



The Parable of the Wine and Wineskins

WEEK 2 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

In the second message of the new series entitled, *Parables*, we will learn how change is important in order to replace old wineskins with the new and fresh work God wants to do in our hearts and lives.

DISCUSSION

God has been trying to lead people out of their old, unhealthy ways of thinking and living for thousands of years. **Isaiah 43:19**, written 700 years before Christ's coming, says, **"Behold, I will do a new thing, and it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."** We need to be willing to restructure and change some things to receive the new thing God wants to do.

Where do we need to change?

1. New openness in our hearts.

If new wine was poured into an old, dry wineskin, when the juice began to ferment and produce gasses, the leather wouldn't be able to stretch. Instead, the wineskin would burst at the seams and all the wine would spill out. God's presence is like the new wine that expands and increases.

A hard heart cannot handle the expansion of God's presence. Hearts of stone can't receive what God wants to do. When we give our heart to Christ, we get a new heart and God's Spirit, but over time, our heart can grow hard as we endure the pains of life. However, God can make our heart soft and pliable again. We just need to ask Him.

Psalm 51:17 says, **“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise.** A broken spirit, a contrite heart, indicates the humility of one who has truly repented of their sin and hardness of heart. This is a heart renewed from within. Are you willing to humbly repent and ask God to soften your heart? Are you ready for the expansion of God’s presence in your life?

- Discuss what makes lives ready for revival as we see what God's doing in places like Asbury, Lee, Samford.

2. New ways of thinking.

In the parable of the wine and wineskin, Jesus tells us that new and old don't mix. One of the greatest places we limit God's work in our lives and our potential is the realm of **our thoughts**. God is reminding us that we need to challenge our natural thinking. We cannot put new thinking on old thinking. **Romans 12:2** says, **"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."** When we think new thoughts, we are creating new pathways in our brain. Spiritually, this is called **renewing the mind**.

- The most powerful way to renew your mind and tear down unhealthy thoughts is through memorizing Scripture. What methods have resulted in successful memorization of Scripture in your life? Set new goals for acquiring more memorized Scripture. What verses would you like to memorize next?

3. New wineskins in our routines and schedules.

Matthew 9:17 says, **"Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."** Jesus is saying, "You have to position yourselves to receive the new!" Time is one of God's most precious gifts to us. It's our most significant, non-renewable resource. We have less of it remaining every day.

- If God wanted to pour some new wine into you, would you have the hunger, the habits, the time, and the space to slow down long enough to hear from Him and respond?
- Identify some "time wasters" in your life.
- What is the first step of your action plan to make the Bible and prayer a priority every day?

LIFE CHALLENGE

Let's make it a priority to receive more of the life of God and even inconvenience ourselves to do so. God wants to do a new thing and pour out **new wine**. Be flexible. Be pliable. Do something different. Change some things on the outside and experience His newness on the inside.

PRAYER REQUESTS & CLOSE IN PRAYER