

No More Waddling

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Date: 10 July 2022

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[0 : 00] I appreciate so much you sharing with us mainline. That's right up my alley now. I was going to have a running pit there for a moment, and I thought I'd calm down and scare you all to death.

If you have your Bibles, turn to Luke chapter 5. Luke chapter 5. When God does new things, we don't always like it. We have a patterned way about us.

We kind of like to keep things the way we're familiar with. God often makes moves that do not follow our patterns, and that can be upsetting.

Well, let me be honest with you. God's not concerned about upsetting us. He's upset folks before. He taught bringing large crowds in, and four men brought a paralyzed man through the roof of the home in which Jesus was speaking, and he healed that man.

And that didn't follow with some people's pattern, so they accused him of blasphemy. When he spoke of fasting, he didn't say it the way the church leaders wanted him to say it, and they said that he was misleading.

[1 : 22] When he grabbed a handful of grain out of the corner of a field, which the corners were to be left for those who were passing by as well as for the poor, but he happened to do it on the Sabbath.

They accused him of breaking the Sabbath because there was work running his hand through the head of a week. When he healed the man with the withered hand, he healed him on the Sabbath. That was considered work. That upset people. When he reached out to Levi, the tax collector, and when he ate with Levi, the tax collector, and therefore the thief, and I sometimes still feel that way, but anyway, the tax collector, and ate with him and his friends, it didn't fall with people's expectations.

And they called him out because he was eating with sinners. He don't mind upsetting us. And instead of getting punch drunk from all the fingers being pointed at him, Christ responded with some stories.

I want to look at a couple of those today. It's found in Luke chapter 5, verse 33, and it says this, and he said to them, the disciples of John fast often and offer prayers.

[2 : 52] And so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink. And Jesus said to them, can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they'll fast in those days.

In other words, what he was saying here is this, you fast when you're waiting on God to do something. When you ask for God's intervention, when you are in need, when you have a strong sense, when you need a strong sense of his presence, you fast in those times.

The disciples, however, were not waiting on Christ to intervene. Christ was already intervening. As Jesus said so often, the kingdom of God was at hand.

He was right there with them. They were not in need. He was providing for them. They felt a very strong sense of his presence. He was standing there. It was not time to fast.

It was time to feast because the kingdom of God was at hand. That's exactly what Jesus is saying. He goes on to say in verse 36, he also told them a parable. No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment.

[4 : 04] If he does, he'll tear the new and the piece from the new will not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wine skins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled and the skins will be destroyed.

But new wine must be put into fresh wine skins. And no one after drinking old wine desires new for he says the old is good.

He began by comparing his arrival and his ministry to a wedding. One thing I love about the teachings of Jesus, the master teacher, is he always met people where they were and spoke to them in a language that they understood.

They were an agrarian people so therefore he spoke a lot of fields and of harvest. They also celebrated weddings and made a big deal out of it.

And they also mourned at funerals and they became social events just like they do in our culture today. Except their customs were different than our culture today.

[5 : 15] And therefore there needs to be some explanation. Because in our day the most anticipated moment is when those doors swing open in the back and that beautiful bride comes down that aisle.

That moment is what all little girls dream of and they come down that aisle and everybody sees them standing looking at them amazed by the beauty that they see.

Well, it was different then. In that custom the bridegroom came to claim his bride and then take her to the wedding.

And it was an anticipated moment. It was the wait for him was people waiting for him was so intense waiting to see when he would come.

And sometimes he came late and they would anticipate that much more. And Jesus told story after story about that whole event and what that meant.

[6 : 16] And once that groom came the anticipation was over and the celebration began and I mean celebrate they did. A wedding in Jesus' day lasted a week.

As a man with two girls I'm thankful today and taxed traditional feasts were ignored and the whole community participated.

It was a celebration like none other. So when Jesus uses a wedding as an example what he's saying is don't miss out on what God's doing. He's telling them God is incarnate.

The promise that the law proclaimed and the law made known the need of has now come. God's incarnate in the flesh before you. Don't miss this opportunity.

Quit looking for something else. The anticipation is no more. God does his greatest work in new and different ways.

[7 : 25] Even in the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah spoke of anticipating God's new ways. Isaiah chapter 43 18 and 9 says remember not the former things nor consider the things of old.

Behold I'm doing a new thing now it springs forth do you not perceive it? So what I'm saying is Jesus was definitely a new thing but Jesus is not the only new thing that God has ever done. He has done new things all along. I mean think just from the garments that God provided for a covering for Adam and Eve in their sinful shame in the garden to the calling and the covenant of Abraham.

God's always doing a new thing. From the burning bush life changing experience of the deliverer Moses. Remember that bush was burning but it was not consumed.

Amazing sight. to that wonderful charge that he gave to Joshua who replaced Moses and he told him be strong and courageous as you enter into the land that you are to conquer that I promised you.

