

*Alêtheia Christian Fellowship*  
*April 14, 2019 ~ Palm Sunday*  
*“Wineskins”*

*9:00 ~ Fellowship.*

*10:00 ~ Service with the King’s Kid’s & Communion for all who are Christians*

**NEWS**

*Please pray for the Mitchell Family*

Resurrection Sunday Breakfast (4/21 at 8:30)

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

Visit the website ~ [www.myaletheia.com](http://www.myaletheia.com) ~ Hear a sermon at

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- 1) What does the change in attitude towards Jesus, say about people in general?
- 2) Can a Christian accept Jesus as Savior, but refuse to surrender to Him as Lord?
- 3) Is Christianity compatible with Judaism?

Today we celebrate the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. On Sunday morning, Jesus and his disciples began the 2-mile journey from Bethany. It was the hometown of \_\_\_\_\_, and his sisters, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Just west of Bethany was בַּיִת פְּנִיָּא (bāt fā-gā), where Jesus dispatched two of His disciples to go retrieve a \_\_\_\_\_.

Genesis 49:1–12, Zechariah 9:9

The people went wild. The expectation was that at the \_\_\_\_\_ the Messiah would come and basically give them Heaven on earth.

While that's precisely what Jesus did - it took a form no one ever expected. That's why the crowd went from, "Hosanna in the Highest!" on \_\_\_\_\_ to, "Crucify Him!" on \_\_\_\_\_.

It was quite an intense few days and everyone who came into contact with Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ to Him.

It is impossible to be \_\_\_\_\_ after an encounter with the Lord.

His very presence - is a challenge to change. Ultimately, there are only two choices.

1)

2)

Human beings blur the lines, because we want to retain \_\_\_\_\_. What if Jesus...

How many people say and truly mean, "Here I am Lord, do with me whatever You \_\_\_\_\_ and give me the courage to follow You wherever You \_\_\_\_\_."

Job 13:15

Everyone hopes that there's something after this life, but no knows that. So, most folks want to do enough to secure a good future, should there be one, but still have as much fun as possible, in the here and now.

Fundamentally, it is a lack of faith.

Hebrews 11:6b, Mark 9:22-24

**MATTHEW 9:14-17** ~ <sup>14</sup>NASB Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" <sup>15</sup>And Jesus said to them, "The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. <sup>16</sup>"But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. <sup>17</sup>"Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

John the Baptist was \_\_\_\_\_ by Herod Antipas, but his disciples were still more dedicated to him, than to Jesus.

One reason was that Jesus did not fit their \_\_\_\_\_. He was so different from John, or the Rabbis.

*Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.*

*God Bless You!*

“The attendants of the bridegroom,” are committed to the groom. The groomsmen are there to make sure it is a wonderful and festive time. These dudes can’t be \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus then gave an oblique reference to His \_\_\_\_\_.

Is Jesus with His disciples now?

Matthew 28:20, John 14:16

In verse 16, the incompatibility of a patch of new material is juxtaposed with an older garment. The two things cannot possible \_\_\_\_\_.

Mark 2:21&22, Luke 5:36-38, John 14:6

In verse 17, carrying on in the same vein, Jesus juxtaposes old wineskins and new wine. Again, they are completely \_\_\_\_\_.

Please, carefully \_\_\_\_\_ the pliancy of your metaphorical wineskin.

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Check all that apply – detach and place in the offering or the prayer box

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to talk with the pastor about \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I want prayer for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to volunteer to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I want more information about \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Alêtheia ~ Matthew 9c ~ 041419 ~ Palm Sunday



Today we celebrate Palm Sunday. That is the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, one week before His betrayal, execution, burial and bodily Resurrection that occurred nearly 2,000 years ago on our calendar.

It was a Sunday morning in early spring just like today - perhaps a bit warmer.

Jesus and his disciples had spent the night in Bethany, a small village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives about two miles from Jerusalem. It was the hometown of His dear friends Lazarus, whom He had

raised from the dead and Lazarus' sisters, Martha and Mary.

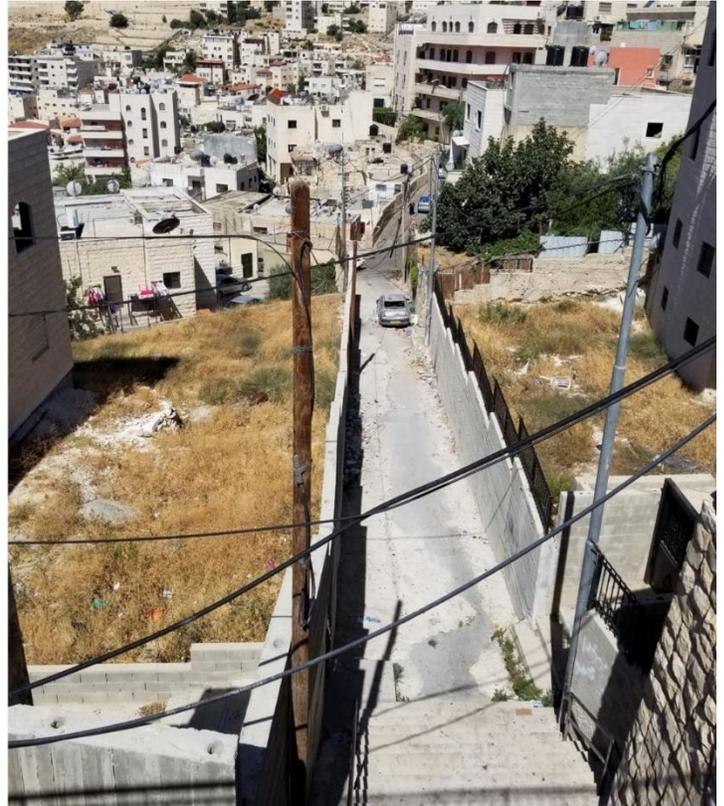
As they travelled a short distance west from Bethany, towards the big city, they came to the outskirts of the village of בֵּית פְּגָא (bāt fǎ-gā) in Hebrew. It means the "House of the Unripe Figs." In English, people pronounce it Beth-fah-gee, Beth-fage, or Beth-page.

