

Matthew 9:16-17 A New Garment and A New Bottle

Introduction: To paraphrase, the disciples of John asked Jesus a question that went like this: “Why do not you and your disciples worship like us and the Pharisees? Why do not your disciples fast?” Part of the answer to that question was that the disciples had no reason to mourn and fast as long as the Christ was with them. They would mourn and fast when the Christ would be taken from them. In our text today He gives a second reason. Christianity is not an effort to patch up the Old Law system and make it better.

I. The first illustration: a new garment. Verse 16

- A. What John and the Pharisees thought was that Messiah would patch up the Law system and make it work.
 - 1. The Pharisees worshiped under the Law.
 - 2. John and his disciples worshiped under the Law.
 - 3. They expected the Messiah to set up His Kingdom work under the Mosaic law.
- B. But Jesus did not come to patch up the Law.
 - 1. No one uses a piece of new cloth to patch a tear in an old garment.
 - 2. The old garment is already weakened.
 - 3. If patched with new (unshrunk) cloth, the new will shrink and make the tear worse.
- C. The old law served well, but it had it's weaknesses.
 - 1. One weakness was the many traditions added by the Jews.
 - 2. Another was that the Jews failed to see their sinfulness. Rather they used the law to point up their self righteousness.
- D. Jesus came not to patch the old, but to make a whole new garment. (He came to establish a whole new system.)

II. The second illustration: new wine bottle. Verse 17 (emphasis)

- A. The Jews used two kind of bottles, earthen ware and skin.
 - 1. Skin bottles were more easily transported on animals than earthen bottles.
 - 2. They were made of fresh whole animal hides.
 - 3. They tied two skins together and laid them across the animal.
 - 4. Two ox hide bottles of water were a load for a camel. (120 gallons)
- B. Goat hides were usually used for wine.
- C. A hide re-used would become brittle and break. (Both the hide and the wine would be lost.)
- D. A fresh hide would be flexible and strong and both would be preserved.
- E. This added emphasis to the fact that Christianity is not new work within the Old Testament Law system; it is a whole new system (with new doctrines and practices).
 - 1. Christianity and Judaism are no more compatible together then new wine in an old skin bottle.
 - 2. Both would loose their usefulness.

III. Those who misunderstand.

- A. The Pharisees and the disciples of John misunderstood them.
- B. Some of the early church leaders also misunderstood. (See Books of Galatians and Acts.)
- C. Even today many still try to make Christianity to be a mixture with the Old Testament Law.
 - 1. Many still teach that you have to keep the Law to be saved. (Or at least keep the Ten Commandments.)
 - 2. Yet the scriptures clearly teach that salvation is not by the Law. Galatians 2:21; Acts 16:31

Conclusion: I am here to tell you that salvation is by a new birth, John 3:3, and that is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am going to ask you to trust Jesus as your Savior right now. I am also going to ask each one of you who are saved by Christ to get to work for Him in a New Testament Church.

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