

Title: Feasting with a New Believer
Text: Luke 5: 29-35
Place: SGBC, New Jersey
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Luke 5: 27: And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

This is the account of Levi's conversion by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Levi is Matthew who wrote the gospel of Matthew. He was a publican—a tax collector—a sinner. But Levi was chosen of God, righteous in Christ his Surety, and therefore Levi was called in power and grace, as all the elect of God shall be.

Christ came to him and with one command—“*Follow me*”—the Lord Jesus Christ gave Levi spiritual life—where there was no life; faith—where there was no faith; forgiveness of sins—past, present, future; and repentance—he was turned by the Lord and therefore Levi turned from his former way and followed Christ.

Have you heard the Master's Voice? Has the Spirit of God turned you from unbelief to faith, from rebellion to surrender, from hatred to love, from sin to the Savior, from self-righteousness to Christ our Righteousness? This is what happens if you have been turned:

Luke 5: 28: And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

For the first time, some of you have experienced the power of the Lord's call. You have confessed that all you are is sin and all your hope is the Lord Jesus Christ. When you are baptized you will be confessing publicly that you have: left all, risen with Christ, and are now following him.

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Proposition: I want to give you 4 words to encourage you, to warn you and for you to follow:

I. ALWAYS BE CONCERNED FOR THE SOULS OF OTHERS

Luke 5: 29: And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

We can relate to the joy that Levi had in his heart. He had met his Savior. This was a time of celebration for Levi. And Levi wanted all his friends to delight in his Master. So Levi invited as many as he could to come to his house to sit down for dinner in the presence of the Lord.

You know how Levi felt. You want the ones you love and care about most to know him. Always desire to want needy sinners to come to Christ. Levi spared no expense—you do the same; Levi invited all to come hear the gospel—you do the same; Levi trust Christ to do all that what necessary to reveal himself in power even as Levi experienced—you do the same. It is good witnessing to say what the samaritan woman said, “Come see a man who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?”

II. BE AWARE THAT AS YOU WALK WITH CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE, MANY WILL LOOK DOWN UPON YOU.

Luke 5: 30: But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

Those who want nothing to do with religion will look down their nose at you and do not be surprised when religious men criticize you as well. The Lord's answer declares why we can expect this.

Luke 5: 31: And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

Sinners think they are whole, righteous. Only sick people go to the doctor. Only the sin-sick flee to Christ. Only the unrighteous flee to the Lord our Righteousness. Self-righteous man defends himself.

Are you sick? Or are you whole in yourself? Are you unfit for the holy and righteous God to accept you? Or do you imagine you are good enough that God ought to receive you?

Luke 5: 32: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The reason I eat with sinners is because all I am--in and of myself--is a sinner but Christ calls sinners to his table. I eat at Christ's table with sinners just like me because Christ came to call sinners just like me.

III. BE ON GUARD AND AWARE THAT SATAN WILL USE ANYTHING TO TURN YOUR MINDS FROM THE SIMPLICITY OF CHRIST.

Luke 9: 33: And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

The self-righteous carnally minded man has his mind set on the flesh—and he will try to sidetrack you to set your mind on the flesh.

They tried to divide based on the preacher—(v33) *the disciples of John, the disciples of the Pharisees, thy disciples (Christ's disciples)*

The Pharisees were carnal and not sent of God. But Christ Jesus is THE PROPHET sent of God. John the Baptist was sent of God. True gospel preachers are sent of God. Whether called through John or by Christ, or by any other God-sent messenger, those who are truly born of the Spirit of God are Christ's disciples. And are all one in Christ.

1 Corinthians 1: 12: Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13: Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?...3:4: For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

The Pharisees tried to divide based on fasting and prayer—outward observances.

They sought common ground with John's disciples to make John's disciples see themselves as one with the Pharisee's RATHER than with Christ and his disciples (v33) They used the observances of fasting and making of prayers as that common ground.

