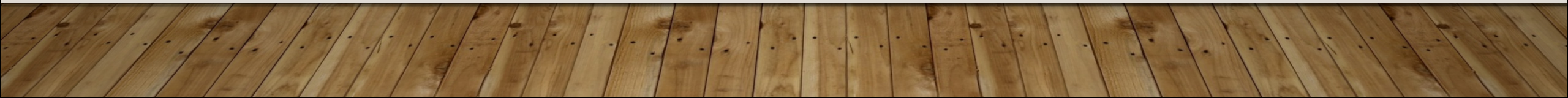




NOT FASTING, FEASTING NOT REFORMING, TRANSFORMING

MARK 2:18-22 LESSON | 10.21.20, 10.28.20

DANNY SCOTTON JR

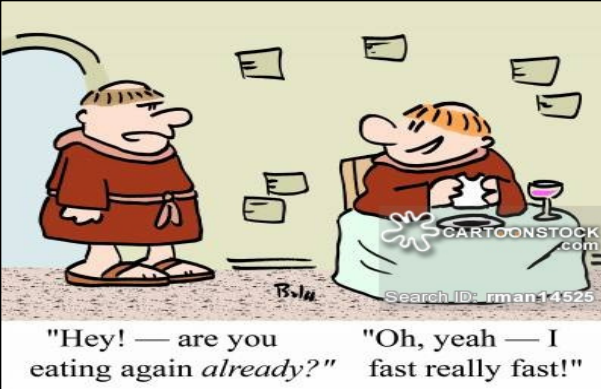




MARK 2:18-22 CONTEXT



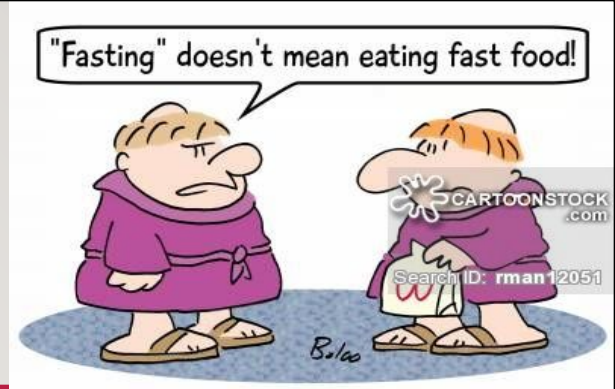
- Essentially, Jesus' **authority** is being questioned **again** (Evans, 194). Who does He think is ?
- Jesus has already healed on the Sabbath (Mk 1:31), though it did not cause too much commotion at the time (Cole, 126)
- They questioned His **authority** to forgive sins (Mk 2:1-12; Evans, 194; Edwards, 86; Guelich, 117; Stein, 134; Strauss, 136)
- They questioned His **authority** to eat with tax collectors and sinners (Mk 2:15-17; Evans, 194; Edwards, 87; Guelich, 108; Stein, 134; Strauss, 136)
- Next they will question Him about working (Mk 2:23-28; Edwards, 87; Guelich, 108) and healing on the Sabbath (Mk 3:1-6; Stein, 134)
- The previous account was about **feasting**; this one is about **fasting** (France, 136; Stein, 134; cf. Evans, 194)
- Before the focus was on Jesus' actions; here it is on His disciples' actions (cf. Mk 2:23-28; Hurtado, 46)
- The increased conflict will culminate in a plan to kill Him: 6 Then the Pharisees went out and began to **plot** with the Herodians **how they might kill Jesus.** (Mk 3:6, NIV; Edwards, 87; Guelich, 112)



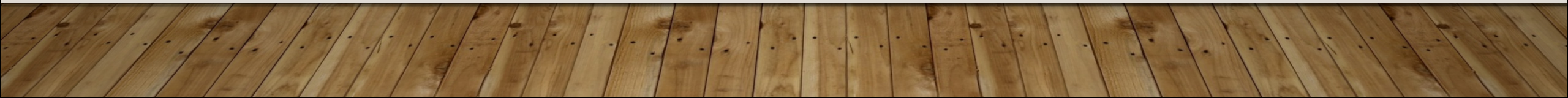
"Hey! — are you eating again *already*?"

"Oh, yeah — I fast really fast!"

MARK 2:18 HOW COME *THEY* FAST BUT YOU...?



- Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And [people] come saying to Him, "Why do the disciples of John as well as the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" (Mk 2:18, AT)
- Not sure who asks the question (Kernaghan, 63; Bock, 421; France, 138; Strauss, 138), but seems like they're not from either group (Schnabel, 74; Edwards, 89; France, 138; Stein, 136)
- Not sure if they are **curious** or **accusatory** (Kernaghan, 63) but likely the latter (Kernaghan, 63; Schnabel, 74; France, 138; Strauss, 138)
- The Pharisees and John the Baptist's disciples both emphasized repentance and purity (esp. the Pharisees) (Evans, 193).
- Both were sort of "renewal" groups who were more pious than the average Jew (France, 138). They fasted **regularly** (EDNT, 466; Evans, 193) — they "made a practice of fasting" (Brooks, 63)
- John's disciples likely did not have the same adoration for the Temple as the Pharisees (though they hated Herod who built it) (Kernaghan, 63-64), but they **both hoped for the coming kingdom of God** (Kernaghan, 63).



MARK 2:18

DISCIPLES OF THE PHARISEES?

- Apparently, Pharisees – a “religio-political party” (Strauss, 138) – technically did not have disciples (Brooks, 64; cf. Mt 9:14; Guelich, 109; Stein, 136; Strauss, 138) but see Lk 5:33 (Wessel, 731).
- Like saying “a follower of the Republicans” instead of simply saying “a Republican... Either you were a Pharisee or you were not.” (Strauss, 138)
- But apparently some were disciples of teachers of the law (Brooks, 64) or were teachers of the law (Mk 2:16; Strauss, 138; English, 70) who had disciples (Lane, 108; Wessel, 731)
- A certain sect of Pharisees may have had much in common with John the Baptist, however (English, 70)
- In a non-technical sense (Strauss, 138) it could mean that they were “admirers” or “fellow travelers” of the Pharisees (Brooks, 64; Wessel, 731) – or those who were influenced by the Pharisees (Lane, 108; Wessel, 731) and adhered to (Stein, 136) or were sympathetic to their teaching (Strauss, 138)
- 15 Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. 16 They sent **their disciples** to him along with the Herodians... (Mt 22:15-16a, NIV; Guelich, 110; cf. Mt 23:15; Stein, 136)



MARK 2:18 FAST FOR?



- Fasting was **not typically done regularly** (Hurtado, 52; France, 138) but was important and common in contemporary Judaism (Cole, 126; Brooks, 64; Stein, 136). Certain individuals fasted at different times for different reasons (Wessel, 732; cf. Lk 2:37; France, 138)
- People would fast to discern God's will (cf. 2 Ch 20:3; Schnabel, 74) and when humbly **petitioning** God (Schnabel, 74; Brooks, 64; Edwards, 89; cf. 2 Sam 12:21-23; Ezra 8:23; Stein, 136; Garland, 113)
- David **pleaded** with God for the child. **He fasted** and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. (2 Sam 12:16, NIV; cf. Ezra 8:21; Schnabel, 74; cf. Ps 35:13; Edwards, 88)
- Fasting could also be a sign of **repentance** (Strauss, 138; Wessel, 732): “Even now,” declares the LORD, “**return to me** with all your heart, with **fasting** and weeping and mourning.” (Joel 2:12, NIV;



MARK 2:18 FAST FOR?



- On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, **fasting** and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. (Neh 9:1, NIV; Stein, 136; cf. Joel 1:14; Schnabel, 74)
- Fasting was also a sign of **mourning** (2 Sam 1:12, 12:21-23; Hurtado, 52; cf. Cole, 127; Brooks, 64; Lane, 109; Edwards, 89; Guelich, 108, 109; cf. 1 Ki 21:27; Esther 4:3; Stein, 136; cf. 2 Sam 3:35; Ps 35:13-14, 69:10; Garland, 114)
- 13 Then they took their [King Saul and Jonathan's] **bones** and **buried** them under a tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they **fasted** seven days. (1 Sam 31:13, NIV; Schnabel, 74; Witherington, 127; Lane, 109; Guelich, 108; Stein, 136; Garland, 114 FN)

MATTHEW 2:18

TRUE FAST

- God rebuked people who fasted “with an undevoted heart” (cf. Zec 7:5; Schnabel, 74) or while treating the least of society unjustly (Schnabel, 74)
- 4 Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. 5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? 6 “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? (Is 58:4-7, NIV; cf. Is 1:13-17; Schnabel, 74; cf. Garland, 114)



MARK 2:18 NOT SO FAST?