[8 : 32] Be strong. Be courageous. God's always doing a new thing. From the greatest strength of the kingdom of David to the sad dissolving of a nation after Solomon.

God's always doing a new thing. From the fish's mouth that spit out Jonah to the fiery chariot that Elijah took home. God's always doing a new thing.

From a virgin birth of the Savior to the disciples feasting while others with Jesus while others were fasting.

God's always doing a new thing. From the wind of the Holy Spirit of God in Acts chapter 2 to the personal salvation that every true Christian has experienced. God is always doing a new thing and that new thing that he's still doing today that he wants to do in our lives may not fall into our pattern of expectation.

So let me give you some advice. First is this. When God moves celebrate him. when God moves celebrate him don't miss the celebration of his indwelling presence in your life.

[9 : 52] The Pharisees and the Sadducees are standing around all grim because the focus is not on them and their ways and that was a change but they were focused instead on Christ and his work and Jesus compared that in two stories.

the first story that he told was about patches. Now I know some things about patches because when I was growing up there were three types of clothing.

There were church clothes there were school clothes and there were play clothes. Now church clothes were highly starched and very uncomfortable.

Okay. Apparently it is a sin to worship in comfort. School clothes were better but they were comfortable and they were new.

And then play clothes were worn out school clothes. Church clothes don't get worn out praise God. Church clothes are kind of like those clothes the Hebrews wore in the desert for 40 years that never wore out you know.

[11 : 03] You just outgrow it. You don't you don't wear it out. And if you're the youngest of three boys which I am play clothes are primarily hand-me-downs because the only way you get new school clothes is to outgrow the old or to wear a hole in the knee of the jeans.

By the way there was a day that you didn't pay extra to have holes in your jeans. And that if you had a hole in your knee of your jeans you were embarrassed by it.

Now I think I'm just going to cut up my jeans and wear them next Sunday. Therefore in order to make that tear more discreet mama would iron on a patch that was always a different color than the jeans she was putting them on.

It stood out like a sore thumb but it covered that ghastly hole but everybody knew you had patched jeans on. Jesus knew about patched garments.

He came up simple and his clothes got worn and when there's a hole his mother would have sewn a patch of cloth on that. However one thing she would never do is put a sew in an unshrunk patch of cloth because if you take a new piece of cloth that has not shrunk yet and place it on old clothes when it's washed that new fabric will shrink and it will pull against the old fabric where it had been sewn in and that will rip as well.

[12 : 56] Your problem would not be solved. It wouldn't fix it. Listen Jesus didn't come to patch the existing religious systems.

He didn't come to fix parts of the law. Jesus came to fulfill the law. Jesus came to supersede the law and to bring victory where defeat had been. Think about it this way.

What did the law do to these men? What had it done to Paul? Paul said that all of his effort to fulfill the law he counts as lost now compared to knowing Christ Jesus.

It was a hindrance to him as a matter of fact. He placed his confidence in the accomplishments that he had done and therefore he held off putting his faith in Christ because he thought he was enough because those things that looked religious and right seemed to be sufficient because they made him feel good.

They didn't save him. Only Christ saves. The law didn't make him better. Instead of pointing the need of Christ out to him, it instead filled him with pride or possibly guilt.

[14 : 15] these Pharisees and Sadducees who knew the law so very well had to know as well they could never fulfill it.

Had to deal with that. So what do you do with that? You well up with pride. Hopefully pride will cover up your imperfections. Hopefully somehow you can hide what you don't get right if you're pride enough.

Have you ever been to Dairy Queen and got one of those dipped ice cream cones where they dip it in? I mean it is nearly magical. It looks so good.

It is soft serve ice cream with a hardened chocolate shell over it. And even if the ice cream is melting away on the inside, that chocolate shell is strong until you take a bite.

That's the biggest trap they've ever made out of ice cream because it'll make the biggest mess because once you bite through that hardened shell, what you'll find is oftentimes a soft mess and it all just crumbles in your hand.

[15 : 30] When I think of pride and the way scripture describes pride, that's what I always think of is a dipped ice cream cone because it looks so good. But when you really bite into it and get into the meat of it, it'll fall in your lap and mess.

Matter of fact, scripture says pride comes before a fall, a haughty spirit before destruction. And the reality is once Jesus took a bite into their pride, it crumbled.

When Christ came and turned the tables, not only physically but spiritually, on all these guys that had invested their time and their effort and pride into it, they were crumbling because we don't like

new things.

We like to know what's coming, we like it the way we like it, even when it comes from God. But Jesus came to turn the table of the law and to bring refreshment where drought had been. And when God moves, don't fight it. Celebrate him. Second thing is this, when God moves, be refreshed.

[16:41] Because Jesus is not a patch. Jesus is restoration. He's not a swallow that does not satisfy. Jesus comes to refresh, bring new, make whole.

