

What It Means to be a Disciple of Jesus Christ --- the Parables of Cloth and Wineskins

Luke 5:36 [NET]

He also told them a parable: “No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old garment. If he does, he will have torn the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.

Luke 5:37-39 [NET]

And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. Instead new wine must be poured into new wineskins. No one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, ‘The old is good enough [‘The old is better’ NKJV].’”

1. Jesus chooses Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John (near Capernaum)

Matthew 4:18-22 (NET)

18 As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon (called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishermen).

19 He said to them, "Follow me, and I will Turn you into fishers of people!" 20 They left their nets immediately and followed him.

21 Going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John, in a boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. Then he called them.

22 They immediately left the boat and their father and followed him.

Mark 1:16-20 (NET)

16 As he went along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, Simon's brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishermen).

17 Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will Turn you into fishers of people!" 18 They left their nets immediately and followed him.

19 Going on a little farther, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother in their boat mending nets.

20 Immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Luke 5:1-11 (NET)

1 Now Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing around him to hear the word of God. 2 He saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then Jesus sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and lower your nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing! But at your word I will lower the nets." 6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets started to tear.

7 So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they were about to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9 For Peter and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, Zebedee's sons, who were Simon's business partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people!"

11 So when they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

2. Jesus Heals a Leper, Creating Excitement Among the People

Matthew 8:2-4 (NET)

2 And a leper approached and bowed low before him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." 3 He stretched out his hand and touched him saying, "I am willing. Be clean!" Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 Then Jesus said to him, "See that you do not speak to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest, and bring the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Mark 1:40-45 (NET)

40 Now a leper came to him and fell to his knees, asking for help. "If you are willing, you can make me clean," he said. 41 Moved with indignation, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean!" 42 The leprosy left him at once, and he was clean. 43 Immediately Jesus sent the man away with a very strong warning. 44 He told him, "See that you do not say anything to anyone, but go, show yourself to a priest, and bring the offering that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." 45 But as the man went out he began to announce it publicly and spread the story widely, so that Jesus was no longer able to enter any town openly but stayed outside in remote places. Still they kept coming to him from everywhere.

Luke 5:12-16 (NET)

12 While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came to him who was **covered with leprosy**. When he saw Jesus, he bowed down with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." 13 So he stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him. 14 Then he ordered the man to tell no one, but commanded him, "Go and show yourself to a priest, and bring the offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." **15 But the news about him spread even more, and large crowds were gathering together to hear him and to be healed of their illnesses.** 6 Yet Jesus himself frequently withdrew

3. Jesus heals a paralyzed man lowered through the roof of house in Capernaum, showing His authority to forgive sin

Matthew 9:1-8 (NET)

1 After getting into a boat he crossed to the other side and came to his own town. 2 Just then some people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, **“Have courage, son! Your sins are forgiven.”** 3 Then some of the experts in the law said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming!” 4 When Jesus perceived their thoughts he said, “Why do you respond with evil in your hearts? 5 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or to say, ‘Stand up and walk’? 6 But so that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—then he said to the paralytic — “Stand up, take your stretcher, and go home.”

7 So he stood up and went home. 8 When the crowd saw this, they were afraid and honored God who had given such authority to men.

Mark 2:1-12 (NET)

1 Now after some days, when he returned to Capernaum, the news spread that he was at home. 2 So many gathered that there was no longer any room, not even by the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some people came bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. 4 When they were not able to bring him in because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Jesus. Then, after tearing it out, they lowered the stretcher the paralytic was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, **“Son, your sins are forgiven.”** 6 Now some of the experts in the law were sitting there, turning these things over in their minds: 7 “Why does this man speak this way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 8 Now immediately, when Jesus realized in his spirit that they were contemplating such thoughts, he said to them, “Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up, take your stretcher, and walk’? 10 But so that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins,”—he said to the paralytic— 11 “I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher, and go home.”

12 And immediately the man stood up, took his stretcher, and went out in front of them all. They were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Luke 5:17-26 (NET)

17 Now on one of those days, while he was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting nearby (who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem), and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. 18 Just then some men showed up, carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher. They were trying to bring him in and place him before Jesus. 19 But since they found no way to carry him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down on the stretcher through the roof tiles right in front of Jesus. 20 When Jesus saw their faith he said, **“Friend, your sins are forgiven.”** 21 Then the experts in the law and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, “Who is this man who is uttering blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 22 When Jesus perceived their hostile thoughts, he said to them, “Why are you raising objections within yourselves? 23 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and walk’? 24 But so that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralyzed man—“I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher and go home.” 25 Immediately he stood up before them, picked up the stretcher he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. 26 Then astonishment seized them all, and they glorified God. They were filled with awe, saying, “We have seen incredible things today.”