- The Law only requires **one day** of fasting – the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*) (UBS, 90; cf. Keener, 134; Brooks, 64; Edwards, 88; Guelich, 109; France, 138; Stein, 135-136; Strauss, 138) – for 24 hours (Edwards, 89)
- 29 “This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must deny yourselves and not do any work—whether native-born or a foreigner residing among you—30 because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the LORD, you will be clean from all your sins. (Lev 16:29-30, NIV; UBS, 90; Kernaghan, 64; Witherington, 124; English, 70; Schnabel, 74; Brooks, 64; Edwards, 88; Stein, 136; cf. Lev 23:26-32, 35:9; Num 29:9-11; Lane, 108; cf. Wessel, 731; cf. Num 29:7; Ac 27:9; Strauss, 138)
- The command to **deny yourself** likely **at least** refers to fasting (Hartley, 242; Hess, 729; Bellinger, 98) as it was later understood (Kiuchi, 307). The Jewish oral traditions (cf. Mt 15:1-9) compiled in the Mishnah, which was completed around AD 200 (BEB, 1475), also included abstaining from washing, anointing, putting on sandals, and even sexual intercourse (mYoma 8:1; Hartley, 242).
- Post-exile, four annual fasts were established (Zec 8:19); a fifth was added by Queen Esther (Esther 9:31) (Schnabel, 74; France, 138; Strauss, 138; Wessel, 732; cf. Neh 9:1; Stein, 136)



MARK 2:18 NOT SO FAST?



- This is what the LORD Almighty says: “The fasts of the **fourth, fifth, seventh** and **tenth** months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.” (Zec 8:19, NIV; Schnabel, 74; cf. Zec 7:5; Brooks, 64; Strauss, 138; cf. Lane, 108; France, 138; cf. Zec 7:3-4; Edwards, 88-89; cf. Strauss, 138)
- They also fasted on New Year’s Day (*Rosh Hashanah*) (Witherington, 124; Guelich, 109)
- Though John’s disciples and the Pharisees both fasted **voluntarily** (Stein, 135), Jesus’ disciples did not. If this was a required fast, they likely would have done so – like they observed the Passover (Mk 14:12-26; Stein, 135-136)



MARK 2:18-22 FASTING PHARISEES



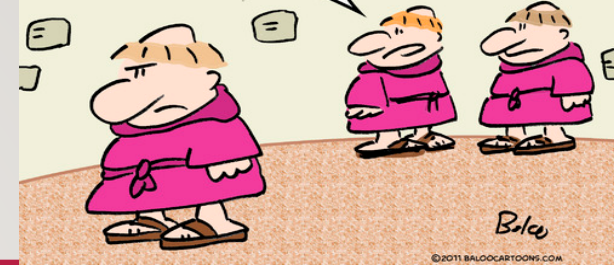
- Pharisees apparently went above and beyond the Law, fasting twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays (UBS, 90; Witherington, 125; English, 70; Lane, 108-109; cf. *Didache 8:1*; Bock, 421-22; Cole, 126; Schnabel, 74; Brooks, 63, 64; Edwards, 88; Guelich, 109, 113; France, 138; Stein, 136; Garland, 113; Strauss, 138; cf. Keener, 134; Kernaghan, 64; Hurtado, 45, 52; Wessel, 732) often without water (in the dry season: Keener, 134) from “dawn to dusk” (Edwards, 89; cf. Stein, 136)
- This is consonant with their view that the kingdom of God would come through Israel’s **strict observance of the Law** and repentance (Kernaghan, 63, 64; Hurtado, 45)
- The Pharisees’ apparently fasted as a symbolic **mourning** for the sins of Israel and that the long-awaited prophetic salvation had not yet come (Hurtado, 45)
- Pharisees also apparently fasted **publicly** (Hurtado, 45) – symbolically rebuking and reminding Israelite sinners (Hurtado, 45)

THEY MADE HIM TAKE A VOW OF SILENCE
SO HE'D HAVE TO STOP COMPLAINING
ABOUT HIS OATH OF POVERTY.



MARK 2:18 FASTING PHARISEES

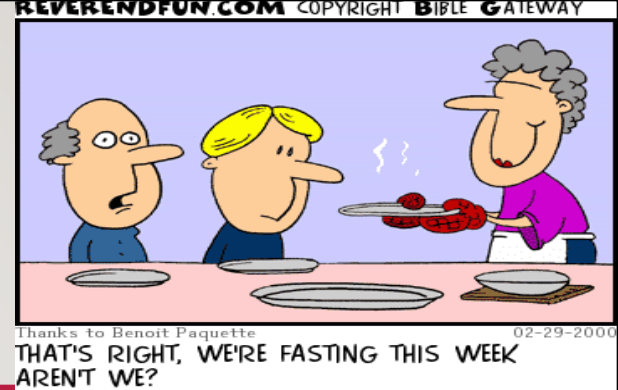
THEY MADE HIM TAKE A VOW OF SILENCE
SO HE'D HAVE TO STOP COMPLAINING
ABOUT HIS OATH OF POVERTY.



- 9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable:
10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 **I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.**’
- 13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ 14 “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” (Lk 18:9-14, NIV; UBS, 90; Witherington, 124; Hurtado, 52; Bock, 421; Schnabel, 74; Brooks, 63-64; Guelich, 109; France, 138; Garland, 105; Strauss, 138; Wessel, 732)
- 16 “When you fast, **do not look somber as the hypocrites do**, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that **it will not be obvious to others** that you are fasting, **but only to your Father**, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Mt 6:16-18, NIV; Hurtado, 45; Schnabel, 74; Brooks, 64; Guelich, 108-109; France, 138; Stein, 136; Strauss, 139; cf. Mt 6:1-6; Garland, 114)
- It seems many would use fasting as a form of “**self-exaltation**” (Hurtado, 45) – a “**badge of one’s piety**” (Garland, 114; cf. Wessel, 732)



MARK 2:18 FASTING BAPTISTS



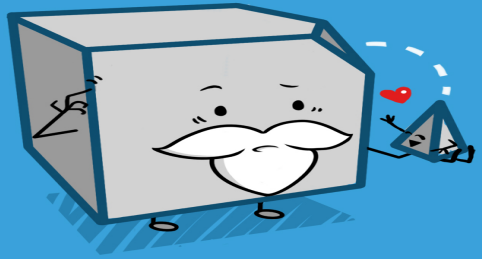
- John was an ascetic and probably made a habit of fasting (Bock, 421; cf. Brooks, 64; Guelich, 109) along with his disciples – baptized followers who were committed to his teaching (cf. Ac 19:1-4; Schnabel, 73; cf. Mk 6:29; cf. Lane, 108; cf. Mt 11:2 || Lk 7:18; Mt 14:12; Lk 11:1; Jn 3:25; Guelich, 109; cf. Ac 18:25 France, 138; cf. Stein, 136; Strauss, 138)
- John was in prison before his execution; his disciples may have been fasting and praying for his release (Kernaghan, 64; cf. Brooks, 64) or at least because he was in prison (Mk 1:14; Strauss, 138; cf. Wessel, 732).
- Or it may have been after/due to his execution (Witherington, 124; Cole, 127 FN; Brooks, 64; cf. Lane, 109; contra Stein, 135), though Mark reports this later (Mk 6:17-29; Stein, 134)
- John apparently saw the Pharisees' strict adherence to the Law as **superficial** (Kernaghan, 63)
- 7 But when he saw many of the **Pharisees** and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 **Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.** 9 And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. 10 The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. (Mt 3:7-10, NIV; Stein, 136; cf. Lk 3:7-9, Strauss, 138)



