

Commentary on Luke chapter 5, by Chuck Smith 6.26.22

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June memory verse Romans 6:14&15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

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The popularity of the ministry of Jesus is growing. Word is being spread around of the miracles that are being wrought by Him, and now wherever He goes people are beginning to jostle and shove in order that they might get close to Him. It made it difficult for Jesus to travel to get around because of the multitudes that, according to Mark's gospel, at this point were thronging Him wherever He went.

And so here in Luke's gospel,

It came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God ([Luk 5:1](#)),

And that to me is always an exciting situation, when people are pressing to hear the word of God. When this becomes such a priority in the life of people, to just hear the word of God, they pressed to hear it. But,

he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret ([Luk 5:1](#)),

Also known as the Sea of Tiberias, also known as the Sea of Galilee. Whenever you are talking about a sea, somehow in my mind you get a vision of a sort of a salt body of water, but the lake of Gennesaret, or it's to me more of a lake than it is the sea. It's not salty water, but is fresh water, drinkable. So yet, it is known as the Sea of Galilee.

There were two ships that were standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and he prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship ([Luk 5:2-3](#)).

So in order to escape a little from the crowd that was thronging Him, He commandeered Simon's ship. He got in it, and He said, "Pull on out a little ways," in order that He might be able to teach the people without them pressing so close that He loses the sight of those that were behind. Now here in the area by Capernaum there is sort of a good

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slope where the Sea of Galilee comes down, where the banks come down into the Sea of Galilee there, so that just pulling out just a little ways from shore, you're sort of an amphitheater type of a situation, which made it very conducive to teach the multitude of people who were thronging to hear the word of God.

Now when he was finished speaking to them, he then said to Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught ([Luk 5:4](#)).

For a load, you're going to be pulling in a large catch.

And so Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net ([Luk 5:5](#)).

Simon is objecting to the command in a polite sort of a way. "Lord, I am the fisherman, I know how to fish, and I know the time to fish, and I know that the time isn't now." As the day gets warmer the fish go to the deeper areas of the lake. And these nets were not really deep-water nets, they were sort of surface nets. They had the floats on the top, and they just cast them out as they are rolling around in a circle in the boat. And then as they complete the circle with the boat having cast the nets around in a circle, then they pull the nets on into the boat, and they are not deep-water type nets. They would catch the fish in the shallower areas in the cooler part of the day. Or in the evening which was usually the best time for fishing. So they've been fishing all night, caught nothing, so you assume that this just isn't the time. "Yet, nevertheless at thy word, I will let down the net."

Now this to me is interesting, because here we find men laboring all night with no results. Now suddenly Jesus directs them to labor in the same area, and they have phenomenal results. And to me this marks the contrast that usually exists in those efforts that are on our own, and those efforts that are directed by the Lord. I think of all of the time and energy and money that is wasted by man-inspired efforts. We see a task that needs to be done. We sit down and figure out what would be the best way to accomplish this task. We develop our programs, and then we develop the financing in order that we might fund the programs that we have devised. And then we set up the committees, then we set up the ways by which we might implement that program. And certainly in the church of Jesus Christ we have seen some remarkably phenomenal programs established by man.

Now Jesus is directing Peter. Just launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draft. And Peter semi-arguing says, "Lord, we've been fishing all night and we've caught nothing, nevertheless, at thy word. (If you insist on it, we'll do it)," not really expecting anything.

How many times I've met people who are discouraged because of bad experiences. How many times when we've suggested a solution to a person's problem, they'll immediately respond, "Oh, I've tried that." But did you try it at the Lord's direction, or did

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you try it on your own initiative? It makes a difference when the Lord directs you to do a thing. You can be sure when the Lord is directing your service, that your service for the Lord will not be in vain.

So when they had done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fish: and their net began to brake. So they signaled to their partners, [which were James and John] who were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and they filled both of the ships, so that they began to sink ([Luk 5:6-7](#)).