In whatever way you pronounce it, it was there, approaching the village that Jesus stopped and dispatched two of His disciples to go retrieve a donkey for Him to ride the rest of the way into Jerusalem.

I used to think that the village was at the top of the Mount of Olives and overlooked the city of Jerusalem. So, I thought that Jesus supernaturally knew where the donkey was in the city of Jerusalem and sent His guys over to the city across the Kidron Valley to retrieve the donkey.

I was wrong. The village straddles a deep ravine below the summit, still on the east side of the Mount of Olives. When we were there, it was easy to see that the road from Bethany to Jerusalem approaches from the upper

part of the southeast rim of the canyon and continues around the top part of the village.



You would have to leave the main road and go down into the village if you wanted to check it out. The road was a bypass, without the stupid roundabouts and unnecessary curves we add here.

From where Jesus would have stood overlooking the village, He could have seen the whole thing laid out before Him. Every home, road, bush and donkey were easily visible.

When Jesus told two of His disciples to go and get Him the donkey to ride. It is probable that Jesus and the rest of the group could easily see the donkey mare and her colt tied up down in the town.

What would be a short, line-of-sight distance, would be an undertaking, to go down and across to get the animals and then bring them back to Jesus. It is a steep ravine! It would take a while, but if He had wanted to, He could have watched the entire event unfold from His perch.

Jesus did not have them retrieve the donkeys because He was tired. A two-mile jaunt was a light morning stroll for Jesus, and it was already nearly half over, with the rest being mostly downhill.

The Lord had need of the donkey to fulfill Scripture. In Genesis 49, Jacob, renamed Israel, blessed his sons and their descendants into the future. To Judah he said, "Your enemies will be brought under your control." And, "The right to rule will not leave Judah. The ruler's rod will not be taken from Him. It will be his until the king it belongs to comes." Israel finished his prophetic blessing with this odd phrase in verse 11, "He will tie

his donkey to a vine. He will tie his colt to the very best branch.” (Genesis 49:1–12).

The Prophet Zechariah picks it up in 9:9,  
9NASB Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” Jesus didn’t come to Israel on a fiery warhorse brandishing a sword of judgment. Nor, did He come to save them from Roman oppression. Jesus came in humble, gentle, loving, mercy, to save Israel from their greatest oppressor - sin. They should have known that by His mode of transportation that was prophesied long before.



Jesus mounted the, as yet, unriden colt, the two or three-year-old foal of the donkey mare that accompanied them and continued into the city. Now, up the final hill to the ridge and down the Mount of Olives to the Kidron Valley continuing west, up the other side and into the city. Some people believe that there was an arched Roman-style bridge over the valley. Either way... The people went wild.

The expectation of the Jews at that time was that at the Passover the Messiah would come and essentially give them Heaven on earth.

While that's precisely what Jesus did - it took a form no one ever expected.

