

## “A Year with Jesus”

### Week 3, January 17th, Mark 2:18-22

// This is our third week in “A Year with Jesus.” The third week in something new to go along with the third week in a new year. Starting new things brings with it hope, excitement, anticipation, and unique effort, along with possible anxieties coming from unknowns or past outcomes of similar experiences.

Take a moment and think of a couple new things you’ve started in the past. What preparations were involved? What changes needed to be made? What priorities were rearranged? What went into the decision process to bring about the new effort in the first place? Try not to focus on the end result, examine only the beginning.

// Read Mark 2:18-22

Jesus is questioned because his disciples aren’t fasting like the disciples of John the Baptist and others. Jesus connects his presence to that of a wedding ceremony, where instead of fasting there is celebration. Then he gives a metaphor.

Read again verses 21-22. Sit for a moment with the images Jesus gives, picture them happening, allow them to take root in your mind. Can you think of your own similar images to those given by Jesus?

*Note: New wine would ferment in animal skin pouches causing them to stretch, eventually reaching their limit and becoming brittle. These old wineskins couldn’t hold new wine as it fermented, and would leak or break.*

The Gospel writers all make a point of highlighting that the coming of Jesus is the coming of something new. There’s a new work being done, a new authority present, and the old ways won’t contain him.

We at times can be like the old wineskins, the old cloth, simply trying to add Jesus while maintaining our old ways. This “Year with Jesus,” this new beginning, is the perfect time to reflect on a new work God might want to do in our lives, and our willingness for it to happen.

// Questions for reflection: Read all of the questions first. Once you’ve done this, sit comfortably and reflect on each of them in quiet prayer.

- What new work do you think God might be wanting to do in your life? It might be: A step of growth, a new service, an interior change, an increase in devotion or openness to God’s work and leading, etc.

- Is there something old that stands in the way of this new work?
- What change in priority, time, commitment might be required for God to do a new work in you?

Once you’ve reflected on these questions, consider taking a moment to meditate on the image of wineskins and/or old and new cloth. Bring your thoughts from the questions you just reflected on and imagine yourself as the wineskin or the fabric (or your own metaphor) being poured into and worked on by God for something new.

Journal your thoughts.