Success beyond their wildest dreams by simple obedience to the command of Jesus. Now the result of the success to me is significant. When we have devised programs, and we put in all of the human energy, and the human effort, and we begin by the human effort to gain a response. You've got something that is working, you've got something that is attracting people. What do you do with it? You franchise it. You carry it out other places. You develop your success seminars. And you invite others to come and learn how to bait your hook, to make your lure more attractive. So you can gather more fish. But when it is the Lord doing the work, rather than developing your success seminars, and being all puffed up over what's been accomplished, like Peter you just sort of fall at the feet of Jesus and say, "Lord, I am not worthy, depart from me Lord, I am a sinful man."

Suddenly you're aware of God's work. You're aware of God's power. You're aware of the presence of God, and that is always a humbling experience. No man who has stood in the presence of God can be proud. Standing in the presence of the Lord, conscious presence of the Lord, is always a very humbling experience.

Depart from me, Lord, [Peter said,] I am a sinful man. And he was astonished, and all of those that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: And so also was James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; for from now on you're going to catch men. So when they brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him ([Luk 5:8-11](#)).

The Lord brought them to the peak, to the ultimate of success in their chosen profession, and then called them to leave it, to follow Him. Their little ships rowing to shore, weighted down in the water by the load of fish. The dream of every Galilean fishermen, and from that point of success the Lord said, "From now on you're going to catch men." And they left all to follow Jesus.

Now in the other gospels they do not give us the background to the call of Peter and John. And it would appear from the other gospels that Jesus was just walking by the Sea of Galilee and He saw some fishermen mending their nets, and He said, "Come, take up your cross and follow me." Or, "Come leave your nets and follow me." And they dropped their nets and followed Jesus without even knowing Him or seeing Him. That is not so. These men had already experienced the Lord, they knew the Lord. Jesus wasn't

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a stranger to them. They knew Him. Now He is calling them to a complete commitment in following Him.

Now it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man was full of leprosy; who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and begged him, saying, Lord, if you will, you can make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him ([Luk 5:12-13](#)).

He is going to give us a list of some of the miracles that Jesus was accomplishing. Sort of a variety of miracles. The one directing them and catching the fish, sort of a miracle in nature. Now the miracle of the curing of an incurable disease. Leprosy was one of the most dreaded and loathed diseases in the ancient world. If a person had leprosy he was to be ostracized from the community. Nobody could touch him. If they touched him, you would be unclean. Jesus touched him.

Now in another case when Jesus healed lepers, He did not touch them. Jesus did not confine Himself to a particular pattern in doing His work. And I am glad for that. Because we so often are trying to find the formula as though it existed within a formula. Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, you hear the sound thereof, but you can't really tell from whence it is coming, or where it is going. And so is he that is born of the Spirit" ([John 3:8](#)).

God does not confine Himself to our patterns, to our methods, to our ways. In seminary we had a class in methodology. As always, men is seeking to develop the methods or to learn the methods by which God works. But the interesting thing is that God doesn't work by any particular method. There are diversities of gifts, and diversities of operations. Yet, it's the same Lord. So there are different gifts, but even with the same gift, there are different ways by which that gift operates within the individual. The Holy Spirit dividing to each man severally as He wills. And so He always maintains the control of method and the work which is to be done. At best I can only be an instrument through which God does work.

So here we find Jesus touching the man. And the interesting question is, "If thou wilt Lord, if you are willing you can make me clean." So often when we pray we say, "Now, Lord, if it is your will," and I am not putting that down. I feel that we should, that whether I say it or not is an underlying fact in every prayer that I ever offer to God. I don't want my will to be done above God's. "Now, God, You set Your will aside, because this is what I want You to do." The purpose of prayer is never the accomplishing of my will. Except as my will has been molded and shaped and conformed to His will. Always the purpose of prayer, the thrust of prayer is the will of God, the accomplishing of the will of God upon the earth. And we need to remember that. Jesus said, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but thy will be done" ([Mark 14:36](#)). And that was at the end of the prayer, after He had offered His request, then He made that statement. And that's not a bad statement for us to make. After laying out to God the things that we desire, I think it is always wise to just say, "Lord, not what I will, but Your will be done."

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Now quite often the Lord is willing to do those things that we desire. When He said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus said, "I am willing, be thou made clean." And He touched him, and he was cured of his leprosy immediately. Now in the case of the ten lepers that came to Jesus, He didn't touch them, and they were healed as they went. In the case of this fellow, he was healed immediately. Again, diversities of operations. He doesn't always work the same way.