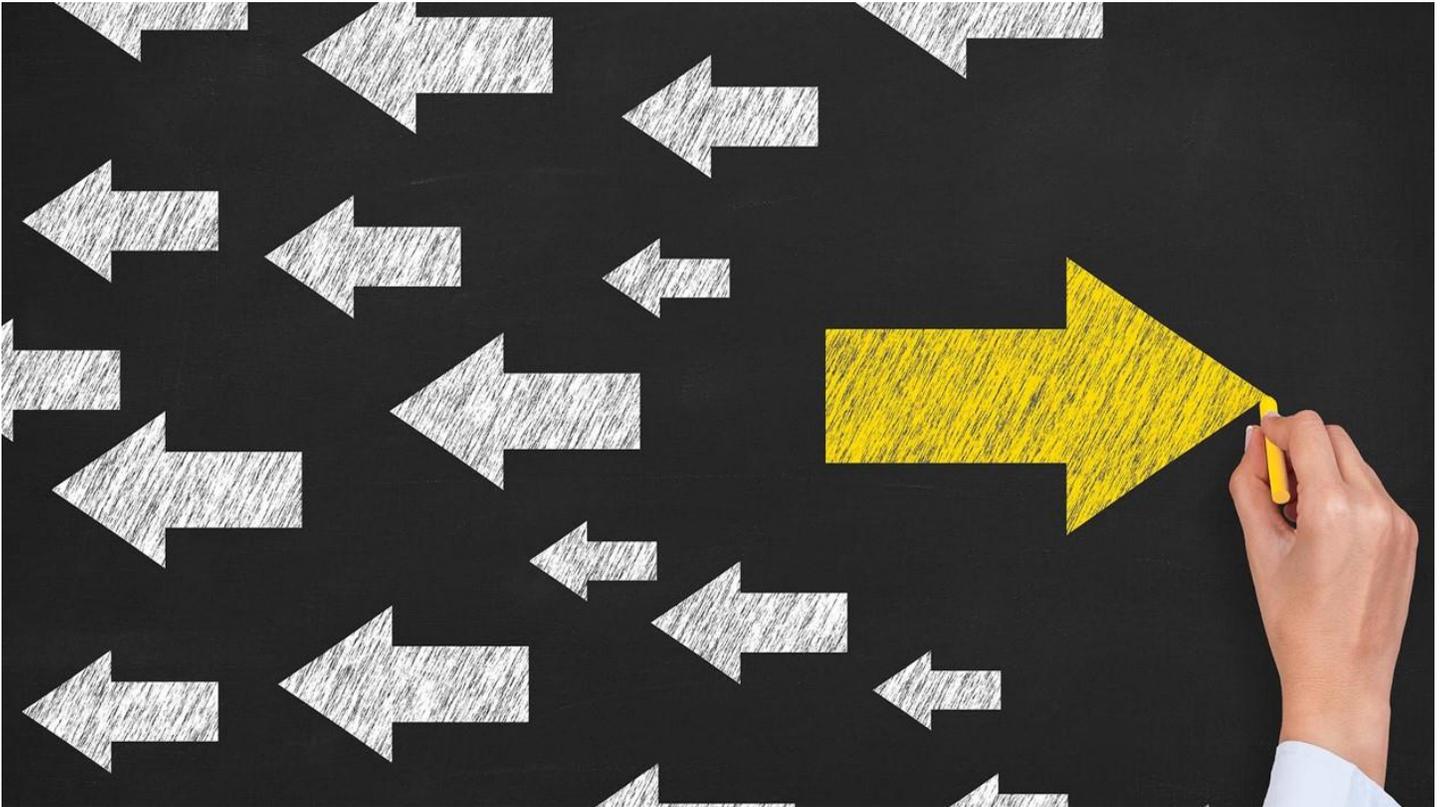
That's why the crowd went from, "Hosanna in the Highest!" on Sunday morning to, "Crucify Him!" on Friday morning.

It was quite an intense few days and everyone who came into contact with Jesus reacted to Him. Judas Iscariot betrayed Him for 30 pieces of silver. The High Priest and his cronies manipulated Rome into executing Jesus. The disciples tried to be brave, but all seemed lost. Peter went from boldly proclaiming that he would fight to the death, to denying that he even knew Jesus, and then, on to weeping bitterly and hiding in a house with the others.

Whatever the reactions - the thing is - Jesus always elicits a reaction. It is impossible to be unchanged after an encounter with the Lord.

One will either move farther from Him or closer to Him - no one stays the same, even here and now. You cannot leave here the same as you walked in. Which direction you move, is up to you.

Why is it so? Well, there are a number of reasons, not the least of which, is Jesus' very existence - His very presence - is a challenge to change.



Most people detest even the notion of change and they put up barriers to prevent the possibility. Jesus, by His very nature demands a decision. What will you do with Him? What will you do with Jesus?

Ultimately, there are only two choices. I not only want you to see that reality - I also want you to see that human beings muddy the water into such a turbid mess of obfuscation, that both of the choices seem to blend

into each other and become this wide spectrum of blurred degrees.

Here's what I mean. The two choices that are clearly and repeatedly delineated in the Bible throughout... Are 1) to fully surrender to God through His chosen Savior Jesus and be filled with the Holy Spirit. The second possibility - the only other Biblical or factual possibility that exists... 2) is not to fully surrender to God through His chosen Savior Jesus and be filled with the Holy Spirit. There cannot possibly be any other possibilities than one of those two.

One is either a full-fledged, card-carrying member of the Body of Christ, or they are not. That's it, you can argue the point, but you would simply be tilting at windmills. You would be both Biblically wrong and semantically wrong.

I didn't write the Book, or the rules of logic and argumentation, I'm just a reporter, reporting the facts.

Now, human beings don't like the stark contrast. We don't like the all or nothing nature of the thing and so we try to have our cake and eat it too.

We blur what it means to be fully surrendered. We blur what it means to have Jesus as Savior. We blur what it means to be Spirit-filled. Because, none of us wants to relinquish 100% of the control over our lives to Jesus. In theory possibly - in reality... Please.

