

A DEVOTIONAL SERIES ON THE GOSPEL ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

OUT WITH THE OLD IN WITH THE NEW

Mark 2:22 “New wine is for fresh wineskins.”

Are you “set in your ways?” To be set in your ways means you have very fixed habits and ideas and are unwilling to change. You think to yourself, your habits and ideas have gotten you this far in life, so why should you change now?

Jesus brought significant change with Him. He criticized Jewish religious practices and the over six hundred laws they had developed over the centuries. He preached the Gospel and performed miracles on the Sabbath, which raised the ire of the Jewish leaders. He associated with people who were considered unfit for a right-thinking Jew to have anything to do with. Jesus literally turned the Jewish world on its ear.

In your life the same dynamic is at work. Change is happening all around you. Which of it should you embrace and which should you not? In the church there are changes happening as well. Music is changing. New hymns are replacing your old favorites. If Bach is sacred to you, what about the music that the Getty’s are writing? What music is appropriate to be played and sung in the church of Jesus Christ today? Must all music be played on an organ or is it appropriate to have in a congregation a band leading the singing?

Then there are new life-styles. Here in Arizona most do not wear formal clothing. That includes what is worn by those attending worship services. Is it permissible to receive the Lord’s Supper wearing Bermuda shorts and a golf shirt while wearing sandals on your feet? Does doing so change the holiness and sacredness of the Holy Meal Jesus has prepared for you? To properly receive the Lord’s Supper must you kneel at a communion rail or is it also appropriate to have a continuous line coming forward to receive the holy meal?

You as a Christian are challenged by Jesus’ teaching here in Mark 2:22 to be open to giving up old ways of doing things and willing to permit changes that are permitted by Holy Scripture. Traditions not based on the teaching of Holy Scripture are simply that. You never dare permit changes in teaching the content

of God's word (doctrine) but be open to new ways of delivering it. "New wine is for fresh wine skins."

Prayer: O Lord, give me the gift of discernment so I can properly determine what You permit to change and what you do not. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Built on the Rock the Church shall stand
Even when steeples are falling.
Crumbled have spires in ev'ry land;
Bells still are chiming and calling,
Calling the young and old to rest,
But above all the souls distressed,
Longing for rest everlasting.

Surely in temples made with hands
God, the Most High, is not dwelling;
High above earth His temple stands,
All earthly temples excelling.
Yet He who dwells in heav'n above
Chooses to live with us in love,
Making our bodies His temple.

We are God's house of living stones,
Built for His own habitation.
He through baptismal grace us owns
Heirs of His wondrous salvation.
Were we but two His name to tell,
Yet He would deign with us to dwell
With all His grace and His favor.

Here stands the font before our eyes,
Telling how God has received us. The
altar recalls Christ's sacrifice
And what His Supper here gives us.
Here sound the Scriptures that proclaim
Christ yesterday, today, the same,
And evermore, our Redeemer.

Grant, then, O God, Your will be done,
That, when the church bells are ringing,
Many in saving faith may come
Where Christ His message is bringing;
Many in saving faith may come
Where Christ His message is bringing:
"I know my own; My own know Me.
You, not the world, My face shall see.
My peace I leave with you. Amen."

(LSB 645)