Now the problem that would develop if He worked the same way is that, it didn't happen to me the way it happened to you, then I think, "Oh, God is not doing it for me." So God keeps His ways diverse, so that when I relate to you what God has done in my life, you then don't look for my experience that I've got, but you look for your own personal experience. For God does not pattern Himself in His work in our lives. And He may work in you in a totally different way, and your reaction may be completely different than my reaction to the work of God.

There is a value to testimony meetings, but there is always a problem with testimony meetings. Because through testimony meetings so oftentimes we seek then to have a similar experience to someone else. And the emphasis in the testimony meetings seems always to be experiential, or this is the way I experienced it, this is how God did it for me, this is what God did for me, and then I begin to think, "Oh, God didn't do it for me that way, there must be something wrong with me, because I didn't feel that. I didn't see the lights flashing. I didn't get the tingling down my spine. I guess maybe I don't have it, because I didn't experience it like someone else." So God keeps working in a variety of ways so that we don't try to pattern God after our methods.

So he was healed immediately. Now Jesus said to him,

Don't tell anybody: but just go, and show yourself to the priest ([Luk 5:14](#)),

A marvelous thing about the law of God, the book of Leviticus, is that God in the law provided the way by which a person of an incurable disease could be returned into society and into fellowship in the worship of God when he was cured of the incurable disease. Now that I really like that, because God left Himself space to work. And this is the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing. This is the method by which he is to be restored into the full fellowship of the family. And yet, leprosy is incurable. Even to the present day leprosy is incurable, it can be arrested, and they can be brought to an arrested state now in what they call the Hanson's disease, but it is still incurable. And it was incurable then, and yet God made provision for Him to work sovereignly, even in incurable situations. God always left Himself that space, to inapt, to put into operation His higher laws that supersede the natural laws as we know them. So Jesus said, "Follow the law, go show yourself to the priest." And, of course, the priest would examine him, and see no white flesh, and see the area where the leprosy was all pink, and new flesh. And so he would set him in the house where he would have to be for seven days, and then he comes back and shows himself to the priest again. He examines him, doesn't find anything, and then the fellow brings two doves. And the one

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dove is killed, and the blood is poured with water into a basin. And the second dove is taken and immersed in this bloody water, and set free. And the second dove flying off, the bloody water dripping off his wings, as he takes off, is a symbol of the disease being taken from the man, and his full restoration now into the community. Can you imagine the emotions that a leper must have felt when he saw that dove flying away, and suddenly he realized that he could be restored completely and fully into society? Here he was hopelessly ostracized because of this loathsome, incurable disease, and yet, he always knew, God has wrought a work.

So Jesus told him, "Do what the law tells you to do, show yourself to the priest." But Jesus could not hide. More and more people were hearing of the miracles that were being accomplished, and the crowds were coming and thronging. And He healed them, and they came actually to be healed from their infirmities. Verse 16:

And Jesus withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed ([Luk 5:16](#)).

As we pointed out last week, as we were studying the gospel of Luke, or the week before. The humanity of Jesus is the thing that Luke points out. The Son of man, the human side. And because this is the particular emphasis of Luke's gospel, Luke makes more mention of the prayer life of Christ than any of the other gospels. Luke gives us insight into the prayer life of Christ. So here again, he shows us, he gives us a little insight into that prayer life of Jesus our Lord. Now all I can say is that, if Jesus as the Son of God felt the necessity of prayer, who do you think you are that you can get by without prayer? If He, being the Son of God, felt it such a necessary part of His life, surely it ought to be a very necessary and considered to be a very necessary part of all of our lives.

Again, the mystery of heaven, I am certain, that men pray so little. I am sure the angels discuss this all the time. When they watch and observe us going through all of our calamities, all of our troubles, and they are just waiting to be dispatched to help us. And they watch, and we get knocked down and bloodied, and we stand up, and get knocked over again. And I am sure the angels say, "When is that nut going to call? How long is he going to go on until he cries out for help? If he only knew what God has made available to him." The mystery of the prayerlessness of infirmed man.

Now it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees the doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: [and I like this,] and the power of the Lord was present to heal them ([Luk 5:17](#)).