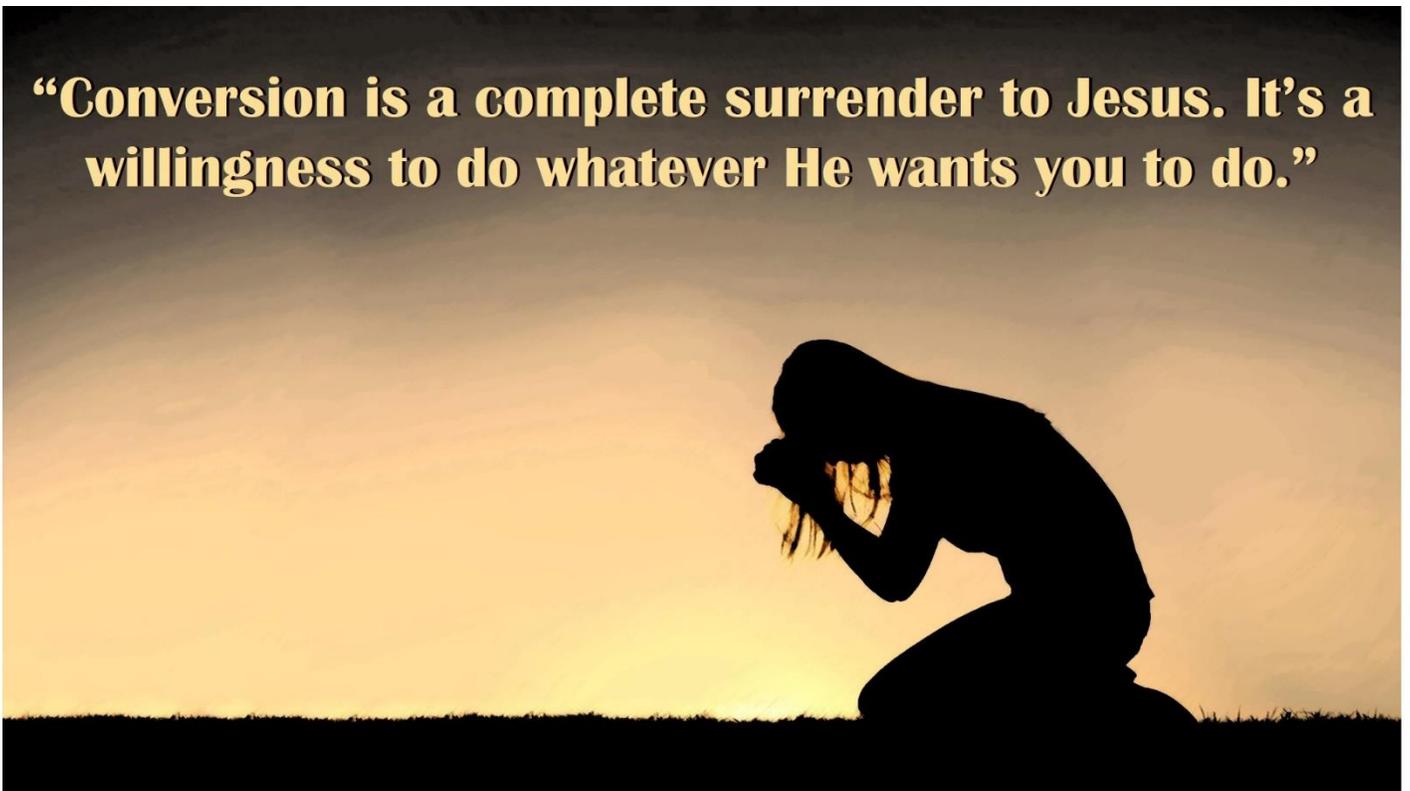
For a variety of reasons, we want to retain at least a modicum of control. What if Jesus wants me to stay in a horrible marriage? What if Jesus is willing to let me suffer the ravages of cancer? What if Jesus calls me to walk away from financial security to minister to other people?

What if Jesus really requires me to be an integral part of a church family that demands a great deal of my time, energy and money? What if Jesus is serious about never having sex, outside of the confines of a proper marriage between one man and one woman? What if Jesus really means it when He demands that I love my wife more than my own life? What if Jesus is truly asking me to submit to my husband? What if Jesus asks of me, what I don't want to be asked?

People pretend that Jesus isn't real, or that He is somehow unaware of what we do in secret. We try to ignore Him, or we embrace some part of Jesus, but not

the stuff we don't like, taking Christianity as a spiritual smorgasbord. If I follow most of what He taught, He'll give me a pass on the rest. Some people embrace all of Jesus, but it is a false Jesus that they, themselves have constructed in their own minds to fit their own personal proclivities.

**“Conversion is a complete surrender to Jesus. It’s a willingness to do whatever He wants you to do.”**



How many people say, and truly mean, “Here I am Lord, I’m a mess, I get that, I am ever deceiving myself, ever forgetting, ever falling back into fear and so ever stumbling, negotiating, manipulating... Here I am Lord, I’m Yours. Do with me whatever You will and give me the courage to follow You wherever You lead.”

As our friend Job, who had lost everything, cried out to the Lord, 15aKJV“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15).

It only makes sense. God has all the power and wisdom and He is the life generating and sustaining force. Who else are you going to trust? What is this life compared to eternity?

