



LESSON 48 - Mark 2:18-22

18And 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.

The Pharisees questioned Jesus' practices, because in terms of fasting, they saw that He didn't seem to do as they did or even as the known holy man, John the Baptist, did. They believed that fasting was a way to express mourning for sin in a person or in a nation. They thought fasting was an activity of holiness. They had lots of rules about fasting, how to fast, when to fast, how long to fast, etc. So when they didn't see Jesus fasting, they incorrectly assumed that He didn't fast at all.

(We know He did fast at times, because He taught about fasting, Matt 6:16-18, and practiced it, giving Him power over a certain kind of demonic spirit {see Mark 9:17-29} His teaching on fasting was a part of Jesus' famous "Sermon on the Mount," which also contains the beatitudes. You can read the whole sermon in Matthew, chapters 5-7. Jesus did not have to fast to mourn over sin, because He had no sin.

(Hebrews 7:26 For such an high priest (Jesus) became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, 1 John 3:5... in Him (Jesus) is no sin...

1 Peter 1:19 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, ... 19But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,

2 Cor 5:21 For he (God) hath made him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

Heb 4:15 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. **15**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

1 Peter 2:22 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22Who did no sin, neither was guile (deceit) found in his mouth: **23**Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;)

Jesus fasted, as the scriptures taught, to be able to break the chains of Satan off people. (Isaiah

PRINCIPLE: There will always be people who assume things about you that aren't correct. You can't help that. Just be sure that how you are living is pleasing to God. Follow the commandments that Jesus gave: love God passionately, love yourself wisely, taking good care of yourself as the creation of God and His temple, ...love other Christians, so that the world may know you are Jesus' disciple, and love your neighbor (**Romans 13:8-10 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.**)

Jesus responded to their question about fasting by asking a rhetorical question (one that is asked to make the hearers think, no spoken answer is expected). He used a metaphor - a word that gives a picture - of a bridegroom, because it spoke of His love and devotion to His followers as a bridegroom would love and be fully devoted to his bride. He is making the point that the coming of the bridegroom to obtain his bride is not a time to be fasting, but celebrating and rejoicing that the bridegroom is here. Jesus is the Bridegroom Whom His Father sent to get a bride from the earth. The bride of Christ are those believers who have been washed in the blood of Christ for their salvation and who allow Him to wash them in the water of the Word to keep them beautiful and clean. (Revelation 1:5, Ephesians 5:25-27)

Notice that Jesus does not dismiss their idea that fasting is a legitimate practice, for He says that, when the Bridegroom (Himself) is gone (left the earth after His ascension), His disciples will fast. That's why believers in Christ are supposed to fast. If you need to review fasting, read lessons 22 and 23.

PRINCIPLE: Enjoy the life God gives you, while you have it. Be thankful for what you have.

PRINCIPLE 2: Love people by speaking good to them instead of cursing, doing good to them instead of evil, praying for them. (These were Jesus' instructions for how to treat your enemies, but they apply to your friends as well. (Matt. 5:43-45)

PRINCIPLE 3: Fasting is a proper activity of the Christian.

Next time we'll look at verses 21 and 22. What do you think they mean?

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