MARK 2:18 FASTING BAPTISTS

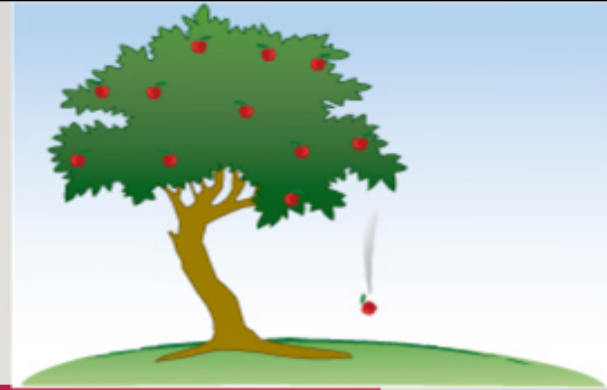


- John emphasized **repentance** and **baptism** in preparation for/anticipation of the arrival of the kingdom/King (Kernaghan, 60; Guelich, 109, 110) so their fasting may have concerned preparation for that day as they **mourned** its delay (Hurtado, 45; Lane, 109)
- Jesus differs with both: God didn't wait until Israel was "ready" and it's no longer time to **mourn** (Hurtado, 45)
- God's kingdom came even though God's people were **still sinful**; God graciously seeks to save the **unworthy** (cf. Mk 2:13-17; Hurtado, 45-46)
- 35 The next day **John was there again with two of his disciples**. 36 When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" 37 When **the two disciples** heard him say this, **they followed Jesus**. (Jn 1:35-37, NIV; Cole, 126; Edwards, 87 FN; France, 138; Stein, 136; Strauss, 138)
- 40 **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother, was **one of the two** who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. (Jn 1:40, NIV; France, 138; Strauss, 138)
- At least some of Jesus disciples were previously disciples of John the Baptist (Cole, 126; Lane, 109)
- Might look like they chose the **easy way out** (Cole, 126)



MARK 2:18

LIKE TEACHER, LIKE STUDENT



- Along with **prayer** and penitence, fasting was an important practice (Keener, 134; Strauss, 138; cf. Kernaghan, 64) – in addition to almsgiving (Edwards, 88)
- Fasting was a sign of religious devotion and humility (Evans, 193; Edwards, 89; Strauss, 136; Strauss, 138; cf. Kernaghan, 63, 64)
- Fasting was seen as a preparation for religious work (Evans, 193; Edwards, 89; Wessel, 732)
- It would have been viewed as unusual for the disciples to not fast at all (Keener, 134; Evans, 193) – others would have expected them to (Bock, 421)
- There is a gap between people’s **expectations** of Jesus/the Messiah and Jesus’ **actions** (English, 70; Garland, 110)
- Seems the questioners believe Jesus is “neglecting an important duty” (Kernaghan, 63). “There is an implicit claim to **higher spirituality**” (Wessel, 732)
- A rabbi was usually “regarded as **responsible for the behavior of his disciples**” (Keener, 134; cf. Witherington, 124; France, 137; Strauss, 138)
- If Jesus ignored fasting practices, they might wonder what He may think of more major matters (Cole, 126). **Why take Him seriously if His followers don’t even fast?** (cf. Edwards, 89; France, 137)



MARK 2:19 WEDDING PARTY



- **And Jesus said to them, "The wedding party cannot fast while the groom is [still] with them now can they? As long as they have time [where] the groom is with them, they cannot fast." (Mk 2:19,AT)**
- Jesus uses parables more and more when responding to opposition (Kernaghan, 63). He also uses the common technique of **counter-question** (Brooks, 64; Lane, 109; Guelich, 110; Stein, 136-137) – especially if the question was **hostile** (Stein, 137)
- **Wedding party:** lit. “sons of the bedchamber” (NIDNTTE, 436), “sons of the bridal chamber” (Witherington, 124; cf. Guelich, 110; Wessel, 733) or “sons of the wedding party” (EDNT, 480)
- Can mean “wedding guests” in general (UBS, 91-92; cf. France, 139; Strauss, 139; Wessel, 733) – those who were invited to the celebratory banquet (EDNT, 480)
- But likely more specifically refers to “wedding participants who were relatives and/or close friends of the bridegroom and who were responsible for carrying through the festive ceremonial” (NIDNTTE, 436), “the bridegroom’s attendants... **groomsmen**” (UBS, 91-92; cf. Witherington, 124; Guelich, 110; France, 139; Stein, 136-137) – the **wedding party** (Edwards, 89)
- Groomsmen were responsible for ensuring that the bride and groom entered the bridal chamber, which they guarded (Witherington, 124). They ensured the marriage was consummated (Witherington, 124)



MARK 2:19 WEDDING PARTIES



- Weddings often included **seven days** of festivities (Keener, 134; Edwards, 89; Wessel, 732) or **more** (Schnabel, 74; cf. Judg 14:17; Strauss, 139).
- During wedding feasts, people would not mourn, engage in hard labor (Keener, 134) nor fast (Keener, 134; Witherington, 124; Schnabel, 74; Lane, 109-110; Edwards, 89; Wessel, 732).
- Even rabbis were expected **not to teach** – but to **join the celebration** with their pupils! (Edwards, 89)
- There was an “abundance of food and wine, as well as song, dance, and fun both in the house and on the street.” (Edwards, 89).
- “They were the largest social events of village life” (Strauss, 139).
- Virtually everyone anticipated weddings with **joy** (Strauss, 140)



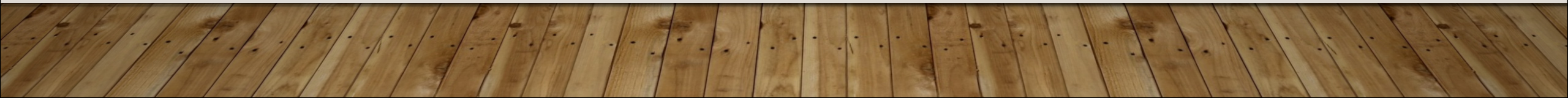
MARK 2:19 WHY FAST?



- Jesus: **Why fast during the party?** (Keener, 134; Cole, 127).
- This ain't a **wake** it's a **wedding!** (Garland, 105) (cf. Mt 11:16-19; Lk 7:31-35; Wessel, 732)
- 15 Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom **mourn** while he is with them? (Mt 9:15a, NIV; Stein, 136)
- Jesus is insinuating that His “presence is cause for celebration” (Evans, 193; cf. Kernaghan, 64; Witherington, 124; Bock, 422; Schnabel, 74; Lane, 110) — He is the bridegroom (Hurtado, 46; Schnabel, 74; Brooks, 64; Edwards, 89; Guelich, 110; France, 139; Stein, 137-138; Strauss, 138-139; Wessel, 732), **God with us!** (Bock, 422)
- Jesus is announcing the **good news** (i.e., gospel) of the inbreaking kingdom of God which brings forgiveness and salvation (Evans, 194; Guelich, 111; cf. Kernaghan, 64; Brooks, 64) as His exorcisms and healings demonstrate (Schnabel, 74) — this is time for **joy** (English, 70; Brooks, 64; Lane, 110; France, 139)
- Jesus likely insinuates that what others were praying, preparing and fasting for **had arrived!** (Kernaghan, 64; Guelich, 110-111) The disciples are in the wedding party (Edwards, 89; Guelich, 110; cf. Strauss, 138-139)... “live it up”! (Edwards, 89)



MARK 2:19-20 SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

- This is the first parable in Mark (Witherington, 124). It's important not to **overinterpret** every detail of parables (Keener, 134; Witherington, 126)
 - Israel's sin was seen as **spiritual adultery** against God – her **Husband** (Hurtado, 53)
 - The **exile** (Babylon c. 586 BC – 539 BC) (DOETHB, 478) was seen as a **divorce** (Hurtado, 53)
 - The prophets foretold of the hope of return and reconciliation to God (Hurtado, 53) – partially fulfilled with the return from exile in the 6th century BC (cf. Hurtado, 53)
 - “Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem: “This is what the LORD says: “ ‘I remember the devotion of your youth, how **as a bride you loved me and followed me** through the wilderness, through a land not sown. (Jer 2:2, NIV; Brooks, 64 FN; Stein, 137)”
 - “If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him and marries another man, should he return to her again? Would not the land be completely defiled? But **you have lived as a prostitute with many lovers**— would you now return to me?” declares the LORD. (Jer 3:1, NIV; Hurtado, 53)”
- 



