**LET’S ASSESS IT!**

**Luke 14:25-35**

Premise: Ministry is a movement. To fulfill God’s plan and purpose for our lives and for the life of our church, we cannot become complacent or stagnant. We must get *On the Move*! To accomplish this, we must honestly examine who we are, where we are, and what we are as a ministry, and with boldness, begin making the necessary changes to fulfill God call (Ephesians 2:10).

**DISCUSSION**

Luke 14:25-35 gives us a biblical valuation of the high cost of discipleship. As Christ-followers we must willingly sacrifice; exercise good stewardship; and maintain a consistent Christian character.

These must be regularly assessed, evaluated, and examined if we are to be effective witnesses in the world.

Not only must we do this in our lives personally, but we must also do this in the life of the church, corporately.

Our focus will shift from the biblical context of the high cost of discipleship to the practical application of the principles obtained from the biblical text.

As Christ-followers when have a prioritized relationship with Christ we should also have a prioritized relationship with the church.

Remember that we stated before that priority speaks to “order of importance”. Thus, our collaborative fellowship should be given a high order of importance.

**\*Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:**

**The church should never change.** Support your response(Remember how we defined the church).

**\*Why do you think change within the church is, by many people, so slowly embraced?**

In Mark 2:21-22 & Luke 5:36-39, Jesus speaks regarding the new (His way) versus the old (the religious tradition).

After understanding the text in context with the rest of the chapter, we will then practically apply the text to guide us into new phases of ministry.

The Text in Context

**Mark 2**

Jesus, while ministering, encounters the doubting questions of the Scribes & Pharisees.

(vv.1-12) Jesus Forgives and Heals the Paralytic

S/P question: verses 6-7. Jesus addresses question verses 8-11.

(vv. 13-17) Jesus Calls Levi/Matthew

S/P question: v. 16. Jesus addresses question v. 17.

(vv. 18-22) Jesus Discusses Fasting

S/P question: v. 18. Jesus addresses question vv. 19-22.

(vv. 23-28) Jesus and the Sabbath

S/P question: 24. Jesus addresses question (25-28)

The third interaction will be our focus. Mark 2:18-22, emphasis on 21-22.

**DISCOVERY**

**Assess, Evaluate, Examine**

**Focus text Mark 2:18-22**

Jesus and His disciples are accused of refusing to fast in like manner as the disciples of John (those who did not shift their allegiance to Jesus) and the Pharisees. John’s disciples and the Pharisees were viewed as righteous people.

The implication then is that Jesus and His disciples are *unrighteous* because they did not fast as the others.

The Pharisees fasting was *only* to satisfy religious tradition. They were outwardly religious, but inwardly, they were separated from God.

**Matthew 23:27-28**

They had a “form” of godliness, but no genuine fellowship or relationship with God.

\*How does this present in the church today?

The Pharisees lacked the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** of covenant relationship with Christ.

“As Seen in Marriage”

Two people are not married just because they know each other, or even because they have strong feelings about each other. In order to be married, they must commit themselves to each other and make this commitment known. In most societies, the man and woman publicly affirm this commitment when each says, “I do!”

Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 117.

Questions to consider:

* Have I committed myself to Christ and His church?
* Have I publicly affirmed this commitment?
* Do I consistently demonstrate this commitment?

Ministry requires of us a genuine commitment to Christ *and* His church.

Our commitment will demand that we forsake our “old ways” of thinking, acting, and speaking, and take on the new life given to us in Christ.

Jesus illustrates this very point with two parables:

* The Garment
* The Wineskins

With these two lessons Jesus is teaching that He came to **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** the new, not **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** the old.

Jesus’ new and internal gospel of repentance from and forgiveness of sin could not be connected to or contained in the old and external traditions of self-righteousness and ritual.

The Pharisees could not have the “best of both worlds”; the best of Pharisaic Judaism and the best of what Christ offered.

The Garment (v. 21)

It would be like tearing patches from a new unshrunk garment and sewing them on an old garment. You would ruin the new garment; and when the old garment was washed, the patches would shrink, rip away, and ruin that garment too.

**Luke 5:36-39**

OR

The Wineskin (v. 22)

It would be like putting new unfermented wine in old brittle wineskins. As soon as the wine began to ferment and the gases formed, the old skins would burst—and you would lose both the wine and the skins.

Jesus was noting that His way and the way of the Pharisees simply are unmixable. The Pharisees would refuse to try the new way for they assumed that their old way was better. Jesus’ teaching was considered by the Pharisees and religious leaders to be like new wine, and they wanted no part in it.

New ideas or teachings cannot be contained by old ways of thinking or doing things. The old ways will not be able to handle the new ideas and will be ruined. The new ideas need to be put into new ways of thinking or doing things. This is because the new ideas will change the old ways and the old ways will not be able to contain the new ideas.

**DIRECTION**

Assess – Evaluate - Examine

Identify some “old wineskins” in your life where Jesus wants to do something “new”?