



Wednesday, September 15th- 6:30 pm

Facing Life's Challenges

Week 1- The Challenge of New Light

Luke 5:33-39

1. Introduction

* Luke 5:17-6:11 is a "conflict section" in Luke's gospel in which the scribes and Pharisees are challenging Jesus' authority and ministry.

-Luke 5:17-26- Jesus is questioned over healing and forgiving of sins.

-Luke 5:27-32- Jesus is questioned for eating with sinners and tax collectors.

-Luke 6:1-11- Jesus is questioned about healing on the Sabbath.

*Luke 5:33-39- Jesus is questioned about why the disciples did not fast and pray.

*Scribes- "Scripture experts." They focused on understanding and applying the Mosaic law and sacred writings.

*The Pharisees- "To separate." This group separated themselves from Hellenization and followed a strict adherence to the law, as well as oral traditions.

*Throughout this section, Jesus is not following the law and is challenging the scribes and Pharisees' traditional interpretation of the law.

2. The Mood of Christ's People (Luke 5:33-35)

* The Pharisees had two problems with Jesus in this encounter:

1. Jesus' disciples did not follow the traditional Jewish patterns and rules.

2. Jesus and his disciples were enjoying themselves more than they should.

*Jewish orthodoxy in Jesus' day was very strict and rigorous with negative consequences for "breaking God's rules."

-The Pharisees were known for fasting and self-denial with minimal celebration and joy.

*Jesus and the disciples were living a more normal life- going to weddings, having dinner parties, eating, and drinking.

*Jesus explains to the Pharisees that the cross would usher in a time for the disciples to be sad, but now was not the time to be heavy and somber.

Resource: Poole, Charles E. and Cecil Sherman, *Facing Life's Challenges*
(Macon, Georgia: NextSunday Resources, 2008)

3. Openness to New Light (Luke 5:36-38)

* Jesus illustrates his point to the Pharisees with two small parables.

1. You would use the fabric from a new garment to mend an old garment.
-The new cloth will shrink after washing causing the stitching to distort. The colors won't match, plus you will end up with a torn new garment.
2. You would not store new wine in old wineskins.
-Old wineskins are rigid and brittle. In fermentation, the wine will push against the wineskin causing the old, brittle wineskins to burst.

*For Jesus, these parables made several important points to the scribes and Pharisees:

1. Jesus was not here to fit into their Judaism. Jesus was something new and different (new cloth, new wine) that would not fit the old.
2. The scribes and Pharisees needed to be open to something new. They were convinced that they were right, and Jesus was wrong.
3. Flexibility is needed when letting in new light.

4. The Hazard of Old versus New (Luke 5:39)

* Jesus brought new light to old truths.

- It is not easy to change our beliefs or opinions, ways of functioning or understanding.
- Jesus ends the parable recognizing how hard it is to follow new light at times by stating, "No one likes new wine. Everyone says the old is good enough."

*How have life's challenges caused you to change? How do we respond to change?

*How do we grow in grace? How do we read the Bible in light of Jesus- the new light?

*Are we allowing God's revelation to be alive and at work drawing people to His light? Or do we focus so much on the old and the traditional that we cannot be open to the light?

*Is it possible that God is not static and "set in stone," but fluid and creative?