MARK 2:19-20

SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

- 6 During the reign of King Josiah, the LORD said to me, “Have you seen what **faithless** Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and under every spreading tree and has **committed adultery** there. 7 I thought that after she had done all this she would return to me but she did not, and her **unfaithful** sister Judah saw it. 8 I gave **faithless** Israel her **certificate of divorce** and sent her away because of all her **adulteries**. Yet I saw that her **unfaithful** sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and **committed adultery**. (Jer 3:6-8, NIV; Hurtado, 53)
- 9 Because Israel’s immorality mattered so little to her, she defiled the land and **committed adultery with stone and wood**. 10 In spite of all this, her **unfaithful** sister Judah did not return to me with all her heart, but only in pretense,” declares the LORD. (Jer 3:9-10, NIV; Hurtado, 53)
- 11 The LORD said to me, “Faithless Israel is more righteous than **unfaithful** Judah. 12 Go, proclaim this message toward the north: “ ‘Return, **faithless** Israel,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will frown on you no longer, for **I am faithful**,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will not be angry forever. 13 Only acknowledge your guilt—you have rebelled against the LORD your God, you have **scattered your favors to foreign gods** under every spreading tree, and have not obeyed me,’ ” declares the LORD. 14 “Return, **faithless** people,” declares the LORD, “for **I am your husband**. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion. (Jer 3:11-14, NIV; Hurtado, 53; Brooks, 64 FN)

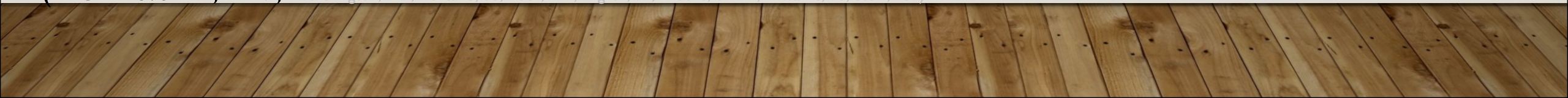


MARK 2:19-20

SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

- 6 “Then I passed by and saw you kicking about in your blood, and as you lay there in your blood I said to you, “Live!”⁷ I made you grow like a plant of the field. You grew and developed and entered puberty. Your breasts had formed and your hair had grown, yet you were stark naked. 8 “Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your naked body. **I gave you my solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you**, declares the Sovereign LORD, and **you became mine**.
- 9 “I bathed you with water and washed the blood from you and put ointments on you. 10 I clothed you with an **embroidered dress** and put sandals of fine leather on you. I dressed you in fine linen and covered you with costly garments. 11 I adorned you with jewelry: I put bracelets on your arms and a necklace around your neck, 12 and I put a ring on your nose, earrings on your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. 13 So you were adorned with gold and silver; your clothes were of fine linen and costly fabric and embroidered cloth. Your food was honey, olive oil and the finest flour. You became very beautiful and rose to be a **queen**. 14 And your fame spread among the nations on account of your beauty, **because the splendor I had given you** made your beauty perfect, declares the Sovereign LORD.

(Ezek 16:6-14, NIV; Witherington, 124; Hurtado, 53; Bock, 422; English, 72; Brooks, 64 FN; Edwards, 90; Stein, 137)





MARK 2:19-20

SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

- 15 “ ‘But you trusted in your beauty and used your fame to become a **prostitute**. You lavished your favors on anyone who passed by and your beauty **became his**. 16 You took some of your garments to make gaudy high places, where you carried on your **prostitution**. You went to him, and he **possessed your beauty**. 17 You also took the fine jewelry I gave you, the jewelry made of my gold and silver, and you made for yourself male idols and engaged in **prostitution** with them. 18 And you took your embroidered clothes to put on them, and you offered my oil and incense before them. 19 Also the food I provided for you—the flour, olive oil and honey I gave you to eat—you offered as fragrant incense before them. That is what happened, declares the Sovereign LORD.
- 20 “ ‘And you took your sons and daughters whom you bore to me and sacrificed them as food to the idols. Was your **prostitution** not enough? 21 You slaughtered my children and sacrificed them to the idols. 22 In all your detestable practices and your **prostitution** you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, kicking about in your blood. (Ezek 16:7-22, NIV; Witherington, 124; Hurtado, 53; Brooks, 64 FN; Edwards, 90; Stein, 137)
- 25 At every street corner you built your lofty shrines and degraded your beauty, **spreading your legs** with increasing **promiscuity** to anyone who passed by. (Eze 16:25, NIV; Witherington, 53; Hurtado, 53; Brooks, 64 FN)



MARK 2:19-20 GOD AS GROOM



- 14 “Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her. 15 There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There **she will respond as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.**
- 16 “In that day,” declares the LORD, “you will call me ‘**my husband**’; you will no longer call me ‘my master.’ 17 I will remove the names of the Baals from her lips; no longer will their names be invoked. 18 In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky and the creatures that move along the ground. Bow and sword and battle I will abolish from the land, so that all may lie down in safety. **I will betroth you to me forever;**
- 19 I will **betroth** you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. 20 I will **betroth** you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD. (Hos 2:14-20, NIV: Keener, 134; Bock, 422; English, 72; Schnabel, 75 FN; Brooks, 64 FN;

Edwards, 90; France, 139; Stein, 137)



MARK 2:19-20 GOD AS GROOM



- 4 “Do not be afraid; you will not be put to shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood. 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. 6 The LORD will call you back as if you were a **wife** deserted and distressed in spirit— a **wife** who married young, only to be rejected,” says your God.
- 7 “For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion **I will bring you back.** 8 In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD your Redeemer. (Is 54:4-8, NIV; Witherington, 124; Bock, 422; English, 72; Brooks, 64 FN; cf. Is 5:1; Edwards, 90; Stein, 137)
- As a young man **marries** a young woman, so will your Builder **marry** you; as a **bridegroom** rejoices over his **bride**, so will your **God** rejoice over **you**. (Is 62:5, NIV; Witherington, 124; Bock, 422; English, 72; Edwards, 90; Wessel, 732; cf. Is 61:10, Schnabel, 75 FN; France, 139; Stein, 137)



MARK 2:19-20 NEW COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP



- The Messiah was not portrayed as a bridegroom in the OT nor in virtually any later Jewish writings (see Edwards, 90; Lane, 110; Guelich, 110; France, 139; cf. Wessel, 732; but see Is 54:4-8, 61:10, 62:5; Ezek 16:7ff.; Stein, 137)
- Though the disciples may not have understood until later (Lane, 110; France, 139; cf. Guelich, 116; but see Stein, 137), Jesus may be implying that **He is fulfilling the bridegroom role of the LORD** (Witherington, 124; Lane, 110; Edwards, 90)
- This may imply the marriage between God and His people – a **new, restored relationship** (Hurtado, 53; Schnabel, 74; cf. France, 139), a new age (of salvation) (Guelich, 110; Strauss, 137, 140) – ushered in by the **authoritative** Son of God (Mk 1:1, 7-8, 11, 22, 27, 2:10-12; Stein, 137)
- The wedding metaphor may imply a **new covenant** (Witherington, 127). New covenants require new rules regarding conduct (Witherington, 127) – a **new “rulebook”** (Garland, 113)



MARK 2:19-20 NEW COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP



- 31 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a **new covenant** with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. 32 It will **not** be like the **covenant** I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because **they broke my covenant**, though I was a **husband** to them,” declares the LORD. 33 “This is the **covenant** I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will **forgive** their wickedness and will **remember their sins no more.**” (Jer 31:31-34, NIV; Stein, 137; Strauss, 141)
- Covenants were “ratified by blood” (cf. Ex 24:8; Keener, 484): 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the **new covenant in my blood**; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” (1 Cor 11:25, NIV)



