



“Old and New”
Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-12; Luke 5:33-39
Aug 24, 2008

Introduction: Church always on the look out for what is new...

Enjoying the Bridegroom

In this text, Jesus is reminding us of the joy we can find in the new life He brings us. At the time, fasting and prayer were seen as hallmarks of a religious life. However, the disciples of Jesus were not known for this. Jesus tells them, *“Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast.”* Jesus and His disciples were known for feasting, rather than fasting, as we know from the many comments on His eating with sinners and tax collectors. A wedding then was a time of feasting and of celebration. It is interesting that Jesus uses this imagery, for in the Old Testament, God was seen as the bridegroom and Israel was the bride. For example, in Hosea 2:19, God says, *“I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice; in love and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the Lord.”* God had also promised that His kingdom would be like a wedding feast, saying in Isaiah 25:6, *“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.”* The coming and the presence of God's kingdom will be a time of great joy and of celebration. The Christian faith is to be full of rejoicing and of joy. How joyful are you?

Enjoying a new Garment

One of the most important components of following Jesus is that our lives are to be made new. Jesus says, *“No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not be saying that we must be careful in how we live our new lives in Him. There will be a mixture of old and new in the kingdom. As Jesus says, in Matthew 13:52, “Therefore, every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”* In the kingdom of God, there will be both old and new, for Moses and the Prophets are now fulfilled in Christ. Jesus affirms this in Matthew 5:17, saying, *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”* So, then we must be careful to keep the old that is of God, and then be open to the new that is also from Him.

Enjoying New Wine

Jesus also compares life in the kingdom to that of new wine, saying, *“And no one pours out new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No new wine must be poured into new wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, the old is better.”* Wine was not the normal ordinary drink of ordinary people, but rather what was drunk at special occasions, such as weddings (as we can see from his miracle in John). Animal skins were used to hold the wine and new wine required new wineskins because new wine was not done fermenting or expanding. Jesus is saying that we need to be open to the newness of life He brings. Our lives are to be constantly changing and being renewed as we are filled with the Holy Spirit. As Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 3:18, *“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”* How will we experience this? In Ezekiel 36:26, God promises us a new heart, saying, *“I will give you a new heart and a new spirit in you; I will remove from you a heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and to be careful in following my decrees.”* As we drink the new wine of His kingdom, we gain new hearts, as we are filled and transformed by His Spirit. Jesus was inviting them to enjoy a new life which revolved around grace, relationship and the cross. Do you?