

Bible Chat week starting 11 6 23

Matthew 9: 14 - 17

14 Then John's disciples came and asked him, 'How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?'

15 Jesus answered, 'How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.'

16 'No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. 17 Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out, and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.'

Fasting

1. Why do people fast? You could look up some of these passages: Leviticus 16: 29 - 31; Psalm 35:13; Nehemiah 9: 1 - 4; Daniel 9: 1 - 3; Luke 2: 36 - 37; Acts 14:23.
2. How can fasting go wrong? Consider Matthew 6: 16 - 18 and Isaiah 58: 3 - 6ff.
3. Judging from verses 14 - 15 above, (and Matthew 6: 16 - 18 again) what did Jesus make of fasting?
4. Does fasting retain any value for the Christian today?

Change

1. Some people thrive on it; some people hate it: *Change!* How about you? How do you cope with change?
2. Discuss the analogies about change Jesus gives in verses 16 - 17 above. His kingdom was a big change from the way many Jewish people were practising their religion. How would you describe the change Jesus was describing with these analogies? Why was such complete change needed?
3. Come up with examples of when God's people have been on the move. Is it fair to say that pilgrimage is in our spiritual DNA as Christians?
4. David's talk said that we must cling to Jesus in times of change. When everything else might be in flux, his love for us remains the same. In what ways can we put this teaching into practice?