4. Jesus calls Matthew, who hosts a banquet in His honor (Capernaum)

Matthew 9:9-13 (NET)

9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax booth. "Follow me," he said to him. So he got up and followed him. 10 As Jesus was having a meal in Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with Jesus and his disciples.

11 When the Pharisees saw this they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

12 When Jesus heard this he said, "Those who are healthy don't need a physician, but those who are sick do.

13 Go and learn what this saying means: 'I want mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'"

Mark 2:13-17 (NET)

13 Jesus went out again by the sea. The whole crowd came to him, and he taught them.

14 As he went along, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax booth. "Follow me," he said to him. And he got up and followed him.

15 As Jesus was having a meal in Levi's home, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

16 When the experts in the law and the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

17 When Jesus heard this he said to them, "Those who are healthy don't need a physician, but those who are sick do. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Luke 5:27-32 (NET)

27 After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax booth. "Follow me," he said to him.

28 And he got up and followed him, leaving everything behind. 29 Then Levi gave a great banquet in his house for Jesus, and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others sitting at the table with them.

30 But the Pharisees and their experts in the law complained to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

31 Jesus answered them, "Those who are well don't need a physician, but those who are sick do.

32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

How tax collectors were viewed

Matthew 9:10-11: “tax collectors and sinners”

Matthew 11:19: “a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners”

Matthew 18:17: “a Gentile or a tax collector”

Matthew 21:31-32: “tax collectors and prostitutes”

Luke 18:11: “I thank you that I am not like other people: extortionists, unrighteous people, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.”

5. Jesus defends His disciples for not fasting

Matthew 9:14-15 (NET)

14 Then John's disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples don't fast?"

15 Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot mourn while the bridegroom is with them, can they?"

But the days are coming when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then they will fast.

Mark 2:18-20 (NET)

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. So they came to Jesus and said, "Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples don't fast?"

19 Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they do not fast.

20 But the days are coming when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and at that time they will fast.

Luke 5:33-35 (NET)

33 Then they said to him, "John's disciples frequently fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours continue to eat and drink."

34 So Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you?"

35 But those days are coming, and when the bridegroom is taken from them, at that time they will fast."

Parable of New Cloth on an Old Garment



Parable of New Cloth On An Old Garment

Matthew 9:16

No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse.

Mark 2:21

No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse.

Luke 5:36

Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was *taken* out of the new does not match the old.

Typical First-Century Wineskin



Parable of New Wine in Old Wineskins

Matthew 9:17 NKJV

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.

Mark 2:22 NKJV

No one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.”

Luke 5:37-39 NKJV

And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’

Traditional Christianity's "Antinomian" and "Non-Contextual" Attempts to Interpretate The Parables

Traditional Christianity's common explanation of these parables is that to be a Christian we must throw away all of the obsolete Old Testament and its burdensome obsolete laws --- because to be a Christian you cannot mix the two. But Jesus' own words demolish this "antinomian" idea, because:

