

IN WITH THE NEW?

Do you wonder about old things? Like, whatever happened to Areas 1-50? Preparation A-G? Heinz 1-56? What about WD 1-39? or Chanel 1-4? At least we still have A1 Sauce.

Jesus got grief from His religious critics no matter what He did or didn't do. They criticize Him for eating and drinking with sinners and tax collectors. They didn't like Him going to a feast at loser Levi's house after he repented and believed in Jesus as the Christ.

And they were upset that Jesus and His disciples didn't observe their religious rituals and traditions. In Luke 5:33-39 Jesus responded with some provocative word-pictures.

1- NEW PATCHES? - In verse 36, Jesus told them a parable, "*No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.*" Practical wisdom pointing to a spiritual truth.

Do people even know what patches are anymore? Maybe you grew up wearing patches to school. When you wore out bluejeans from baling hay or other jobs, mother took the backs of old jeans to make patches for the fronts. Today, people buy jeans with rips and tears that didn't get there by someone doing actual work. How things have changed.

Even if you've never worn a patch or made a patch, you get the idea. Patches made from new cloth won't match the old material, and new cloth will shrink when washed and tear away from the old fabric. Likewise, Jesus says, old ways of doing things are giving way to new.

2- NEW TEACHING? - "Judaism, good as it was, had become an old worn-out garment," notes RK Hughes. "It could not be patched with a few new things taken from Christ's gospel." In fact, the whole Old Covenant was being replaced by the New Covenant, whose Mediator had come.

Christ's disciples also struggled with this later, after His resurrection. That's why so much of the New Testament explains it in great detail: Acts 15, Galatians 2, 4:3-7, Philippians 3, Hebrews 8, 9:15. The whole book of Hebrews explains how Jesus Christ fulfilled Old Covenant conditions in perfect detail, as He personally fulfills and ushers in the New Covenant age.

The old pictures of atonement were fulfilled in the life and ministry of Christ, through His perfect sinless life, perfect atoning death and perfect victorious resurrection. He instituted the Lord's Supper saying, "*this cup is the new covenant in My blood.*" This also provides the church a continuing reminder that we are new creations in Christ's new covenant kingdom.

3- NEW WINE? - Jesus continues in 37-38, "*and no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.*" Jesus' teaching comes with the New Covenant.

This illustration also relates to the immediate context of His comments, the feast at Matthew's house in verses 27-32. Jesus was being criticized for eating and drinking and feasting with tax collectors and sinners - who had been called by Him, and who had repented and believed.

People stored wine in large pottery jugs of varying sizes. They also used tanned animal skins for a portable means of containing smaller quantities. Wine would be poured from the skins, one part wine to two to four parts water. New skins were elastic and could expand as the wine fermented. New wine would burst old wineskins, because they became hard and brittle.

4- NEW BELIEVERS? - Just like new patches won't work on old cloth, neither does new wine work with old wineskins. Now that the age of Messiah is here, things are changing. They must.

People were being called out of the kingdom of darkness into Christ's kingdom of light. The old religious traditions had looked forward to His coming. What will happen now He's here?

Those who receive Him must be the new wineskins. He transforms us into new creations, as all things become new (2 Cor 5:17). We contain the new wine of salvation. All by the regenerating presence of the Holy Spirit within those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

"The new wine of life in Christ cannot be restrained by old unyielding religious structures. Our spiritual capacity has immense possibilities," notes RK Hughes. Christ's new replaces the old you, as the Christian is defined "*in union with Christ,*" Christ in you and you in Christ! ☐