Now Jesus had began to attract the notice and the attention of a hostile crowd, the Pharisees, the doctors of the law, and they were coming all the way from Jerusalem up to the area of Galilee because they heard of Him. And their purpose of coming was really of being more critical than accepting. Here is a rising movement, a spiritual movement among the people. Now they have pretty well set themselves in a

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comfortable position as religious leaders. Here is a threat to them. They must come up and listen carefully, and examine Him, so that they can contradict Him, and show where He is at fault, and to dispel any idea that this man might truly be of God, and possibly the Messiah. But while they were there, the power of the Lord was present to heal.

And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with palsy: and they sought a means to bring him in, and lay him before Jesus. But when they could not find a way that they might bring him in because of the multitude, they climbed up on the roof, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus ([Luk 5:18-19](#)).

And so you can get the picture. Jesus is sitting there in the house, and the people are all gathered, the multitude is gathered around, and suddenly there is a noise upon the roof, and the tiles are being pulled back, and then the ropes, and here is this guy being let down right in front of Jesus. These guys are ingenious, I admire them, I really do. They are determined. They've got a friend, they want help for him, and they are determined to get help. Now I tell you, those are the kind of buddies you need. And so they come with him to the house, carrying him in his bed. They can't get in, and so they are not to be stopped. And so they let him down right in front of Jesus.

And when he saw their faith ([Luk 5:20](#)),

Not the faith of the fellow that was let down, the faith of his friends that brought him. That's great to be surrounded by friends who believe. And He saw their faith,

and he said to them, Man, your sins are forgiven ([Luk 5:20](#)).

Now I imagine the guys upon on the roof said, "No, no, no, Lord, that's not what we want, we want him to walk home."

So often in their minds, illness was related to sin. You remember when the disciples were with Jesus, and they saw the blind man, they said, "Lord, who did sin that this man was born blind?" Now they even believed in prenatal sins. While you were in the womb you could sin. I don't know how, but they believed that you could. "So was it his parents, or was it him? Did he do some sin in the womb that he was born blind? Or was it his parents?" And Jesus said, "No, no, no, this man...." He didn't really answer why he was born blind, He just said, "That God may be glorified, I must do the works of God while I am with you." And He healed the man. He never told them why the man was born blind.

People misinterpret that saying, "Well, he was born blind for the glory of God to be revealed." No, Jesus just said that He must work to glorify God, and thus, He healed the man. He never answered the question. Except that He affirmed that neither he nor his parents sinned. He affirmed that it wasn't their sin. But they so often related illnesses to sin. Which we haven't really divorced ourselves from that completely yet. And it's tragic, that when we see a person who is suffering, we say, "Oh, you must have really done something wrong."

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We were pastoring a church in Tucson years ago, and one of the fellows in the church said, "Would you please pray for my wife tonight that God will help her to confess whatever sin she has been committing? She has been sick for over a month." And so that idea that somehow illness is related to sin is not completely divorced from the minds of people. If illnesses were directly related to sin, none of us would be strong enough to be here tonight. And it is extremely wrong, and extremely cruel to say to a person, "Well, if you just had enough faith, you would be alright."

Some of the greatest saints of God have had great physical maladies, and actually it was the physical malady that created that depth of character, and that depth of their walk, and relationship with the Lord.

Jesus took care of the most important thing first. You know, it's more important that your sins are forgiven than that you be healed. It's better to go into heaven maimed than to go into hell. So Jesus took care of the most important thing first, with the man's sins. "Man, your sins are forgiven." Of course He knew that the Pharisees and all were there watching and listening. He was baiting them. I mean, He was looking for a big blowup, which He got. And He was deliberately just baiting them. He knew what their response would be. He anticipated it. And He was deliberately creating it.

And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? ([Luk 5:21](#))

Now, they were right in their assumption. Only God can forgive sins. Jesus wanted them to make that assumption. They were falling right into His trap. They were wrong in thinking that Jesus was speaking blasphemous. What Jesus was actually demonstrating to them was that He was God. So in saying, "Man, your sins are forgiven you," He is exercising His divine prerogative of forgiving sins, knowing that only God can forgive sins. David said unto God, "Lord, against thee, and thee only have I sinned, and done this great sin in thy sight" ([Psalm 51:4](#)). Thus, if sin is against God, then only God can forgive sin. And Jesus was deliberately seeking to get this response and reaction, which He did get. And then He closed the trap.