MARK 2:19-20 JESUS AS GROOM



- 22 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the **Lord**. 23 For the **husband** is the head of the wife as **Christ** is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now **as the church submits to Christ**, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
- 25 Husbands, love your wives, **just as Christ loved the church** and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, **just as Christ does the church**—30 for we are members of his body.
- 31 “For this reason a **man** will leave his father and mother and be united to his **wife**, and the two will become one flesh.” 32 This is a profound mystery—**but I am talking about Christ and the church.** (Eph 5:22-32, NIV; Witherington, 127; English, 72; Schnabel, 75 FN; Lane, 110 FN)



MARK 2:19-20 JESUS AS GROOM



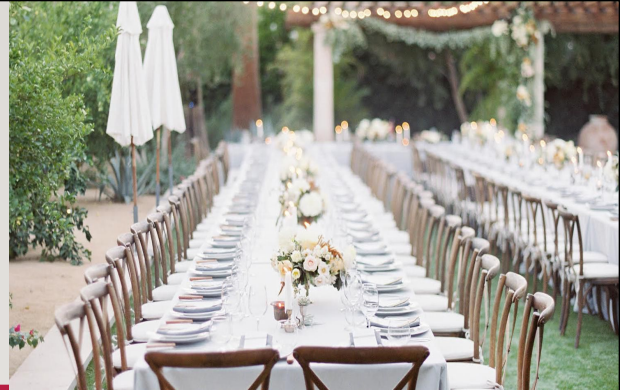
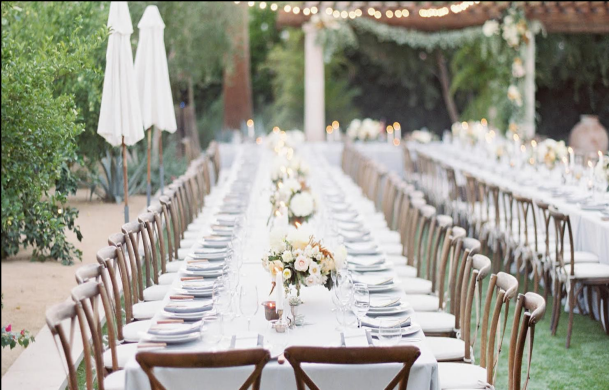
- 2 I am **jealous** for you with a **godly jealousy**. I promised you to **one husband, to Christ**, so that I might present you as a **pure virgin to him**. (2 Cor 11:2, NIV; Witherington, 127; English, 72; Lane, 110 FN; Stein, 137)
- In this culture, fathers were the one who pledged their daughters to be married. As their spiritual father/founder (cf. Ac 18:1-11; 1 Cor 4:14-15), Paul tells the Corinthians that he aimed to pledge them in marriage to Christ. (Keener, 516)
- John the Baptist: 28 You yourselves can testify that I said, “I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.” 29 The **bride belongs to the bridegroom**. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is **full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice**. **That joy is mine**, and it is now complete. 30 He must become greater; I must become less.” (Jn 3:28-30, NIV; English, 72; Lane, 110 FN; France, 139; Stein, 137)
- What John and his disciples were **preparing for**, Jesus and His disciples were **celebrating!** (cf. Guelich, 110)



MARK 2:19 EVERLASTING WEDDING BANQUET



- The consummation of God's salvation of His people is often portrayed as a feast or wedding banquet (Strauss, 139)
- 6 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a **feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine**— the best of meats and the finest of wines. 7 On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; 8 he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. (Is 25:6-8, NIV; cf. Is 65:13-14; Strauss, 139; Wessel, 732)
- I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places **at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.** (Mt 8:11, NIV; cf. Lk 13:29; Strauss, 139; Wessel, 732)




MARK 2:19-20 EVERLASTING WEDDING BANQUET

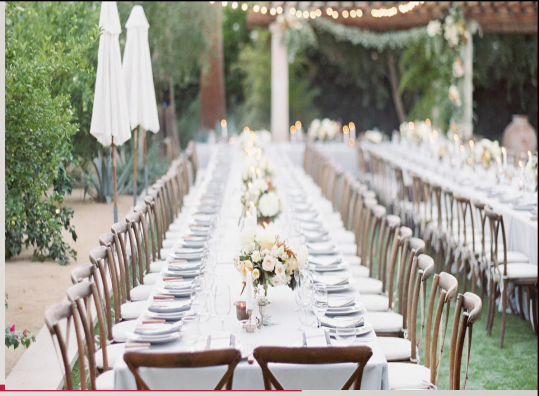
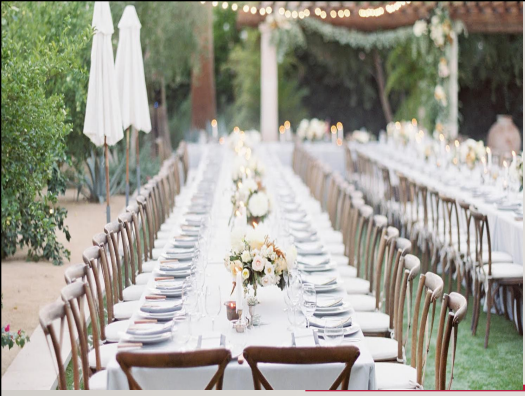
- Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a **wedding banquet** for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they **refused** to come. 4 “Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the **wedding banquet**.’
- 5 “But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. (Mt 22:1-7, NIV; Hurtado, 53; France, 139; Stein, 137; Strauss, 139)



MARK 2:19 EVERLASTING WEDDING BANQUET



- 8 “Then he said to his servants, ‘The **wedding banquet** is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. 9 So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ 10 So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the **wedding hall** was filled with guests.
- 11 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was **not wearing wedding clothes**. 12 He asked, ‘How did you get in here without **wedding clothes**, friend?’ The man was speechless. 13 “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14 “For many are invited, but few are chosen.” (Mt 22:8-14, NIV; Hurtado, 53; France, 139; Stein, 137)
- Parable of the Ten Virgins (Mt 25:1-13, NIV; Hurtado, 53; Schnabel, 75; France, 139; Stein, 137; Strauss, 139): At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the **bridegroom** (Mt 25:1, NIV)
- 13 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. (Mt 25:13, NIV; Hurtado, 53; France, 139)



MARK 2:19 EVERLASTING WEDDING BANQUET

- 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. (Rev 19:7, NIV; cf. Rev 19:9; Witherington, 127; Hurtado, 53; Schnabel, 75 FN; Lane, 110 FN; France, 139; cf. Rev 22:17; Stein, 137; Strauss, 139)
- I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride** beautifully dressed for her **husband**. (Rev 21:2, NIV; Witherington, 127; Schnabel 75 FN; Lane, 110 FN)
- 9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the **bride, the wife of the Lamb**. (Rev 21:9, NIV; Witherington, 127; Schnabel, 75 FN)
- 17 The Spirit and the **bride** say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life. (Rev 22:17, NIV; Stein, 137)



MARK 2:20 THE TIME TO FAST



- **But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day (Mk 2:20, AT)**
- It's possible this could refer to a time when Jesus is no longer present in person with them (France, 140) – perhaps **after His Ascension** to the right hand of God the Father (Mk 12:36, 14:62; Strauss, 139), and when His disciples will endure persecution (Mk 13:9-13, 33-37; Strauss, 139)
- However, in this context (UBS, 92; Wessel, 733; but see Ac 1:9, BDAG, 96), at least in retrospect (Lane, 111), **taken away** (ἀπαίρω | *apairō*) likely implies being taken away by **force** (Schnabel, 75; Guelich, 112; France, 140; Stein, 138; Strauss, 139)
- People usually did not fast when the bridegroom (and bride) were absent (English, 70). Typically, the **guests** left the bride and groom (Edwards, 90-91; Guelich, 112)
- But when Jesus is **taken away**, then it will be time to fast (Strauss, 139; cf. 1 Sam 31:13; Witherington, 127; cf. Evans, 194; cf. Jn 16:20; Cole, 127; cf. Schnabel, 75; cf. Jn 14:20, 16:23, 26, Guelich, 111) – perhaps at His Crucifixion (Hurtado, 46; cf. Bock, 422; contra Lane, 112)
- On that day, His disciples will fast in mourning (cf. Jn 16:16-20; Guelich, 113; cf. Cole, 127) due to his arrest, death, and burial (cf. Wessel, 732; cf. Jn 16:22; Stein, 139)



