

INTRODUCE

Well, good morning church! If I haven't met you yet, my name is Chris Martin, and I'm the Lead Pastor here.

MOTHER'S DAY

Happy Mother's Day. Give it up for all the mommas.

- The Bible makes it abundantly clear
 - that Jesus is the head of the church.
- But history teaches us
 - that for the last 2000 years,
 - the backbone of the local church
 - has been some praying mommas.

Many of us are in the kingdom because our momma prayed us in here.

And I also know this:

- Mother's Day can represent some of your highest highs...
- but it can also represent some of your lowest lows.

So, let me just say this, a little theology lesson.

- Did you know that when Adam gave Eve her name,
 - and her name means *mother of all living things*,
- but when he named her that,
- she had not yet given birth?

So, here's what this means...

- in the kingdom of God, in the church, if you are a female,
- whether you have biological children or not,
- you are called to be a mamma in the kingdom of God.

This is why the church is called a family,

- and we need every single momma in this place
- to do what God has called you to do,
- because we're all in this thing together.

So, if this day represents great joy for you, then give God the praise.

- And if this day represents great pain,
- then give God praise, as well.
- Because he gathers us all here together for his glory,
- and we could not make it without all of you gals!

So, love you all!

BIBLES

Ok, if you've got your Bibles, and I hope you do, please open them up to Matthew chapter 9. Matthew 9. That's where we're going to be.

We want every person to have a hand on their Bible. You can open your phone or tablet to Matthew 9. If you open one of the hard-backed black bibles under your seat, Matthew 9 will be on page **814**.

INTRODUCTION: BULLY TEXT

Alright. So, today's text is a vastly misunderstood and misused text. Ok, let me read two verses to you.

MATTHEW 9:16-17

[16] No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. [17] Neither is new

wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

One pastor I know calls this a *bully passage*. Here’s what he means:

- this new wine/old wineskin passage
- is ripped out of context
- and used by church folk so much,
- it’s unbelievable!

Anytime anyone in the church

- wanted to change something in the church
 - it was “*new wine*,”
- and the old way things were done
 - were “*old wineskins*,”
- and so, “we just need to change to stay true to scripture.”

This is a bully text!

I’ve seen it happen!

- “*The way I want to do music...*”
- *The way I want to do bible study...*
 - *That’s new wine!*
- *And your old choirs and organs and hymns...*
- *And your Sunday School class models...*
 - *That’s old wineskins...*
- *And they’re gonna burst!*
- *Get some drums! Get some small groups!*

But that's using the text to bully someone to get your way...

- And it's out of context...
- And it's ridiculous!

This text is in a CONTEXT! And that means:

- it cannot be ripped out of context,
- and coopted for your own purposes.

This is why we preach this way...

- through books of the Bible...
- verse by verse.

RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

But it immediately makes me want to address something.

You wanna tick off some religious people? Do things that are outside their religious comfort zones or traditions.

- Raise your hands during worship...
- Play the music too loud...or too soft...
- Keep your eyes open during prayer.
 - You ever do this? It's weird.
 - Also, does the prayer even count if your eyes are open?
- Sit in "*somebody else's seat*"
 - They'll scratch your eyes out for that.

You want to tick off religious people?

- Do the things outside their traditions...
- and just see what happens.
- You'll get some furious Christians real quick!

I'm calling today's sermon **SLIDE THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS**.

In today's text we find a very interesting moment, and this whole "new wine" thing actually...

- deals with fasting,
- and religious observances,
- and really, the main purpose Jesus came.

And it'll make some people furious!

So, let's look at this.

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MATTHEW 9:14

[14] Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

CONTEXT

Now, last week we saw Jesus choose Matthew,

- a hated tax collector,
- to be one of his disciples...

AND after picking him,

- he goes to his home,
- and dines with a bunch of tax collectors and sinners.

This causes the religious elites to question Jesus,

*"Why is he eating with such filth...
tax collectors and sinners?"*

They're getting FURIOUS! But Jesus' response is so beautiful! He says:

- *“I haven’t come for those who THINK they’ve got this!*
- *No, I came for those who KNOW, ‘I ain’t got this!’”*

EXPLAIN: JOHN’S DISCIPLES

And now in verse 14, presumably during or after that same dinner party with sinners, John the Baptist’s followers come to Jesus and ask about fasting.