He said unto them, What are you reasoning in your hearts? What is easier, to say, Your sins are forgiven you; or, Rise up and walk? ([Luk 5:22-23](#))

Well, it would be easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven you." If you say, your sins are forgiven, who can look in a guys heart and really see? Well, you can say that, but how do you know it's really happened? How can you prove that the sins were really forgiven? How can you prove that your words really have authority? You can't prove it. There is nothing that you can see that can prove the authority of that. However, if you say to a fellow who is lame, "Rise up and walk," it's very easy to quickly see how much authority you have in your words.

So Jesus said unto them,

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But that you may know that the Son of man has the authority upon earth to forgive sins, (he said to the man who was sick of a palsy,) I say unto you, Arise, take up your couch, and go home. And immediately he rose up before them, he took up that whereon he was laying, and he departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen some weird things today ([Luk 5:24-26](#)).

Now Jesus was here demonstrating to them His divinity. Doing it in a very clever way, saying first to the man, "Your sins are forgiven," creating that response, "How can you do that, only God can do that?" Only God has that authority. And thus, by showing that His word did have authority by saying, "Rise up and walk," He is demonstrating to them that He is God.

Now after these things he went forth, and he saw a publican ([Luk 5:27](#)),

Now a publican was a tax collector. The Roman government assessed an area with an certain assessment, and then they auctioned off the job of tax collector. And the tax collector only had to pay to the Roman government that assessment. Anything he could collect above the assessment was his. So they were constantly looking for things to tax. Constantly grabbing people and taxing them for many things. Actually, you had to pay a tax just to be alive under the Roman government. They taxed 10% of the fruit of your crop, and 20% of your oil and wine. They had taxes on just about everything. And you think that our government has been shrewd. All they had to do is read what the Roman government taxed, we'd really be crying even more than we are. The people in those days classified tax collectors with murders and thieves. They probably weren't so far off, thieves to be sure. In fact, it was extremely rare to find an honest tax collector. They were notoriously crooked. In fact, there was a monument that was raised. They've found records of a monument extolling a man because he was an honest tax collector. About the only one I guess in the Roman Empire. So much so, that they made a special monument. This man was an honest tax collector. But that was a rarity indeed. And so the Jews considered tax collectors, traitors, because they were really working for the Roman government. And they made a law that a tax collector could not enter the synagogue. I mean, he was a rank sinner. There was no way he could come into the synagogue. Ranking him with the murders and the thieves, they would not allow him to worship God in the synagogue.

Now here was a tax collector,

named Levi, and he was sitting at his little custom house [where he received his taxes]: and Jesus said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him. And Levi had a big feast [of course he could afford it] in his own house: and there was a great number ([Luk 5:27-29](#))

He invited all of his tax collector friends to come and listen to Jesus. All of the publicans, he invited them to gather together, and Jesus sat down with them.

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It's interesting how that when a person comes to a real relationship with Jesus Christ, the first thing they do is they grab their associates to tell them about it. The only associates he had were tax collectors. So in gathering his associates, he had to gather the tax collectors. They only had fellowship with each other, no one else would fellowship with them. And so he gathered together all of these tax collectors, and the scribes and the Pharisees murmured against it. And they came to His disciples and they said, "Why are you eating and drinking with publicans and sinners?"

You see, a Pharisee if he came near a tax collector would grab his robe and hold it tied around him, because he wouldn't want his robe to flip out and touch a tax collector, because they were considered unclean. And if he did that he would have to go home and bathe, and change, and wash his cloak, and he couldn't go to the synagogue for a day, because he was unclean, because his cloak touched the tax collector.

Now here is Jesus eating with them, that's even worse in their mind, because when you're eating with someone, you are touching the same bread. And you're eating bread that that guy touched. "How is it you're eating with this publicans and sinners?" Eating together was identifying with one another in a very intimate way.

They were murmuring to the disciples, [they were bringing their complaints to the disciples,] but Jesus answered them and said, They that are whole need not a physician; but those that are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance ([Luk 5:30-32](#)).

