

DO NOT COMBINE THE OLD TO NEW COVENANTS

We are currently studying a series of lessons on the New Covenant. This is important because all church age believers (CAB) are under the New Covenant and not under the Old Covenant.

In today's lesson, Jesus warns us against combining the Old to the New Covenant in four parables.

- **Bridegroom** (Lk.5:33-35)

“And they said to Him, "The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers, the disciples of the Pharisees also do the same, but Yours eat and drink." And Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? "But the days will come; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days."

- **New cloth on old garment** (Lk.5:36)

And He was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.

- **New wine in old wineskins** (Lk.5:37-38)

"And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.

- **Old wine tasters and new wine** (Lk.5:39)

"And no one, after drinking old *wine* wishes for new; for he says, "The old is good enough."

NOTE: These grouping of parables are found in Matt.9:14-17 and Mark 2:18-22. However, only Luke mentions the last parable (5:39).

The background to these four parables is important. Jesus was being criticized by Pharisaical legalism for recruiting a tax collector as one of His disciples (Lk.5:27-32; Gal.4:29; Acts 15:5). When they took their complaint to the disciples of Jesus (Lk.5:30), Jesus stepped into it. “It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (Lk.5:31-32) This led Jesus to teach these four parables. Later Jesus explained to His disciples why He taught by parable in Lk.8:9-10 and Matt.13:10-17.

FOUR REASONS WHY WE ARE NOT TO COMBINE THE OLD AND NEW COVENANTS.
--

(Gal.2:21) “I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”

1. Jesus did not come to reform or extend the Old Covenant Law but to fulfill it and to establish the New Covenant.

(Matt.5:17) “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.”

(Heb.8:13) “When He said, ‘A New Covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.”

(Heb.9:15) “For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgression that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”

(Heb.10:9-10) “Then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will.’ **He takes away the first in order to establish the second**. By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**.”

2. The difference is that legalism works to extend the law of the Old Covenant (OC). Pharisaical legalism of the first century was a classic example of this principle.

They created the Traditions of the Elders. They added some 600 additional laws to Mosaic Law.

Jesus was criticized for breaking these laws in Matt.15:1-14.

Jesus answered their criticism, “Why do you transgress the Commandments of God for the sake of your traditions?” (Matt.15:3)

The “Tradition of Elders” reflects how it distorted the purpose of the Law and it’s replacement today, under the New Covenant.

(Gal.3:24-26) “Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith had come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all son of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”

Therefore Jesus went on the offensive against this apostate legalism in **Matt.23**. Jesus described these teachers as hypocrites, blind guides, snakes, brood of vipers, and murderers of God messengers.

3. Legalism puts the burden on your shoulders to carry.

(Matt.23:4) “They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger.”

Grace puts the burden upon Jesus Christ - on our behalf.

(Matt.11:28-30) “Come to Me, all who are wearry and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Therefore, legalism and grace are mutual exclusives.

Law: (James 2:10) “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.”

Legalism: (Acts 15:1) “Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, ‘unless you are circumcised, according to the customs of Moses, you cannot be saved.’”

Grace: (Acts 15:10-11) “Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?” We believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.” (Eph.2:8-9)

4. In our lesson text, Jesus gave three parables to teach:

DO NOT COMBINE THE OLD AND THE NEW COVENANTS.

- **New cloth on old garment**

(Lk.5:36) And He was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.

- **New wine in old wineskins**

(Lk.5:37-38) "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined." But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins."

- **Old wine taster and new wine**

(Lk.5:39) "And no one, after drinking old *wine* wishes for new; for he says, The old is good enough."

Summation

- **Combining them will ruin both contents**

(1 Cor.5:6-8) "Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

- **New was made from the old formula**

(Rom.1:1-3) Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called *as* an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,"

- **Each has a special role in the Plan of God**

(Heb.12:24) "and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel."

- **The Old Covenant must not be superimposed upon the New Covenant**

(Gal.2:21) "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

- **If you combine them, it will be disastrous for both of them**

(1 Cor.11:24-25). "and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."