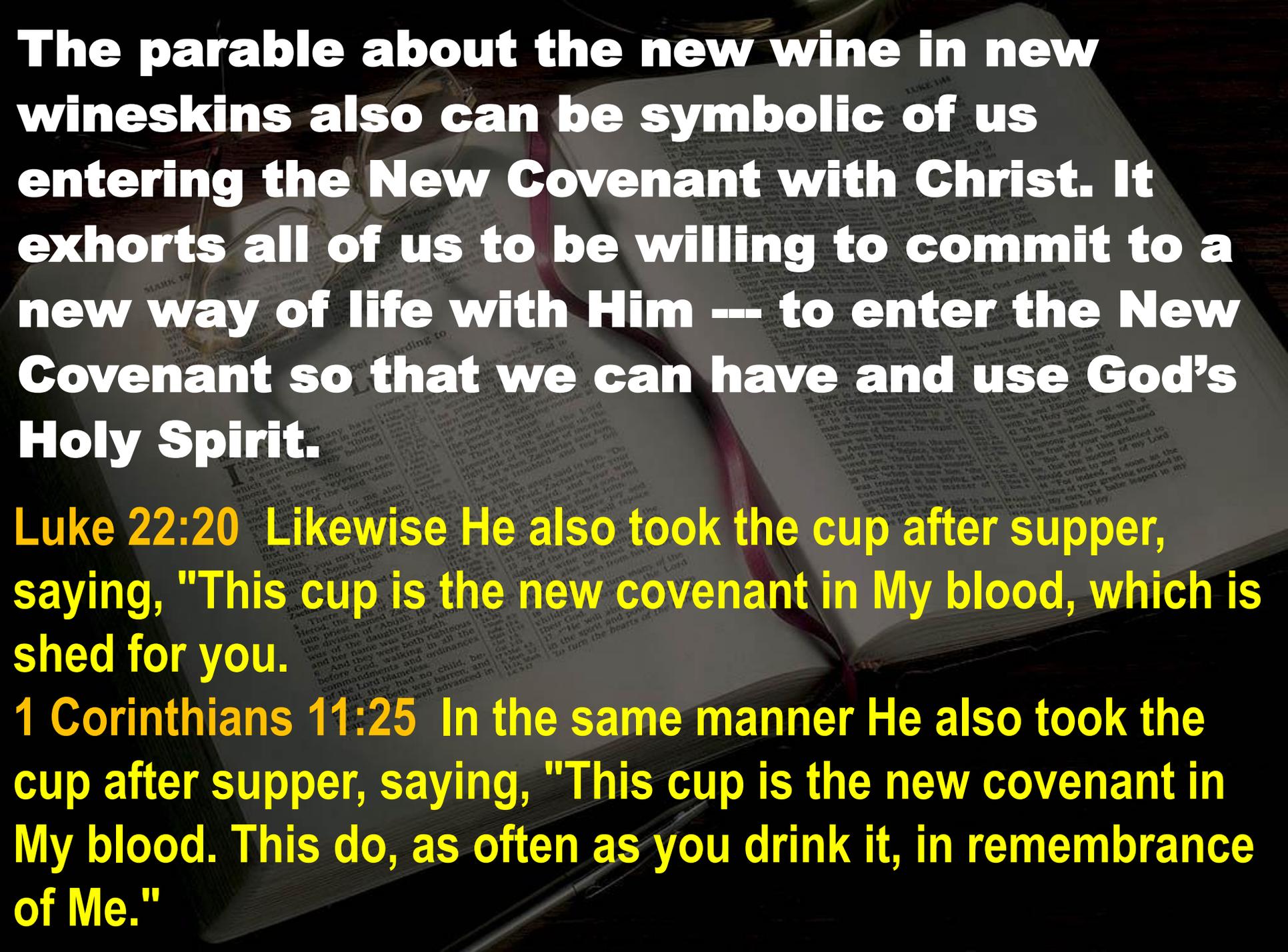
- 1. His whole point about the old garment wasn't to throw the old garment away, but to preserve the old garment.**
- 2. His whole point about the wineskins was not to throw the old wineskin away, but to preserve both the old and the new wineskins.**

Example: Adam Clarke Commentary on Matthew 9:17

New wine into old bottles The institutes of Christ, and those of the Pharisees, could never be brought to accord: an attempt to combine the two systems would be as absurd as it would be destructive. The old covenant made way for the new, which was its completion and its end; but with that old covenant the new cannot be incorporated.”

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.



The parable about the new wine in new wineskins also can be symbolic of us entering the New Covenant with Christ. It exhorts all of us to be willing to commit to a new way of life with Him --- to enter the New Covenant so that we can have and use God's Holy Spirit.

Luke 22:20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Conclusion

He or she who is a true “disciple” of Jesus Christ must become a “new creation” --- lead by God’s Holy Spirit, totally committed to striving with their whole heart to obey God’s holy and perfect law that is revealed in all of the Holy Scriptures (both in Old and New Testaments).

When Jesus Christ gave “*The Parable of New Cloth on an Old Garment*” and “*The Parable of New Wine in Old Wineskins*”, He was not saying that the Old Testament and the holy laws contained within it were to be abolished. On the contrary --- He was explaining that **anyone who either is or wants to become a true disciple of His must be deeply devoted to Christ and must seek to emulate Him in all aspects of life.**