I really think, therein lies the rub. Everyone hopes that there's something after this life, but no one can be absolutely certain. So, I think a lot of people want to hedge their bet. I think most folks want to do enough - just the minimum - to secure a decent future should there really be one, but at the same time, have as much fun as they can get away with in the here and now.

Fundamentally, it is a lack of faith. We humans in general, lack the faith that Heaven is real, and that God is 6bNIV“a rewarder of those who earnestly seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6b). Even our friend Job, who so wisely said, 15aKJV“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15), had not, at that point fully surrendered to God... He still had much to learn about real faith.

That's why one of my favorite interactions in the Bible is the one between Jesus and the father of the possessed boy. In Mark 9:22-24, the father says to Jesus, 22bNLT "Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." 23 "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." 24 The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!" That's wisdom - "Lord, help me overcome my unbelief!"

*Welcome Friends*

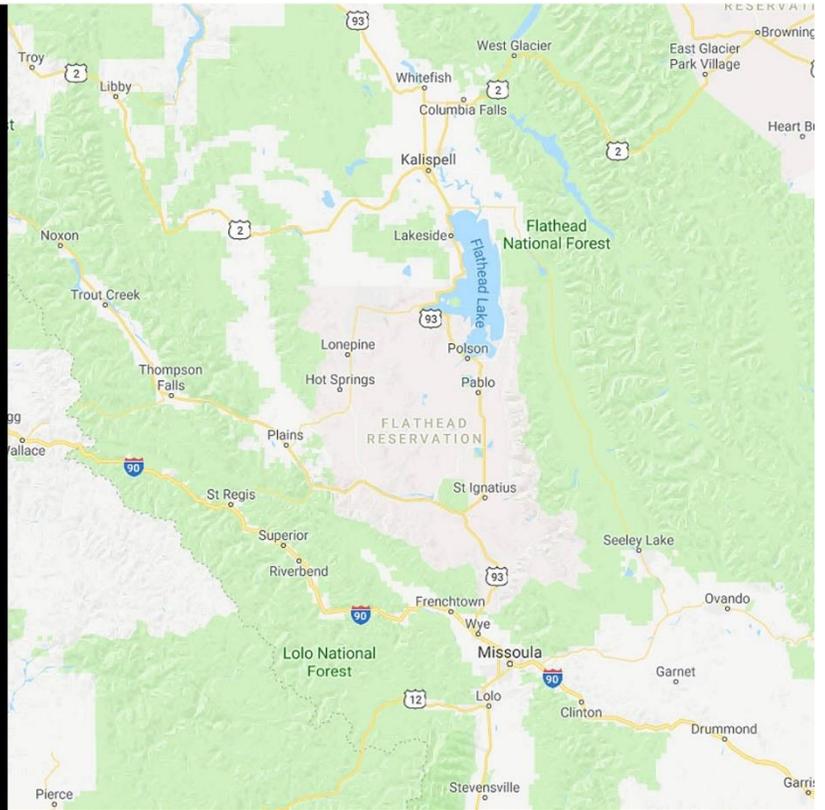
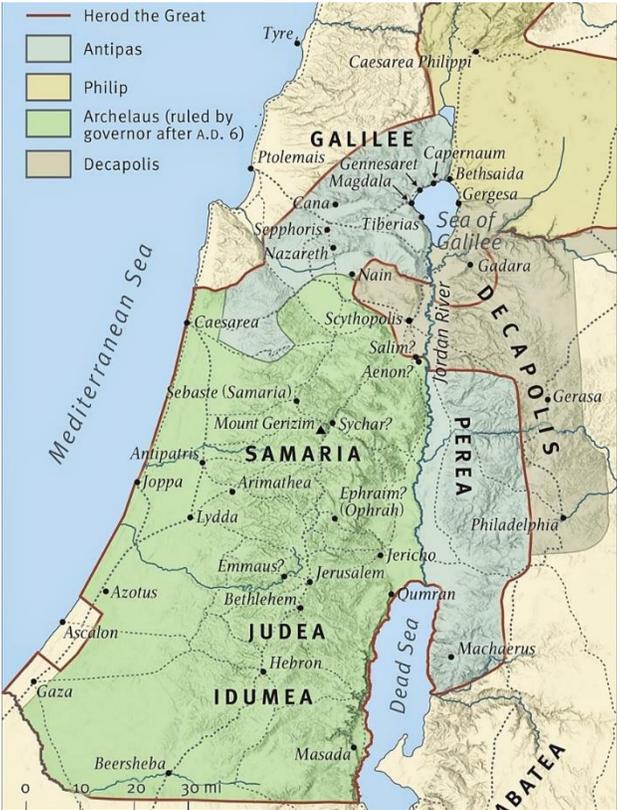
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
**MATTHEW**

A CLASH OF KINGDOMS

*Alêtheia Christian Fellowship*



Matthew 9:14-17 ~ 14NASB Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?” 15 And Jesus said to them, “The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. 16 “But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. 17 “Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.”



The passage starts with the word, "Then." It directly

links this bit with what came before. Jesus was the guest at a big outdoor shindig where everyone was feasting and celebrating.

The Pharisees took issue. The likely scenario is that some of John's disciples were in town. Perhaps both the Pharisees and John's guys were fasting that day to add injury to insult.