And he speaks of the wineskin. Now the wineskin was made from the skin of a goat. They would take the skin of a goat and they would clean it and they would prepare it and they would cut it and then they would sew it into a pouch and they would place fresh squeezed juice into that pouch. And that skin, because it was new, when it was used, it had elasticity in it. And that elasticity allowed that wine to ferment and as it fermented, it would expand.

The wine skin would expand as well. if you place fresh juice into an old wineskin, when it fermented and expanded, the wineskin would burst and the drink would be lost.

He gives that illustration because Jesus didn't come to fit into our system. He didn't come to fit into their system, but Jesus didn't come to fit into our system either.

[17:59] He came to make things new. all things new. When God moves, throw out the old.

Arthur Blessed is an interesting character. Arthur Blessed is a man who got a burden to carry the cross of Christ across the world.

He did a lot of it starting, I believe, in the 70s and in the 80s. And in 1989, he made news because he carried the cross of Christ, or cross that symbolized that one, from California to Washington, D.C., across the country.

He was interviewed, and I vaguely remember him being on television. Since that time, he has carried that cross across 43,000 miles and 324 nations, island groups, and territories by his own testimony.

Now, Arthur's an individual. He's charismatic, and he ran for president in 1976 and didn't do very well.

[19:20] I imagine I don't agree with Arthur on a whole lot of things, but I like what R.T. Kendall said about him as I was studying for this sermon.

Arthur was in a meeting with 39 other men in Phoenix, Arizona years ago. It was a prayer meeting, and they were praying for revival. And they went around that circle with those 40 men in that circle, each one of them praying.

The first one prayed for God to bring revival. The second one prayed that God would bring revival. The third one prayed that God would bring revival. And Arthur blessed was number seven in that list.

And Arthur prayed that God would bring revival. And after he prayed, he did something that was absolutely scandalous. He opened his eyes, and he looked up while those other men were praying. And when Arthur looked up, he looked out the window. And he saw a restaurant across the street. And he walked out.

[20:27] Walked across the street to the restaurant. When he walked in the restaurant, he announced as he entered the door, does anybody here want to be saved?

And the waitress said, I do. He went to the waitress and he said, I do. He said, the church across the street, do they ever come here?

She said, they do. She said, do you ever see any other members? She said, yes. He said, have you ever been to that church? She said, no. She said, I see the members on Sunday at lunch.

She said, have they ever talked to you about Jesus? She said, no. He said, how many, how long have you been working here? And she said, many years.

Arthur led her to Christ. And then he walked back across the street. The prayer meeting was still going on. And he announced, stop your praying.

[21:34] God's answered your prayer. It's time to share Christ. I thank God this morning in a restaurant across the street, don't you? But yet you know and I know there is.

There is there all around us. Don't ever try to get God to fit inside your expectations. limitations. Don't ever try to get God to fit inside your limitations.

Don't ever try to get God to fit inside your way of life. Give your life. Give your life to Jesus and throw out the old.

Let's quit mourning over who we are or who we're not and become what God wants us to be. Let's quit trying to patch our lives with a little bit of Jesus and putting on, instead put on the new self in Christ.

Let's quit pouring God into our own worn out ways and start afresh with him. Maybe by just walking across the street. So when Kierkegaard was a 19th century Danish theologian and he wrote a parable about ducks.

[22 : 57] He said there was a little town of ducks and every Sunday the ducks waddled out of their houses and waddled down Main Street to their church.

They waddled into the sanctuary and squat in their proper pews. The duck choir waddled in and took its place. Then the duck minister came forward and opened the duck Bible because even ducks have their own version of scripture.

And he read it. And he said, ducks, God has given you wings. And with these wings you can fly. And the duck said, amen. Amen. And he said, with these wings you can mount up and soar like eagles.

And the duck said, he said, no walls can confirm you, confine you. And the duck said, no fences can hold you.

[24 : 03] And the duck said, you have wings. And the duck said, God's given you wings and you can fly like birds. And all the ducks said, with enthusiasm together, amen.

And then they all waddled home. Hey folks, let's don't waddle no more. Let's don't waddle anymore. Let's trust God to do something new. Not just in us, but in us. And may he be honored and glorified by our obedience.

With every head bowed and every eye closed, if you're here this morning and you've never asked the Lord Jesus to come into your heart and life and to save you, I want you to know the greatest opportunity that you'll ever have in this life is to give your heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ. And if you'll tell him today that you are sorry for the sins that you've done, the wrong that you've committed. know, the only that you have the Allah I get.

[25 : 18] He heard that early, he was good. That's that much more highlighted. He's the firstly God of mine all waq Right hel expedited ways to get ready for the deserve. From such as John Oslo Arsmore Señorlin's made want to drop pleasure Seattle. Family is a perfect person onój aquella and a star.

And you know that all particular things about everything this and IT■ is doing. Yeah. And you know the thing about everything about serving you and All that with your heart and living really ■■ is so