

Luke 5D

- In Chap 5 last week, Luke gave us an early look at the conflict that would follow Jesus through out His Ministry
 - Jesus was back in Capernaum teaching the crowds and the Pharisees had begun to take notice of Him, with a suspicious eye
 - In particular, they were troubled by his immense popularity and the power He had gained over the people in such a short time
 - Pharisees we said were religious leaders in their, but in truth they were more properly thought of as religious politicians or powerbrokers
 - They were men whose power and prestige and very livelihood revolved around their control over Jewish society
 - They demanded the respect and obedience of the people
 - And they maintained their control by imposing a system of rules and regulations beyond the Law itself
 - They burdened the people with obligations that they could never meet, but the Pharisees prided themselves on how they had made the most of this system
 - So the last thing the Pharisees wanted to see was someone who presented an alternative to the system that favored the Pharisees
- Consider two of Jesus' teachings from earlier in this chapter
 - First we had the healing of the paralytic
 - Jesus first declared the man forgiven of sins, which offended the Pharisees
 - Jesus declared that God could in fact wipe away the debt that each man carried, the debt of sin
 - Now to be sure, the dilemma for the Pharisees in the moment was trying to discredit Jesus' claim to forgive sins yet being unable to explain away the miraculous healing they had seen

- But there was an even more serious concern on their minds
 - The Pharisees had based their own power and authority on establishing and enforcing a system of righteousness based on the Law
 - It was based on the Law because it wasn't the law, not exactly
 - The Pharisees had taken the Mosaic law and distorted it, added to it, changed it, all the while making it more burdensome and difficult, as if the Law weren't difficult enough
- And here comes Jesus declaring that God could forgive sins without the necessity of a life of good works
 - Based purely on this man's willingness to appeal to Jesus for mercy and healing, Jesus could grant both physical healing and spiritual healing
 - What would happen if the people accepted this teaching? It would be madness
 - First, people would accept this free offer of forgiveness and then the next you know, they would be dispensing with all the rules and restrictions that the Pharisees had declared were essential to righteousness
 - Nevermind the Pharisees would lose their powerbase, their hold over the people
- Then secondly, Jesus goes to a tax collector, makes him a disciple, a pupil, and then accepts an invitation to feast with the tax collector and his unrighteous friends
 - This offended not only the Pharisees' sensibilities, it also frustrated their means of enforcing control
 - These men Jesus visited were a part of society that had refused to play the game of the Pharisees
 - Either they were prevented from playing, or more likely, they didn't want to have any part in it

- They lived life as they pleased, without paying attention to Pharisee's rules and restrictions
- And they lived under the protection of the Roman legion, which enabled them to avoid the penalties of the Jewish law
- Now the Pharisees made sure that these outcasts were made pariah's in Jewish society
 - No upstanding Jew would have anything to do with them
 - This was their punishment, and the Pharisees wanted to make sure that these men stood out as examples of what would happen to anyone who didn't live according to the Pharisees rules
- But here again, Jesus comes on the scene, a man of God, a Rabbi, and he eats and drinks with these men and seems to give them approval
 - Talk about upsetting the status quo
 - If the people got the idea that even sinners were worthy of God's mercy, then what would be the incentive to earn God's favor by adhering to rules
 - The Pharisees would have no hope of keeping anyone in line once they got the idea that God would accept men as they were, sin and all
- Which brings us the end of Chap 5 and Jesus first substantial confrontation with the Religious leaders of his day
 - The Pharisees complain how the disciples of Jesus don't respect the customs of the other rabbi's disciples, like fasting
 - They looking for a way to indict and shame Jesus' ministry, hoping to discredit him now before he does anymore harm
 - And these confrontations will continue and grow throughout Jesus ministry, and in Luke's account they will take a recurring role on center stage for the next 10 chapters
 - Through those chapters, Jesus will work the whole time to illustrate the principle He first describes here at the end of Luke 5, at times contending with the disciples and at other times teaching the disciples

- So, let's look at this principles – the central dispute between the Pharisees and Jesus – as Jesus introduces it Chap 5 verse 36:

[Luke 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.