MARK 3:20 TIME TO MOURN, A TIME TO DANCE



- 20 Very truly I tell you, you will **weep** and **mourn** while the world rejoices. You will **grieve**, but your **grief will turn to joy**. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her **joy** that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of **grief**, but I will see you again and you will **rejoice**, and no one will take away your **joy**. (Jn 16:20-22, NIV; Guelich, 113; Stein, 139)
- a time to weep and a time to laugh, a **time to mourn** and a **time to dance**, (Ec 3:4, NIV; Strauss, 139)
- For Jesus and His disciples, it's time to eat and drink – **even with sinners!** (cf. **Mk 2:13-17**; Evans, 194; Witherington, 127; Hurtado, 46; Lane, 113; Guelich, 109, 116)
- Contrast: “**death, funeral, mourning**” vs. “**life, wedding celebration**” (Witherington, 124; cf. Guelich, 112)
- 18 For John came **neither eating nor drinking**, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ 19 The Son of Man came **eating and drinking**, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.” (Mt 11:18-19 = Lk 7:33-34, NIV; Evans, 194; Witherington, 127; Guelich, 109, 111; Stein, 136; Garland, 104; Strauss, 138, 139; Wessel, 732)
- Even after Jesus’ death, “the joy of the resurrection will transform all grief and sorrow” (Garland, 105).

AND BY HIS
WOUNDS WE
ARE HEALED.
-ISAIAH 53:5

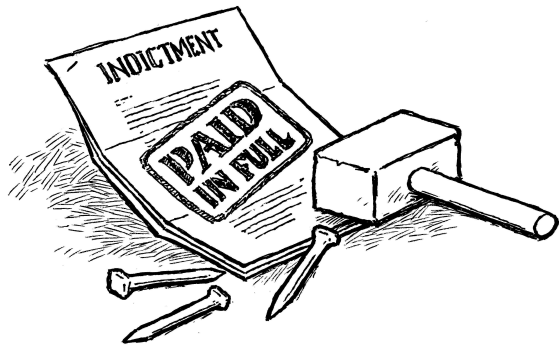


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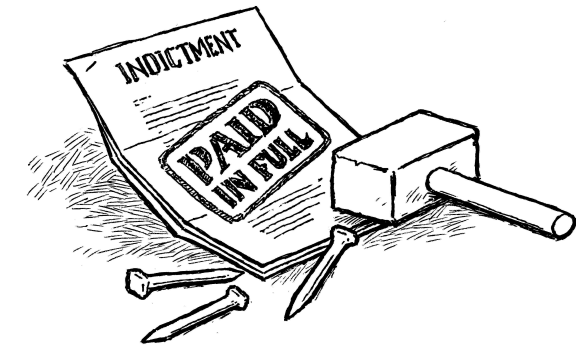


MARK 2:20 SUFFERING SERVANT

- Could be a reference to the **Suffering Servant of Isaiah** (Witherington, 124; Edwards, 91), Who is referenced throughout Mark (Edwards, 91)
- 4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.
- 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment **he was taken away [αἰρώ | *airō*]**. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was **cut off from the land of the living**; for the transgression of my people he was punished. (Is 53:4-8, NIV; Witherington, 124; Edwards, 91; Guelich, 112; Stein, 138; Strauss, 139; Wessel, 733)



MARK 2:20 FUTURE SUFFERING (FOR GOD)



- Also may be a reference to John the Baptist – who was already **taken away (to prison)** (cf. Mk 1:14; Edwards, 90-91; cf. English, 72)
- John suffered for His godly obedience, Jesus suffered for His godly obedience... Jesus' followers will suffer for godly obedience (cf. MK 8:34-38; English, 72) – foreshadowing (Edwards, 91).
- Mark's audience may have been Christians in Rome who were being persecuted by Emperor Nero (Edwards, 91)
- Likely the first passion prediction (Guelich, 112; Garland, 105). Also: 31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must **suffer many things** and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be **killed and after three days rise again.** (Mk 8:31, NIV; Stein, 141)
- 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to **give his life as a ransom for many.**" (Mk 10:45, NIV; cf. Mk 14:21, 36 Lk 2:34-35; Stein, 138, 141)
- Jesus' forthcoming death was not a surprise to Him (Stein, 141) and therefore should not be seen viewed as a tragedy. It was "the **sacrifice that sealed the new covenant** he came to bring" (Stein, 141)
- 24 "This is my blood of **the covenant**, which is poured out for many," he said to them. (Mk 14:24, NIV; Stein, 141)

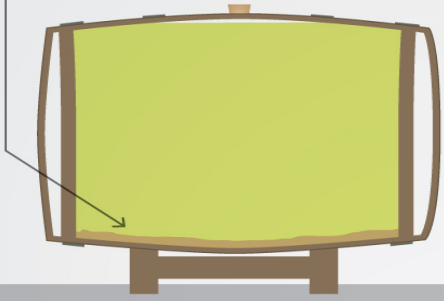


MARK 2:21 OLD GARMENT, NEW PATCH?



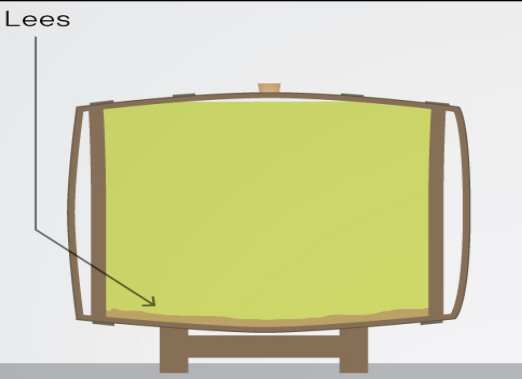
- **No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, that which fills [the cloth] takes away from it – the new from the old – and the tear becomes worse. (Mk 2:21, AT)**
- **Unshrunk** (ἀγναφος | *agnaphos*): “new” cloth that has not been washed and dried and therefore **not yet shrunken** (LN, 524; UBS, 94; cf. EDNT, 20; Hurtado, 46). **“Fresh from the weaver’s loom”** (BDAG, 12; Schnabel, 75)
- **Nowadays**, people often sew new cloth on old garments – and they look good as new (UBS, 94).
- Back then, things were different. Typically, older clothes had **shrunk from previous washing** (Keener, 134; Stein, 139). Jesus did not offer tips on prewashing (Garland, 105)
- Back then, if you sewed a new patch on an old garment, when it was washed, the new patch would shrink and cause the garment to be torn worse than before (Witherington, 127; Schnabel, 75; Edwards, 91; France, 141; Garland, 105; Wessel, 733; cf. Hurtado, 46; Bock, 422; Stein, 139)
- **Old clothes** require an **old patch** (Witherington, 126; Bock, 422; Schnabel, 75)
- **Takes away** (αἶρω | *airō*) is a cognate of the word used to describe the how the bridegroom was to be **taken away** (ἀπαίρω | *apairō*) in Mk 2:20 (Edwards, 92). Also same word used in Is 53:8 (Strauss, 139)

MARK 2:22 NEW WINE, OLD WINESKINS?



- **And no one puts wine that is beginning to ferment into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the wineskins and the wine is lost – as well as the wineskins. Rather, wine that is beginning to ferment [goes] into new wineskins (Mk 2:22, AT)**
- **Beginning to ferment** (νέος | *neos*): “fresh” (NIDNTTE, 378; EDNT, 462) that is, **still fermenting** (UBS, 96; BDAG, 669; NIDNTTE, 378; EDNT, 462) after the lees had been strained (Schnabel, 75; France, 141)
- **Wineskin** (ἄσκός | *askos*): a bag made from animal skin or leather (LN, 68-69; BDAG, 172; EDNT, 172; France, 141; Wessel, 733) to carry water (Gen 21:14-15, 19; Ps 33:7), milk (Judg 4:19), or wine (Jos 9:4, 13; 1 Sam 10:3, 16:20; Job 32:19; Jer 13:12; Stein, 140; cf. Hab 2:15; Strauss, 140)

MARK 2:22 NEW WINE, OLD WINESKINS?