The Pharisees grumbled around town and John's guys took up the cause and confronted Jesus.

John, is of course, John the Baptist who by this time, was imprisoned by Herod Antipas. According to Josephus, John was held in the fortress palace Machaerus in Perea. Jesus is in Kalispell and John is being held down in Missoula.

While John was, "More than a prophet," and was, "The one about whom it is written, 'Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, Who will prepare Your way before You,'" and was the greatest, "Among those born of women," and was, "Elijah who was to come," he was nevertheless, at that time, still part of the old.

John was a transitional character and I think everyone believes that he will be at the head table in Heaven, so to speak. However, at that time, the least of those who were following Jesus, were greater than John.



John still had disciples who were far more dedicated to him than they were to Jesus, the One John prepared them for. Those disciples did not understand Jesus, because Jesus did not fit into the box, they had built for Him - He did not meet their expectations.

They were shocked that He and His disciples were not following the practice of fasting twice a week. The Pharisees fasted on Mondays and Thursdays, in

addition to various fasts alluded to in the Bible and the mandatory fasting on the Day of Atonement.

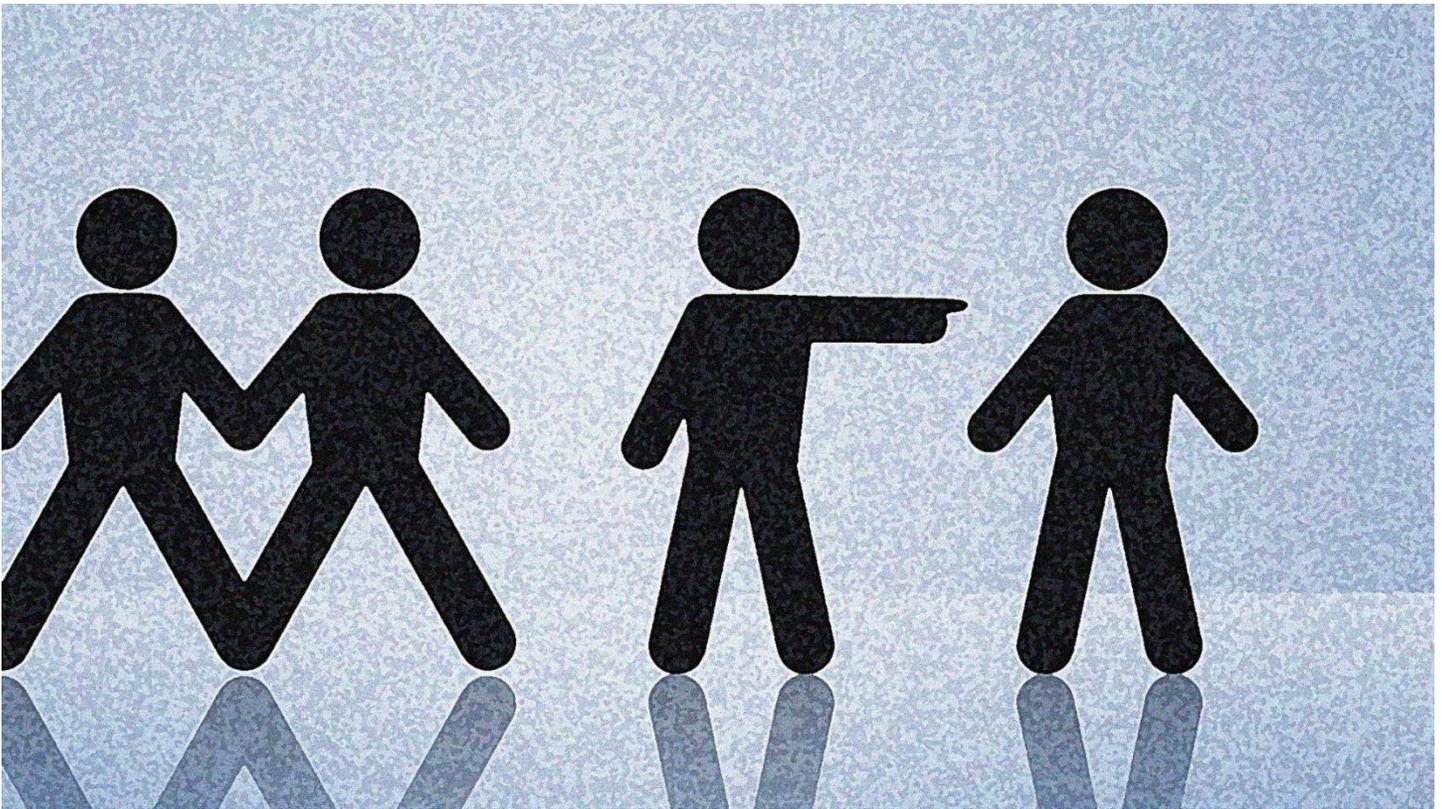
They made a bit of a production out of it to show their superior piety. The Essenes also fasted frequently and so did John. Even though there was serious tension between John and the Pharisees, at least they agreed on the practice of regular fasting.