[Luke 5:37](#) “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.

[Luke 5:38](#) “But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.

[Luke 5:39](#) “And no one, after drinking old *wine* wishes for new; for he says, ‘The old is good *enough*.’”

- Jesus answers the Pharisees concerns over the behavior of Jesus disciples with a two-part parable
 - the first parable recorded in Luke
 - And as such, we need to consider it very carefully
 - The parable uses two different subjects to draw a contrast, and as attempt to understand his meaning, we need to take note of how parables typically work
 - A parable uses a common everyday setting or experience, and then draws a parallel to some deeper spiritual issue
 - The idea is really quite simple – if the audience can understand and appreciate the everyday experience , then they'll have a key for understanding the more complex spiritual issue
 - But since we're talking about the Word of God, the process is infinitely more complex than that
 - Before we have the teaching assistance of the HS, we can't see the connect in parables
 - In Matt 13, Just as Jesus answered his disciples when they asked him why he taught in parables, and He said:

[Matt. 13:10](#) ¶ And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”

[Matt. 13:11](#) Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

[Matt. 13:12](#) “For whoever has, to him *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.

[Matt. 13:13](#) “Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

- The Pharisees and other unbelievers were not granted the possibility of understanding Jesus’ teaching in the day of His coming, as a part of God’s plan
- So it requires God’s allowing us to understand His Word, through the Holy Spirit, before we might understand these hidden mysteries
- So returning to our parable, consider Jesus’ comment about the garment
 - He said imagine an old garment, a garment that is worn and falling apart – a pair of jeans, let’s say
 - With holes and tears...the jeans can’t be used any longer for the purpose for which they were made
 - The jeans should be thrown away
 - But there will be those who would desire to preserve them, to so they could continue using them
 - But if instead of repair the old garment, what if the garment maker provided you a new garment instead – a new pair of jeans
 - Jesus makes the point in the parable that no one who has been given a new garment would think to cut it up and take a piece of it and try to patch the old garment
 - First, taking the patch would completely ruin the new garment
 - Secondly, the patch when placed on the old garment just makes it look even more ridiculous
 - Anyone hearing this parable knows instinctively what should be done,...you throw away the old and start using the new dress
- Before we consider the larger spiritual issue Jesus is describing, let’s move to the second comparison Jesus offers in the parable
 - He describes placing wine in wineskins

- In Jesus day, people didn't have glass bottles to hold wine
- Instead, people used clay pots or jugs to hold wine
- But if you wanted to take wine with you, as you walked on a long journey, clay pots were impractical and too heavy
- So sacks made of animal skins – leather – were used to hold wine
 - When you put wine in a fresh wine sack, the skin is strong and flexible and it can withstand the pressure of the wine
 - Over time the skin weakens and if the wine inside weren't consumed, it would eventually leak out as the skin gave way
 - Since wineskins were used to hold wine for a short time, the wine was usually consumed before the skins gave out
 - But if you took a used wineskin and refilled it with wine, you were asking for trouble, it would almost certainly fail from the pressure
 - Instead, you must choose a new container to hold the new wine – the two containers remain separate
- So Jesus uses this well understood principle as he teaches once again, that it would be foolish to try to take something old and adapt it to a new use
 - Not only does it ruin the new thing – whether jeans or wine
 - But it ruins the old thing as well – they must remain distinct and separate
- So what is Jesus' larger point to the Pharisees and to us?
 - Well, as should be obviously by now, the old religious order of the Pharisees, the Mosaic Law and all the man-made rules that had grown up around it was destined to remain unrepaired, just like that old garment
 - It was to go away just as the old wineskin must be retired when the new wine is ready
 - And as God inaugurated a new covenant, one that brought new life, it must by necessity replace – not repair – the old