- Fermenting in the sealed container caused pressure to build (Bock, 422; Stein, 140; Wessel, 733) and the wineskin to expand (Edwards, 91; Strauss, 140) as it became more brittle (Edwards, 91; France, 141; Stein, 140)
- Old wineskins that had previously contained fermenting wine would have been already **“stretched to capacity”** (Keener, 134; cf. Stein, 140; Garland, 105; Wessel, 733). Jesus did not offer tips on pre-moistening (Garland, 105)
- If you put wine that is beginning to ferment into a wineskin that has already been stretched, it will break (Keener, 134; Witherington, 127; Bock, 422; cf. Hurtado, 46; Wessel, 733) and the wine and wineskin will be lost (Bock, 422; Wessel, 733; cf. Job 32:19; Edwards, 91).
- **New** wine requires **new** wineskins (Witherington, 126; Bock, 422)



MARK 2:22

DON'T MIX OLD AND NEW



- **New wine** (Jn 2:1-11; Stein, 139) and **new clothes** (cf. Mt 22:11-14; Stein, 139) were typically both found at weddings (Witherington, 127; Stein, 139)
- It would not be right to try to stitch what is **new** onto what is **old** (Witherington, 126); the **new** requires **new** forms (Witherington, 126; Bock, 423)
- The Old Covenant, like the old wineskin, had been “stretched as far as [it could]” (Bock, 422)
- Linking the old with the new “can result only in **mutual disadvantages**” (NIDNTE, 380).
- Both the old and the new are “damaged when they are wrongly combined” (Bock, 422; cf. Schnabel, 75-76). **If** one tries to mix them, there are **destructive consequences** (Edwards, 92; France, 140-141)



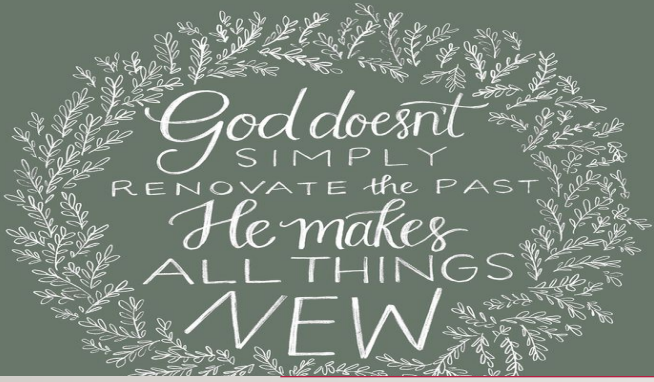
MARK 2:22

OLD AND NEW DON'T MIX

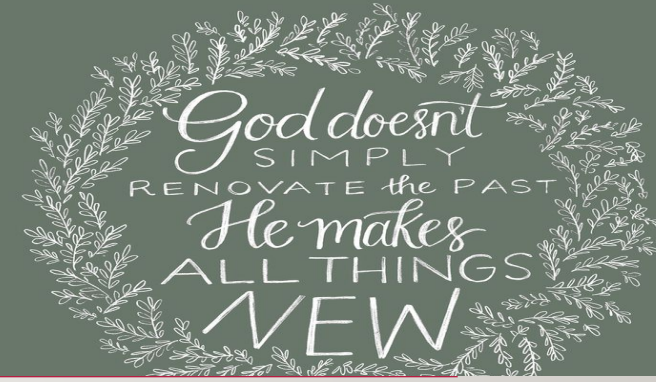
(CF. GUELICH, 115; FRANCE, 141)



- Up until John the Baptist's preaching, it was appropriate to fast, mourn, and prepare (Evans, 194). The “age of promise” vs. the “age of fulfillment” (Wessel, 733)
- John was **preparing for** the arrival of the King/kingdom; with Jesus, **it has already come!** (Lane, 113) – the wedding is underway; time to celebrate (cf. Lk 15:23-25, 32; Stein, 137)
- Similar to Jesus turning water into wine (NIDNTTE, 380; cf. Jn 2:1-11; Brooks, 65; Wessel, 733). The **water of Judaism** turned into the **new wine of Christianity** – God saved the best for last (cf. Jn 2:10; Brooks, 65)
- The Book of Acts chronicles how the Christian church could not be viewed as merely a “Reformed Sect” of Judaism (Cole, 128; cf. Brooks, 65).
- He did not come to **reform** but to **transform!** (Strauss, 136, 140; cf. Wessel, 733).



MARK 2:18-22 ALL THINGS NEW



- John the Baptist, the Pharisees, Judaism, etc. represent the **old**; Jesus and Christianity/the inbreaking kingdom of God represents the **new** (NIDNTTE, 380; Schnabel, 76; Brooks, 65; Lane, 113; Edwards, 92; Guelich, 115; France, 142; Garland, 105; Strauss, 140) – the **Old Covenant vs. the New Covenant** (Stein, 139-140)
- Jesus is not saying that all that happened prior to Him is now invalid (Kernaghan, 64) or evil (Brooks, 65) or that the Old should be completely thrown out (English, 72; cf. Mt 13:52; Rom 15:4; Strauss, 141). No value judgments are made (Guelich, 117)
- But things are **different** now because Jesus has arrived (Kernaghan, 65); the old can't be mixed with the new (Witherington, 126). The time of the Old has **passed** (Brooks, 65); the New **surpasses** the Old (English, 72; Lane, 113; France, 137)
- “Jesus had come to **make all things new**” (Witherington, 127); this is a new era, **a new age** (Lane, 113; Garland, 113). Jesus is not an “**appendage** to the status quo” (Edwards, 92; cf. Stein, 140)
- The Old Container/Cloth **can't contain** the freshness of Christ (cf. Bock, 422; English, 72; Schnabel, 76; France, 140). “**New**” teaching (cf. Mk 1:27; Guelich, 117)
- Jesus didn't come to merely **patch up the old** (Garland, 105; Wessel, 733) covenantal relationship between God and His people (i.e., Judaism) (Strauss, 137, 140), but to bring **new clothes** – a **new covenantal relationship** with new standards (Bock, 423)



MARK 2:18-22 ALL THINGS NEW



- Jesus didn't come to **refill** the Old Covenant, but to **fulfill** the Old Covenant (cf. Cole, 128; Lane, 113; cf. **Mt 5:17**; Rom 10:4; Edwards, 92)
- Jesus should not be an **add-on** to our lives (Edwards, 92), our lives should be “receptables” for the newness of the fermenting Gospel (Edwards, 92)
- Ceremonial washings (Mk 7:2-4; Stein, 134), food regulations (Mk 7:14-22; Stein, 134; Garland, 105), circumcision (Ac 10:1-11:18; Stein, 134), Sabbath laws (Mk 2:27; Stein, 134; cf. Col 2:16-17), the sacrificial system of the Temple (cf. Mk 1:10, 14:63, 15:38; Garland, 105), etc. have been **superseded** (Stein, 134)
- The Bridegroom did not come to **renew** the vows of the Old Covenant, but to **make new** vows under the New Covenant (cf. Strauss, 141)

IMMANUEL
God with us

MARK 2:18-22 FASTING NOW? JESUS IS WITH US

IMMANUEL
God with us

- Many look to this passage to justify fasting on Good Friday – a practice that started in the 2nd century (Stein, 139) – and other Fridays. But, the early church did not “think of Jesus as being **away**” (Stein, 139)
- Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “**Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.**” (Heb 13:5, NIV; Stein, 139)
- 7 But very truly I tell you, **it is for your good that I am going away.** Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you (Jn 16:7, NIV; Stein, 139)
- 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely **I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**” (Mt 28:20, NIV; Stein, 139)
- 51 While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. 52 Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem **with great joy.** 53 And they stayed continually at the temple, **praising God** (Lk 24:51-53, NIV; cf. Ac 8:8, 13:52; Stein, 139)
- We can **still rejoice** due since the Lord’s presence is still with us (Stein, 139) through the Holy Spirit. “If anything... [this passage] justifies a practice of **not fasting** more than a practice of fasting” (Stein, 139)



MARK 2:18-22 FASTING NOW?