John and his disciples, like the Essenes, probably more for the self-denying, sorrowfully repentant, ascetic life, than for the religious piety of the Pharisees, but still, they all fasted a lot.

Now, the primary reason for fasting, whether it was forefront in a person's mind or whether they had another hidden agenda was mourning.

Mourning over sin, mourning over the fact that the promised Messiah and so the very presence of the Living God was not dwelling among the people.

Fasting was an act of pious contrition and sorrow meant to humbly beseech God for His favor - His salvation - His embrace.



The guys approached Jesus and asked a question that was really more of an accusation. You know there are two kinds of questions. The first kind seeks information and the second kind seeks to accuse, entrap and attack... This was the second kind. I get that kind a lot myself.

Jesus gave them an answer in the form of an analogy that is very similar to a couple of other analogies He must have used often. The other two function like maxims and Matthew put them here, because they flow so well, but they are very universally applicable principles, not limited to this particular discussion.



Don't worry, I'll explain it in a minute. First, the direct answer in the form of an abbreviated parable. "The attendants of the bridegroom," are not, as some translations have, just guests. It would be like the best man and the groomsmen today, but even more intensely involved, because weddings then were a much bigger deal. A lot of preparation for months and then a wedding feast usually lasted a whole week.

Their great friend and brother - the man they've committed themselves to - is getting married. It is wonderful and it is festive and the last thing in the world anyone needs is an Eeyore for a best man.

These dudes can't be down - they're supposed to make sure everything is up! It would be a completely insane idea that they should be mourning while the groom is still celebrating.

Jesus asked it as a question, but in Greek, the answer is already given, so it is a rhetorical question that basically means, of course they cannot mourn!

The analogies of a wedding and wine are prophetically eschatological... The point Jesus is driving at is the whole reason you fast, has been eliminated, because I'm here!

Jesus then said, "But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast." Jesus is giving an oblique reference to His death. When I am "Taken away from them," then they will mourn.

John's disciples would have understood the principle better than we think, because the master they were still following, was imprisoned and unlikely to ever be released alive. They were, no doubt, already mourning John's absence.

But, given the eschatological meaning, this would have been surprising. When the Bridegroom comes - He isn't taken away. That would have been puzzling. I'm sure they chalked it up to a reference to John's capture.

Now, just to put a bow on this, realize that people come up with all kinds of bizarre ideas about verses like this one. Such as, since Jesus is gone from us, we Christians ought to regularly fast.

That's wrong! The time for mourning Jesus was from Friday to Sunday morning, 20 centuries ago. Jesus walked out of Hades with the keys to it and to death itself in His hands. Next week we celebrate Resurrection Sunday! The church should be in a continuous state of unspeakable joy!



FEAR  
FOR I AM WITH YOU.  
NOT

Jesus is not only with us now - He will be with us always. As He Himself declared 20bNASB “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). And we, His Body on earth, are indwelt with the other Paraclete according Jesus. Speaking of Himself as the Paraclete and the Holy Spirit as the other Paraclete, means that one function of the Breath of God, is to be Jesus to us, in us and through us.

Mourning lasted on three calendar days - there could be no mourning before the “Bridegroom” was forcefully “Taken away,” and there can be no mourning now that He has conquered sin and death forevermore. Rejoice! He has risen!

Let us live like Jesus is with us, instead of sour, dour, religious hypocrites ever pointing the finger at others.



The two axioms. The first, in verse 16, Jesus talks about a very common practice of mending worn garments. Everyone in that environment would have been well aware of the ramifications of sewing a patch of new, unwashed material onto an older garment that had been washed many times.

The new unshrunk patch once wet would dry and shrink. Not only would it create a hole, it would tear the surrounding older and weaker material as it shrunk

thus making the original hole worse than it was in the first place.

The two things cannot possibly mix. The old garment stands for Judaism at that time - Judaism as understood and practiced by the Jews then - Judaism of the Old Covenant.

The unshrunk patch stands for the Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus is ushering in - we can call it the New Covenant - we can call it Christianity.

Please follow me on this important point. Nowhere here, nowhere in the use of these maxims in Mark 2:21&22, or Luke 5:36-38, does it say anything about first shrinking the patch.

That's what you would need to do to make the two things compatible, but that is the opposite of the point Jesus was making.

