

## Joyful Believers

Luke 5:33-39

*Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr was a member of the U.S. Supreme Court for 30 years. His mind, wit and work earned him the unofficial title of "the greatest justice since John Marshall." At one point in his life, Justice Holmes explained his choice of a career by saying: "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers."*

Holiday Inn, when looking for 500 people to fill positions for a new facility, interviewed 5,000 candidates. The hotel managers interviewing these people excluded all candidates who smiled fewer than four times during the interview.

A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

Charles H. Spurgeon, instructing a group of seminary students on sermon delivery, said, "When you speak of heaven, let your face light up with a heavenly gleam. Let your eyes shine with reflected glory. And when you speak of hell—well, then your usual face will do."

Jesus has been contending w/ grim faced, contentious, religious hypocrites who look for and find fault in whatever does not agree w/ them.

**Luke 5:33 And they said to Him, 'The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers; the disciples of the Pharisees also do the same; but Yours eat and drink.'**

**:34 And Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is w/ them, can you?"**

**:35 'but the days will come; when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days.'**

Those who feel spiritually superiority to others are disgusting in God's sight. Here they sought to outdo others by means of asceticism, severe treatment of the body or what looked like it. Deprivation instead of gratification, fasting instead of feasting. **John Peck-starve-roll eyes**

Jesus disciples lived like normal people, like a common person yet w/ true Godliness. To the Pharisee religion had to be unpleasant for it to be worthwhile. Something was wrong w/ your religion if you were joyful instead of mournful, if you feasted instead of fasted, restful instead of hurried, at peace instead of worried. Serious business to them. **Israel today**

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They regulated religion to where it had become mechanical and meaningless. Fast Mondays and Thursdays, whiten face (sunrise to sunset). Prayer at noon, 3 pm, 6 pm. They went thru the motions of religion but had lost the emotion for God.

*Taken away* is literally taken away violently. So far Jesus has said nothing about being crucified. He now makes a reference to His violent end. The bridegroom would be taken away—speaks of the cross, then at that time would be a time of fasting.

But for now the criticism came because of the **exuberant joy** and **cheerfulness** and **glad heartedness** they felt being around Jesus who is God in the flesh. To follow Jesus is not a funeral march but more like a graduation party...old life to new. Not a time to be sad & solemn but joyful and rejoicing.

The picture is that of a marriage processing in Israel of the bridegroom and the attendance. As they prepared for the groom to escort His bride to their permanent dwelling. But first for one week the couple would honeymoon at home. Be dressed in their finest cloths and treated like King and queen for that week.

There would never be another week like it again in their lives. It was the inauguration into the rest of their lives. The guests who shared in the festivities were called 'the attendance of the Bridegroom.'

Jesus likens Christianity to a wedding feast more than once. Joy and gladness being the chief elements.

**:36 And He was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.**

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Jesus is saying new cloth and old are not compatible because of shrinkage. Old garment that is torn then patched w/ new cloth will rip and make the tear worse because in normal washing the new will shrink and tear away from where it was patched and make a worse tear.

Jesus point is that the old religious system w/ it's traditions and rituals are incompatible w/ the new work Jesus came to bring. It is evidenced by the criticism and contention-ripping & tearing at the new work of His ministry.

Jesus did not come to mend but to end the old system. He is the fulfillment of all it stood for. It was a shadow of what was to come & He is the substance. He is standing in their midst, He is all they need He further illustrates

**:37. “And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined.”**

**:38 ‘but new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.**

**:39 “And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, ‘The old is good enough.’**

Unfermented wine placed into old wine skins will burst them once the fermentation process begins and the gases are released.

The old skin because of use has lost its elasticity, it's flexibility and is unable to expand-enlarge itself. So it is w/ those stuck in religious traditions, they become rigid, critical, unable to open themselves up to the spirit unable to enlarge to new horizons.

Jesus give a subtle rebuke by saying they are satisfied w/ status quo, drunk on old system of religion they are in, scolding them by saying ‘the old is good enough’

They had lost their capacity for God, no more growth, expansion in their spiritual life. They had confined God to their little liturgical boxes. They were like wine skins hardened in the religious sun only permitting God to move w/in the parameters they set for Him.

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William Booth founder of Salvation Army was criticized for the use of tambourines and the type of music and parades he used in his evangelism of the lost. He said 'If I thought I could win one soul to Christ by standing on my head and beating a tambourine w/ my feet I'd learn how to stand on my head and beat the tambourine'.

Charles H. Spurgeon was standing in the hall of his house when there came a knock at the front door. He opened the door and there stood a man with a huge stick in his hand. The man sprang into the hall and announced that he had come to kill Spurgeon! "You must mean my brother," the preacher said, trying to calm the fellow. "His name is Spurgeon." But the man would not be dissuaded. **"It is the man that makes the jokes I mean to kill!"** Fortunately Spurgeon was able to get the man out of the house! Later the police picked him up and returned him to his room at the asylum. But it is interesting that even a madman identified Spurgeon as "the man that makes the jokes." An irate woman approached the pastor and scolded him for his humor in the pulpit. Spurgeon replied: "Well, madam, you may very well be right; but if you knew how much I held back, you would give me more credit than you are giving me now!"

Pr 15:13,15 A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, But when the heart is sad the spirit is broken....A cheerful heart has a continual feast...and we do so on the Lord Himself.