- To the Jewish culture, the Jewish people, especially the Jewish leaders, the natural assumption had always been that the Mosaic covenant was the way to righteousness
- It was the means by which God would save His people
- And when the Messiah would come, naturally his ministry would just fit into the existing system, they assumed
- And of course, the Pharisees were just fine with that – because they were masters of this system
- In fact, they expected to be honored and celebrated by the Messiah as the best that Jewish society had to offer
- Even Christians today can fall back into that thinking from time to time
 - It's very common to hear teaching in the church that says – either by suggestion or directly – that the Law is still in some way a part of our Christian experience
 - The easiest way to see this tendency at work is in how we tend to hedge our bets whenever the question is posed what parts of the Law still apply to a Christian
 - The ones most Christians today will still say are applicable are the ten commandments
 - Some take an even stronger view, stating that the moral law is still in force for Christians, leaving only the sacrificial & ceremonial laws off the table
 - And a few supposed Christians would maintain that the law in its entirety still applies to Christians
- But Jesus argues that the two can never mix
 - If we were to try to place them together in some way, we ruin both
 - God never intended to combined these two vastly different covenants into some patchwork means of obtaining righteousness
 - And other scripture makes this very clear
- In Galatians, Paul uses the analogy of a child to illustrate how one covenant replaces another

- He says that we are like a child – an orphan who is under a guardian - a tutor , a nanny – waiting for adoption as true sons of God
- But once we receive our adoption, we no longer need the tutor
- Likewise, once the Gospel has been made known and the grace of the new covenant has been revealed, we give no more thought to the Law

[Gal. 3:23](#) ¶ But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

[Gal. 3:24](#) Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.

[Gal. 3:25](#) But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

- In Romans, Paul also compares the transition from old to new using a widow released from marriage vows when her husband dies

[Rom. 7:2](#) For the married woman is bound by **law** to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the **law** concerning the husband.

[Rom. 7:3](#) So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the **law**, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

[Rom. 7:4](#) ¶ Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the **Law** through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

[Rom. 7:6](#) But now we have been released from the **Law**, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

- Just like a wife who must be released from marriage to her first husband before she can be joined to another, we must be released from the law through death before we are available to be joined to a new covenant
 - Paul also says that like that widow, we have been released from the law by a death
 - But when did we die? If death is the only way to be released from the law, when did we get the chance to die so that we would have the opportunity to accept the new covenant?
 - Paul says we were made to die through the Christ's bodily death on the cross

- When The Father put His Son to death, he was putting to death the body of all believers who were joined to Christ
- We never personally experienced this death Paul speaks of, because God the Father placed Christ on the cross in our place
- And as Paul says in Rom 7:4, we were joined to Christ, both in death and in new life
- So we have died to the law – it no longer has any relationship to us – no power to condemn us
- And we live in the new life of Christ, bearing fruit for God
- Still, some will not accept this substitution, preferring to stay with the old system
- The Pharisee couldn't get past the very suggestion that their system wasn't good enough – that it needed replacing at all
- And Jesus recognizes this fact about the Pharisees
- Consider how Jesus ends the parable
 - In verse 39, Jesus says that those who have tasted the old won't want the new wine, saying the old is good enough
 - Which wine is considered superior? New wine or old wine? You don't choose the youngest wine you can find
 - Once you've had old wine, you refuse to even consider someone's offer of new wine
 - You won't even try it, usually, because you already believe you know which one is better
 - As it was for the Pharisees, who had come to know and like the system they had – the Law and the pharisaical additions to it
 - This was comfortable and it gave them power
 - And here's Jesus, making subtle suggestions that he has been sent by God and is even to be the Messiah of Israel, yet he contradicts the Pharisees at every opportunity
 - He undermines their authority

- He challenges their rules
 - He doesn't respect their judgments over the people
 - It's as if He is dismissing the very Law itself
 - So they reject Him and his message without even considering it
- Today we have the opportunity to celebrate an important commandment of our Lord – a baptism of believers
 - We mentioned a moment ago that we have died to the law through Christ's death on the cross
 - And just like Christ we have been resurrected – first the resurrection of a new spirit and ultimately a resurrection into a new body
 - And to recognize that death and resurrection process, Our Lord gave us the practice of baptism
 - All believers are commanded to be baptized, having come to faith we are to show that new life by picturing the death and raising in the form of water baptism
 - Today we baptize Cameron and Moriah
- Before we call Daniel up to close our service today, I would like to pray over the two young people who will be baptized today