- They, too, are shocked that Jesus
- isn’t behaving as religiously pious
- as they expected him to be.

Now, just like the Pharisees, John the Baptist’s followers practiced a pretty rigorous fasting protocol.

And now that John is in prison, they likely continued what he did,

- neither eating nor drinking...
- and they probably saw Jesus’ followers,
- as religiously lax.

EPLAIN: OLD TESTAMENT FASTING

Now, in the Old Testament, you would fast for a few purposes.

- You would fast for CONSECRATION;
 - a kind of setting apart before a special occasion.
 - Think of Joshua before he led the Israelites
 - into the Promised Land.

- You would fast for God to INTERVENE.
 - Think of the story of Esther,
 - and God's people fasting for her
 - before she goes before the king.
- And you would fast, seeking ATONEMENT for sin.
 - This is what was celebrated on Yom Kippur...
 - The day of atonement.
 - Fasting for forgiveness of sin.

TRANSITION

So, John's disciples are questioning why it seems that Jesus' crew doesn't fast like they do.

- They're wondering why
- they don't seem as religiously pious
- as their Jewish tradition would dictate.

And Jesus' response must have shocked them...

maybe even make them furious.

Look at verse 15:

MATTHEW 9:15

[15] And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

EXPLAIN: WEDDING

And so, here's what Jesus is saying:

- *“you know that Old Testament fasting...*
- *yeah, we don't fast like that anymore.*
- *Why? Because I'm here!*
 - *We will fast...*
 - *just not like that anymore!”*

And Jesus uses the illustration of a wedding to answer their question,

- which would have been especially effective
- to the disciples of John the Baptist,
- because he had used that very metaphor to describe himself.

John had said that

- Jesus is the groom,
- and that John functioned as the best man...
 - just pointing to and setting up the groom.

Well, now Jesus identifies himself as the groom...

- and his disciples are guests at his wedding.
- And you would never fast at a wedding!
- It defeats the purpose!
- A wedding was a party...
- Especially in Jewish culture...
- Where weddings would last for a week!

But, Jesus adds that a time was coming when the groom would be taken away from the guests, and then they will fast.

- When Jesus speaks of being “taken away”
- this is a prophecy of his coming death.

And at that time grief-stricken fasting will be appropriate.

- Indeed, fasting will become a regular part
- of the disciple’s practices
- as seen in the book of Acts...
- and it will become a regular part of
- historical Christian faith practice.

SO, DISCIPLES OF JESUS WILL FAST...

BUT THE PURPOSE OF FASTING WILL CHANGE!

EXPLAIN: CHRISTIAN FASTING

Christian, we don’t fast for the same reasons.

- **We don’t have to fast in order to be consecrated.** Why?
 - Because Jesus has come.
 - He consecrates us.
 - We fast because he has set us apart.
- **We don’t have to fast to garner favor with God.** Why?
 - Because Jesus has come.
 - He has already given us favor.
 - We fast because he already has!
- **And we don’t have to fast to find atonement for our sins.** Why?
 - Because Jesus has come.
 - And he was sacrificed once for all.
 - All of our sins are covered by his blood.

Jesus is saying: *“we don’t fast to earn something.”*

- No! It’s not earned...
- it’s freely given...
- in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

TRANSITION

Now, this flies in the face of how many of us think this Jesus stuff works?

It certainly did for the religious elite of Jesus’ day!

- You see, we often think
- we need some sort of religious piety
- to earn God’s favor!

And this leads many Christians

- to attempt to earn something
- through religious practices: such as fasting.
- And that leads us into some weird stuff.

ILLUSTRATION: CD BURNING

I mean, I didn’t grow up in the church, but when I was a teenager a friend of mine invited me to a youth group,

- and let me just lay my cards on the table...
- I thought church was ridiculous!

We were going to this Wednesday night youth group

- called Extreme Teen Ministries...
- and every letter ‘t’ in that title
- was replaced with a cross in Papyrus font...