Jesus went out where they were, meet them on their own territory. He ministered to the sick. Those who were sick spiritually. I think that oftentimes in the church we begin to make ourselves sort of sterilized hospitals. And we create almost a sterile environment, where if a sinner would come in he feels so totally uncomfortable, because we are all sitting here in our sterile robes of righteousness.

And so they then brought up the question, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and they make their prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but yours eat and drink? And he said unto them, Can you make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days ([Luk 5:33-35](#)).

In those days when a couple got married, it was a two week party. A week before, and a week after. The week before everybody would gather together and they have this big weeklong party, and then they would have the marriage and the consummation of the marriage. And then they would have open house for a week, where they would party for a week. And the bride and the bridegroom would be the host of a party for a week, and their special friends were invited to party with them for a whole week. Now their lives were extremely difficult in heart, and this was probably the only time in their lives where they just have a week off with doing nothing. Because they had to work so hard. And so

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it was that one week of their life of real partying, now that they are married, then after that it was to work and to the treachery, as life as it was in those days.

Now those special friends that they invited to celebrate that week and party with them and all were called the children of the bridechambers. And so Jesus called his disciples the children of the bridechamber. The bridegroom is with them, they are here to party. "We are here to enjoy and celebrate the fact that I am with them. Now when I am gone, then it will be time for them to fast, but as long as the bridegroom is with them, they are not going to fast, they are just going to enjoy the presence of the bridegroom."

And then he spake a parable unto them; No man puts a piece of a new garment on an old; if otherwise, then both the new makes a tear, and the piece that was taken out of the new does not agree with the old ([Luk 5:36](#)).

They didn't have preshrunk in those days. So if you took a new patch and sew it into an old garment, the first time you washed it, the new patch not being preshrunk would shrink. Of course, the garment had already been washed enough that all of the shrinkage was out of it. But if you put a new cloth into an old garment, the new cloth as soon as you wash it would shrink, and it just make the tear worse. So Jesus said, "You just don't put a new patch on an old garment. It's only going to rip it up more."

And also he said, No man puts new wine into old bottles ([Luk 5:37](#));

Now when they poured the new wine into the wineskins, there was a chemical reaction that created a gas. So if you would pour the new wine into old wineskins, it would cause it to immediately ferment, and this gas would be formed, and the old wineskins, of course, were stiff, because they were old. And being stiff, no give to them, the gas would develop and they just pop. And so you just didn't put new wine into the old skins, but you put it into new skins that were still soft and pliable. The gas had developed, but they would just expand with the gas, because there was a pliability in the leather. And the wineskins were made of leather. And so Jesus said, "You don't take the new wine and pour it into the old skins, they're going to burst on you."

You put the new wine into new skins; and both then are preserved. And no man having drunk the old wine immediately desires the new; for he says, The old is better ([Luk 5:38-39](#)).

Now He is talking about the old religious systems that He was coming up against. He is bringing a new breath of air into the religious scene that had become so stodgy that no one could hardly stand it. Now, rather than coming in to reform that system, putting the new cloth in the old garment, or putting the new wine in the old skins, He is developing a whole new skin for this new work of God.

Now those who are used to the old traditional ways are always upset when something new comes along. They say, "Oh, the old is better." And we see this demonstrated so

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often. New ideas, new thoughts are so often immediately rejected. People get caught in their old traditional ways, and they get upset if anything should come along. Well, the old wineskins burst.

Chuck 1:1, "Blessed are the flexible, they shall not be broken."

May God keep us flexible. As I grow older I know the tenancy is to get set in your ways. And I pray, "God don't let me grow old in that regards, help me to always be open to what You might want to be doing." I have observed in the history of the church how many times when God wanted to do a fresh work upon the earth, He had to go outside of the organized systems. Because the old skin couldn't handle the new wine. And so we see this glorious fresh work of God, but he had to create a new skin in order to do it. And those who come from the old systems so often are shocked and appalled at what they see. Kids sitting on the floor. And they just can't handle what God is doing, because it doesn't follow our structure. It doesn't fit into our pattern. And yet, God develops the new skins for His new wine.