A fast ("the afflicting of the soul") under the old covenant symbolized spiritual humility, the mourning of our sin, the confession of the deadness of our flesh. "Prayer" is truly the sinner casting himself upon the Lord to save. Listen to the Lord give the meaning of fasting as a heart work.

Joel 2: 12: Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: 13: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and

turn unto the LORD your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

I have no doubt that John the Baptist taught his disciples the true, spiritual significance of the fast on the day of atonement. And I have no doubt that John's disciples did not fast or pray in the same manner or with the same spirit as the Pharisees. But by this the Pharisees' caused some of John's disciples—to look to themselves.

Matthew 9: 14: *Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?*

If you start to look at this world's religion it will divide you and your brethren, from Christ—making issues of things that do not matter--“touch not taste not handle not.” Read Colossians 2: 8-23; 3: 1

IV. SET YOUR AFFECTION ON CHRIST ALONE

Christ Jesus gives 4 reasons that his people do not join in with the vain, licentiousness of this world's religion.

1. Christ is with us.
2. We are robed in his righteousness
3. Made new creatures of the Holy Spirit
4. We have tasted something better

1. We have Christ.

Luke 5: 34: Can ye make the children of the bridegroom fast, [mourn] while the bridegroom is with them?

Illustration: We mourn and weep at funerals. We rejoice at weddings.

Christ is the Bridegroom. His church is his bride, each individual elect child is a child of the bridechamber. Christ had come to Levi. Christ had called him. Christ had caused Levi to leave all. Christ was sitting at the table with him and his brethren. Could they mourn? This was a marriage feast—not funeral.

Luke 5: 35: But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

When Christ went to the cross, he was taken and his disciples mourned greatly. They mourned because now they thought they were left to themselves—their flesh and this world. But one of the first things Christ did when he came to them, after his resurrection was to sit down to eat with them. He takes away our mourning, our fasting, by feeding us himself!

Believer, there may be times when you do not feel the Lord's presence and you will mourn your sin—for nothing satisfies our appetite for Christ but Christ himself. But it will be a heart work, not a ceremony. This is the day of grace, the day of feasting and rejoicing for Christ's people.

2. Second reason we do not worship as Pharisee's do is: we have been robed in the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Luke 5: 36: And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old.

Illustration: Patching your britches

We are not attempting to piece Christ's righteousness together with some righteousness in our selves—that kind of religion will not save AND it makes the rent worse. By his grace, we have been stripped of our fig leaves—clothed in perfect righteousness--the seamless garment of Christ's righteousness--we are not trying *to be* righteous, we *are* righteous.

3. Third reason we do not imitate this world's religion is: we have been made new creatures AND Christ abides in us.

Luke 5: 37: And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. 38: But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

We are not trying to appear holy we are--a “new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” **And both are preserved** for the new wine and the new wine skin are one so as the new wine expands the wineskin expands—so we are one with Christ with Christ in us.

Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

4. Forth reason we do not join in with the Pharisee's is that we have been given a taste for that which is better—the gospel of God our Savior.

Luke 5: 39: No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

Old wine is better. The gospel is the old wine of old eternity. Before the law was the Lawgiver. Before the shadow was the Image.

Isaiah 25:6: And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

We do not concern ourselves with “touch not, taste not” but that which does matter--unites brethren—which is THE ISSUE is the truth who God is and of how God saves sinners:

- God's electing grace,
 - Christ's particular redemption of all God's elect,
 - The Holy Spirit's invincible call
 - The Preserving of God's sheep by which we persevere in faith—
- These things scatter the goats but they unite sheep

Review: Always be concerned for the souls of sinners; Know that the self-righteous will look down upon you and your brethren; Be not turned aside to the flesh by carnal, christless religion; Set your affection on Christ, remembering; Christ is with us—the Bridegroom; We are robed in his righteousness and new creatures in Christ—wedding garment; and we have been given a taste for that which is better—wedding wine!

AMEN!