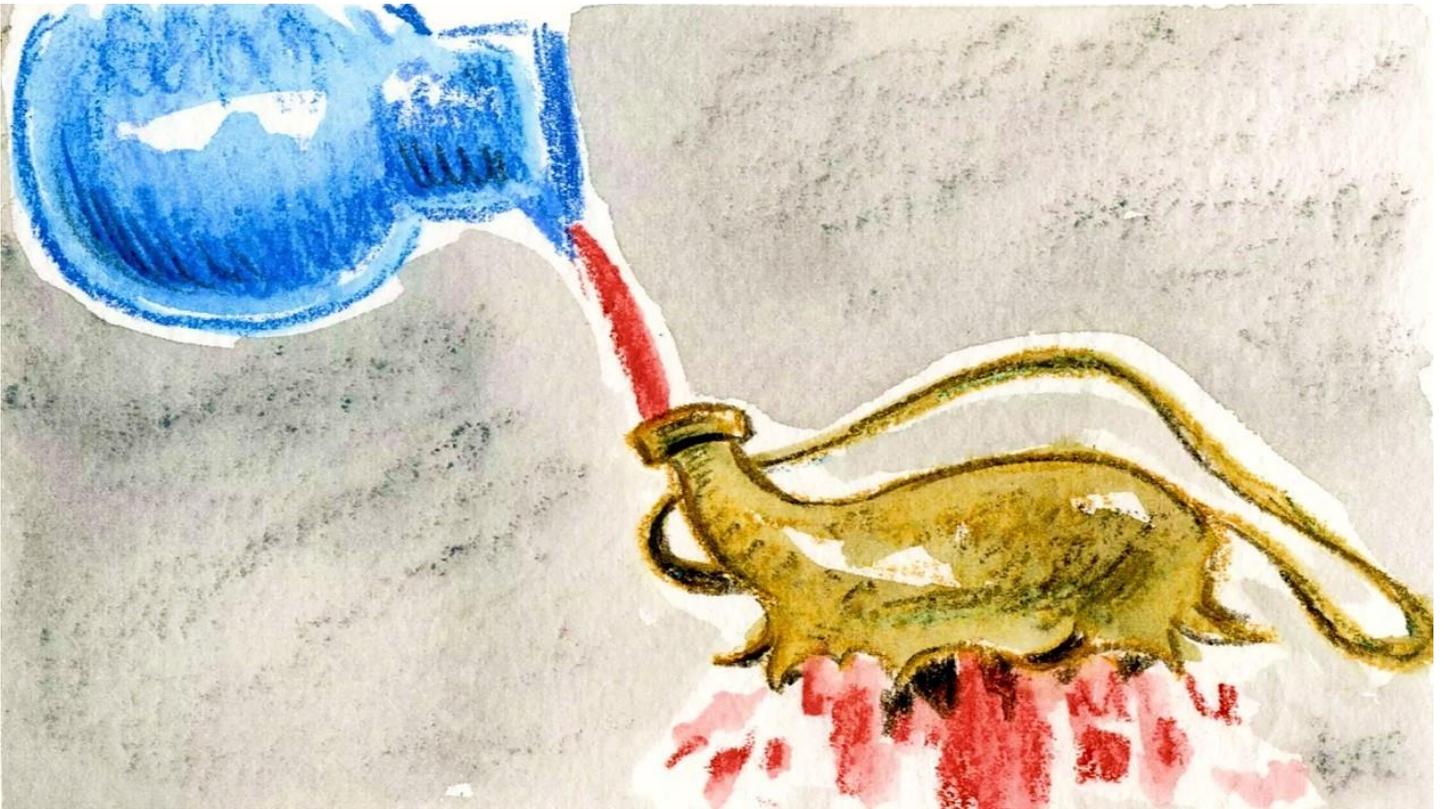
This is an analogy, not a garment repair seminar. Please understand that Jesus was clearly saying that there is no compatibility between the old and the new.

He didn't come to put a patch on old worn out Judaism. He didn't come to revitalize the Old Covenant. He didn't come to start a new sect within a legalistic religion - Jesus fulfilled Judaism and ushered in the Kingdom of Heaven, the New Covenant - the new faith we call Christianity, because it means we follow, obey and surrender to the One and Only Christ.

To make the new compatible would mean changing the new - modifying it - watering it down.

Christianity is the continuation of Judaism in the sense that it is the promised correction. It is pure folly to believe that anyone is getting into Heaven apart from full devotion to Jesus as the One and Only Messiah God has given to the world - first to the Jews who accepted then, who have accepted since, and who will accept in the future.

“No one - meaning literally no one - comes to the Father except through Me.” That's not what Scott said, that's what Jesus said (John 14:6).



We see it even more clearly in the second adage. Verse 17, carrying on in the same vein, Jesus said, “Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.”



Wineskins were often the entire skin of a goat or sheep carefully removed to minimize openings that needed to be tied off.

New wine was essentially the juice of grapes still in the fermentation process. Fermentation was unstoppable back then despite what people ridiculously claim.

Yeast was ubiquitous and as soon as fresh fruit juice of any kind was introduced into the environment, let alone put into a leather container, the ever-present yeast went to work, and fermentation began.

Yeast transforms sugar into ethanol, otherwise known as alcohol and carbon dioxide. It is the expanding carbon dioxide that overcomes old wineskins and causes them to burst. New wineskins are still unstretched and can accommodate the expanding gases without rupturing.

The complete incompatibility is obvious. New wine, which in this case is the Kingdom of Heaven, New Covenant, Biblical Christianity can only be contained by people who are flexible enough to contain it.

The Judaism of that day was far too rigid, and it did burst, as evidenced by the vast majority rejecting the Messiah God sent them.

Never fear, we're no better today. People in America, Canada and Mexico, know more about Jesus than His contemporaries did back then, and yet the vast majority are too rigid to accept Him fully as He is, without holding anything in reserve.

Examine the pliancy of your wineskin. Rejoice because, not only does your Savior live - He reigns!