- 13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you **do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope** (1 Th 4:13, NIV; Garland, 114)
- 16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you **by what you eat or drink**, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a **shadow** of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. (Col 2:16-17, NIV; Garland, 121)
- Since they kingdom is not yet fully consummated, there will be trials and hardships (cf. Mk 14:22; Strauss, 141; cf. 2 Tim 3:12). But even being persecuted for Christ is to be a **joy** (Jas 1:2-23; Mt 5:12; Col 1:24; 1 Pet 1:6, 4:13, 16; Strauss, 141)



MARK 2:18-22 FASTING NOW?



- “Any observance that we do **simply to conform to external rules imposed upon us**—fasting because it is a certain season—is to be **rejected**. The **calendar is not to rule our religious devotion**. Fasting is only meaningful when it arises from concerns so deep that food does not matter, not when it is dictated by some rule book” (Garland, 121)
- “All spiritual exertion that **aims only at setting ourselves apart from and above others** is to be rejected.” (cf. Col 2:18-23; Garland, 121)
- That being said, many in the early Church did fast regularly (cf. Didache 8:1) and even required people to **fast before baptism** (Didache 7:4; Strauss, 139)



EXCURSUS: MARK 9:29 ONLY BY PRAYER AND FASTING?

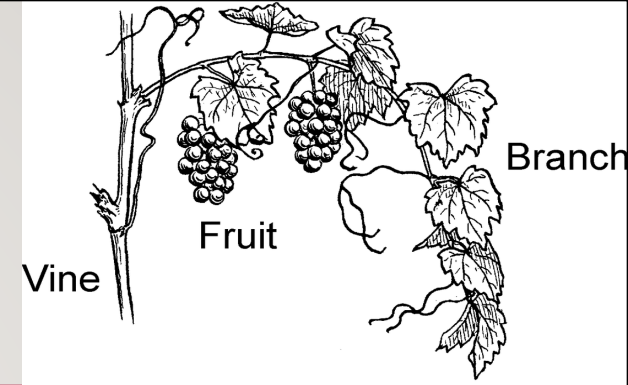


- 28 After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” 29 He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.” (Mk 9:28-29, NIV)
- Many manuscripts add “and fasting” (καὶ νηστεία) to Mark 9:29 (Cole, 222; Brooks, 148; Bock, 479) – similar to additions in Ac 10:30 and I Cor 7:5 (Brooks, 148; Strauss, 400; France, 361)
- The two earliest (and generally most trusted) Greek manuscripts and a few other early texts omit it (Brooks, 148). It is likely a later **scribal addition** (Bock, 479; Hurtado, 150; Strauss, 400; Stein, 437; Witherington, 268; Kernaghan, 178 FN; but see France, 361)
- Mark is likely writing to a Gentile church where fasting was likely not as common as it was among Jews (Cole, 222)
- This addition likely reflects the belief of the early Church (Lane, 335; Brooks, 148; Hurtado, 150; Stein, 437; cf. Witherington, 268)
- This kind of demon (i.e., stronger than others) or this kind of challenge (i.e., spiritual warfare)? (Strauss, 400) Perhaps the former but **any** kind of spiritual conflict requires prayer (cf. France, 370)
- Jesus only mentions prayer as “the **source** of faith’s power and the **means** of its strength” (Lane, 335; cf. Brooks, 148; cf. Eph 6:10-21)





EXCURSUS: MARK 9:29 ONLY BY PRAYER AND FASTING?



- Seems like they thought they could exercise the authority to exorcise **on command** (Lane, 335; Strauss, 400-401; France, 370) – likely without praying (though there may have been time constraints) (France, 369)
- 7 Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and **gave them authority over impure spirits.** (Mk 6:7, NIV; Lane, 335; Guelich, 54)
- They had done it before; they thought they could do it again (Lane, 335; France, 370). But they need to ask **every time!** (Lane, 335) – they have no power of their own (Strauss, 401); it's all **derivative** (France, 370) (cf. Jn 15:5)
- This was “a subtle form of **unbelief**” – they were trusting in **themselves**, rather than trusting in **God** (Lane, 335). “And fasting” is out of place because the passage is about **dependence on God alone** – not any type of human piety (Brooks, 148; Witherington, 268)
- “the power of God must be **asked for on each occasion** in radical reliance upon **his ability alone**. When faith confronts the demonic, God’s omnipotence is its **sole** assurance, and God’s sovereignty is its **only** restriction.” (Lane, 335-336)
- Our inadequacy should drive us to prayer (Edwards, 281). Prayer entails “acknowledging one’s dependence on [H]im for all of our needs” (Strauss, 400) If we could do everything on our own, who would feel the need to pray?
- “Their public humiliation has been a necessary part of their **re-education** to the principles of the kingdom of God.”



MARK 2:18-22 FASTING NOW?



- This is the only reference to fasting in Mark (reference to fasting in Mk 9:29 was a later scribal addition; Hurtado, 52; as well as Ac 10:31 and 1 Cor 7:5 Stein, 138-139)
- Jesus is **not** saying that fasting is never appropriate (France, 138-139; Garland, 114; Strauss, 139; cf. Wessel, 732)
- 2 After **fasting forty days and forty nights**, he was hungry. (Mt 4:2, NIV; Schnabel, 74)
- Yet, the NT does not say much about fasting (see par. Mt 9:14-17; Lk 5:33-39; Brooks, 64)
- Christians apparently fast/go hungry elsewhere in Scripture (Ac 13:2-3, 14:23; 2 Cor 6:5, 11:27; Hurtado, 52; cf. Cole, 128; Schnabel, 74; cf. Ac 9:9; Brooks, 64; cf. 1 Cor 7:5, 9:25-27; Edwards, 91 FN; France, 138-139; but see Stein, 138-139) but not for sorrow or grief (Stein, 138)
- And the practice does **not appear to be regular** (Hurtado, 52-53)
- 23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders a for them in each church and, with **prayer and fasting**, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. (Ac 14:23, NIV; Hurtado, 52, etc.)



MARK 2:18-22 FASTING NOW



- 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. 5 **Do not deprive each other** except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, **so that you may devote yourselves to prayer**. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (1 Cor 7:4-5, NIV; Cole, 222; Edwards, 91; France, 138-139 FN)
- In Scripture, the only clear reference to fasting as a regular practice seems to be Mt 6:16-18 (Stein, 138-139)
- “Scripture does not condemn such voluntary self-discipline as an aid to prayer (1 Cor. 7:5). What Scripture condemns is the **outward fast** that corresponds to **no inward and spiritual reality**, and becomes simply an **opportunity for pride and self-glorification** (Luke 18:12).”

(Cole, 222)



CONCLUSION

- As often, Jesus answers objections on multiple levels (Cole, 127): (1) It's inappropriate to fast while the during wedding festivities. Why fast when Jesus – the Bridegroom – is among them?
- (2) It's inappropriate to put a **new** patch on an **old** garment/**new** (newly fermenting) wine into an **old** wineskin. Can't mix old (Jewish ceremonial) practices with the new (Christian) practices (Cole, 128). Mixing would cause trouble
- Can't act like it's the **Old Age** in the **New Age** (of salvation) – BC (before Christ) vs. AD (*anno Domini* – “In the year of the Lord”) (Stein, 140; cf. Wessel, 733)
- Since the Fall, creation's been caught in the cycle of “sin, death, and decay” (Strauss, 140-141). Now that the King has arrived to announce the kingdom, it is time to **celebrate** (Evans, 194; Witherington, 126) at the messianic banquet (Strauss, 140) – **not fast**.
- The Pharisees thought that strict adherence to the **Old Covenant** would hasten the coming of the **new age** (Witherington, 127)
- “...the way to God is **not through religious practices** but **through joyful association with Jesus** (Brooks, 65) – **the Bridegroom!** Let every person who acknowledges Christ celebrate! (cf. Edwards, 90, 92)
- Jesus makes all things new; the New Covenant cannot fit into the container of the Old. **Jesus came not to refill but to fulfill**