So, get every cool youth group image out of your head, because it was not cool at all.

- Like, I got there, and they were singing songs
- that were spelling things out...
 - *"I am a C...I am a C H...I am a C H R I S T I A N"...*
- I mean, I'm in high school,
 - and it felt like a Saturday Night Live sketch.

And one week we were instructed to bring our secular CDs to youth group.

- And I had to ask my buddy what secular meant...
 - and it meant any music that wasn't Christian...
- which I didn't even know existed...
 - like was, "I am a C" on that album?

But, we were to bring them,

- and we were going to take them out to the parking lot,
- throw them all in a metal can,
- and we were going to burn them,
- because Christians didn't listen to secular music!

And so, I showed up the next week,

- and there was the can,
- and kids were burning their CDs.

And one of the leaders was like,

- *"Do you hear that noise?"*
 - Sissssss.....
- *"Those are the demons leaving."*

No, that's the hole in the ozone layer getting larger...

By the way, that's where I got my very first copy of Guns & Roses'
'Appetite for Destruction'...

- cause I was like, *"What you got there, bro?"*
- And he pulled it out,

So, I grabbed it, and was like,

- "See, it's got a cross on it..."
- and I think Sweet Child of Mine is about Jesus...
 - it's a Christmas song."
- So, I just pocketed that.

But I thought this was just what Christians did!

- We didn't cuss,
- or drink,
- or smoke,
- or listen to good music,
- or watch rated R movies
 - unless they were about Jesus.

And I just started believing that my behavior...what I did...earned my status as a Christian.

And I was just like John's disciples.

- Why don't you guys fast?
- Why do you feast?
- Why are you hanging out with sinners?
- Why do you listen to THAT kind of music?
- Why aren't you religious like we think you ought to be?

One scholar said this: **SLIDE**

“We may highlight again that Jesus was frequently present at parties. Jesus was clearly not a recluse, a hermit, or an unnaturally religious person. He was invited to meals and parties, and he came to a number of them.” ~ Frederick Dale Bruner

BLANK SLIDE

TRANSITION

Christian, you and I have not been called to be *unnaturally religious*.
Jesus is saying: *“hey, there’s a better way!*

- *We’re not gonna fast like we used to!*
 - *We’re gonna fast like we’ve tasted...*
 - *like we’ve been at the wedding.*
- *We’re not gonna fast in some unnaturally religious way.*
 - *It’s gonna be different.”*

And in that context, he then illustrates in verses 16 & 17

MATTHEW 9:16-17

[16] No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. [17] Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

EXPLAIN: SHRINKAGE

So, these aren't bully passages! No! These last two illustrations, or parables, are meant to communicate something!

The first one is clear: a piece of unshrunk cloth tightly sewed to old and well-shrunk cloth in order to repair a tear will cause a bigger tear.

So, if you do laundry you know this...clothes shrink.

- Especially jeans.
- Especially if you tumble dry with heat.
- They shrink a lot!

And I can't seem to get this across to my wife!

- Because she'll buy a new pair of jeans...
- and they fit perfectly...
- I mean, she's looking good!

But after a few washes they don't fit anymore...

- and what's her response?
- *"I'm getting fat!"*
- NO! No you're not!
- Your pants don't fit because they shrunk!
- Stop drying your jeans!

But you'd never want to patch a hole in a pair of shrunk jeans with an unshrunk patch...

- because if you do,
- the patch will start to shrink,
- and the jeans won't shrink anymore...
- and it'll jack up your pants more!

EXPLAIN: WINE

The second illustration is a little more contextual to the first century. Skin bottles for carrying wine were made by killing an animal...

- goats most commonly...
- and you'd cut off the head and feet,
- skin the carcass,
- and sew up the skin,
- fur side out,
- to seal off all the orifices except one,
- usually the neck.
- The skin was tanned to minimize any disagreeable taste.
- And you'd fill it with wine to ferment.

Now, when people say, "I just wish I could've lived when Jesus lived..."

- I think, "well, here's one more reason
- why I'm not sure that's a great idea."
- Goat wine.
- Gross.
- I don't care if you prefer your wine in a bottle or even a box...
- it's better than goat wine!

Now in time, the skin became hard and brittle,

- and if new wine, still fermenting,
- were put into an old skin,
- the buildup of fermenting gases
- would split the brittle container
- and ruin both bottle and wine.

APPLICATION

These illustrations show us that following Jesus...

- isn't just a religious patch to be added to your life.
- It isn't just wine that can be poured into your old life.
 - No! New garments are needed.
 - New wineskins are needed.
- You need a new life!
- Not just some religion added into your old ways!

For some of you those old ways are unnaturally religious.

- The old wine skins...
 - they're actually more like grape-juice skins,
 - cause you'd never drink wine...am I right Baptists?
- But you're trying to pour Jesus' way
- into an unnaturally religious life,
- and you need new wineskins of the joy and life of Christ.

And for others of you,

- the old wine skins you're dealing with aren't religious,
 - but they're irreligious!
- You're trying to just add the new wine of Jesus to your old life,
 - but that will not do either!

This is what we said last week with Matthew.

- You must leave your old ways behind and follow Jesus.
- The call to discipleship is to a new way with new wine,
- and both the unnaturally religious
- AND the irreligious cannot hold it.

ILLUSTRATION: DOG TRACK

You see, trying to earn God's favor through religion is kinda like this:

- I haven't told this story for a while...
- but, I was raised in Colorado Springs.

And when I was a kid there was one place that attracted a lot of people.

- It was the greyhound racing track.
- Now, it's long since gone,
- but that track was a hot spot in Colorado Springs for years.

Now, I don't know if anyone has ever been, but here's what goes on at a greyhound track.

- You get out to the track to watch the dogs,
 - and have you ever seen a greyhound?
- They're like the ugliest dogs alive!
 - And don't send me an email
 - about how you love greyhounds...
 - alright, God bless you...
 - your dog's ugly.

They're like a supermodel dog, all sucked in and weird.

- But when they run...
- it looks awesome!

And so, you get to the race,

- and they put the dogs in these chutes
- at the start of the race,
- and the dogs are just going bonkers.

And then a fake rabbit comes out of hiding,

- which the dogs are gonna chase,
- and when that rabbit gets going,
- the dogs go crazy.

So, they're all jumping around and barking and going crazy,

- and then the rabbit goes,
- and they take off.
- And they're putting everything they have...
- into catching that rabbit.

And yhey're running, and running, and running...

- And then, right at the end of the race,
- just when they think they might catch the rabbit,
- he just disappears into this hole.

And when you stand there as a person, you're like,

- *"What a stupid greyhound.*
- *How dumb do you have to be*
- *to continually chase after something*
- *that's not even real.*
- *What a dumb dog!"*

CONCLUSION

This is what religion is like.

- You're running, and you're running, and you're running...
- And even if you catch it...
- you'll find it's not a real rabbit.

Church, what Jesus is offering us is the real rabbit...it's new wine.

- Not the irreligious wine that leads
 - to drunkenness and debauchery.
- Not the unnaturally religious grape juice that leads
 - to legalism and self-righteousness.

No! It's a new wine!

And hear me, it's better!

- When you've been relying on old wine
 - (whether religious or irreligious),
- and your run out...
 - you're out of life...
 - you're out of energy...
 - you feel exhausted...

But Jesus's offer is,

- *"Hey! Over here! I've got new wine!*
- *Nah, it's not that boxed wine...it's the good stuff!*
- *Come on, and feast!"*
 - I'm sorry, if you like boxed wine.
- But it just can't compare with the new wine Jesus offers.

And the new wine of Jesus is what's being offered to all of us here today.

- Give up the religious wine.
- Give up the irreligious wine.
- Join the feast!
- Drink the new wine.

Let's pray. **LYRICS SLIDE W/PADS**

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

RESOURCES USED:

- Carson, D.A. Matthew: The Expositor's Bible Commentary.
- Chandler, Matt. *New Wine.*
- Foster, Richard. Celebration of Discipline.
- Osborne, Grant R. Matthew: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament.