

A. STAYING CLOSE

- Growing to know God and our new identity in Christ, we discover in His Word that we are His children, disciples and priests in the Kingdom. (Rom 8:14ff; John 15:5, 7; 1 Pt 2:9)
- This new identity brings with it the delegated power and authority of Jesus.
- Living in this new power and authority requires us to listen closely and to be committed to His agenda instead of our own: John 5:30 NAS--I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.
- Many believers live defeated, powerless lives because they do not understand the necessity of vital union with Christ. They're not aware of their Old Wineskins.
- Since the Garden, Satan has sought to keep God's people from the New Wine of living their lives from a deep connection with the Lord: Gen 3:1-10 NLT-- The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"² "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. ³"It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" ⁴"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. ⁵"God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." ⁶The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. ⁷At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. ⁸When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. ⁹Then the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" ¹⁰He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."
- Adam and Eve were lured into sin by the deception of the Father of Lies. They didn't chose to live from childlike faith but instead succumbed to prideful thinking: Pr 16:18-- Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.
- Insights:

B. ENEMY ACCESS

- Uninterrupted relationship with God was broken. The resulting separation meant He was no longer available to fulfill their core needs of love, safety and acceptance.
- Adam and Eve help us to see how sin is at the root of our struggles. It is also ultimately responsible for the negative thinking and emotions we experience:
 - Pride that expressed itself in doubting God (vv. 3-4)
 - Shame that came as a result of their failure to obey (v. 7)
 - Fear of the consequences and of their futures (v. 10)
- Many of our Old Wineskins are composed of these 3 elements. Let's focus on these today as they are some of Satan's oldest and most often used wiles: 2 Cor 11:3 NLT-- But I fear that somehow your pure and undivided devotion to Christ will be corrupted, just as Eve was deceived by the cunning ways of the serpent.

- No matter how the enemy has lured us into giving him ground in our lives, we have the promise of freedom in Christ!
- He has freed us from bondage to sin and its effects: Rom 6:14 NLT-- Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace.
- We can overcome because Jesus Christ dwells within us and has granted us authority: 1 Jn 4:4 NIV-- You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Lord, we pause in Your presence to meditate on the amazing truths that:
 - *Sin is no longer my master.*
 - *I am free.**To what extent do these truths currently impact you? (Little difference in my life, impacts my view of self and God, source of victory in some areas, or transformative)*

No matter where you are on being changed by this truth, ask the Spirit of Truth to:

- *Show you anything that may be hindering full buy-in*
 - *Reveal how a deeper conviction of this truth can change you and your relationship with Him*
- Insights:

C. OUT WITH THE OLD

- Implementing biblical strategies is crucial in ridding our lives of Old Wineskins!
 1. Name it clearly
 - Jesus identified his opponent by name: Mk 5:9 NLT-- Jesus demanded, "What is your name?" And he replied, "My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man."
 - Enhance recognition of common Old Wineskins by studying the variety of ways they can be expressed. Here is a list of their synonyms (Roget's Thesaurus):
 - Pride—arrogance, conceit, ego, haughtiness, rebellion, self-righteousness, self-willed, unteachable, vanity
 - Shame—contempt, disappointment, disgrace, dishonor, disrespect, embarrassment, mockery, reproach, ridicule, scorn, taunting
 - Fear—anxiety, apprehension, dread, horror, panic, phobia, terror, timidity, foreboding about almost anything (ex: fear of man, fear of loss, fear of missing out, etc.)
 - It takes courage to ask the Lord to uncover what's hiding beneath the surface. Yet, none of us really wants to live in the dark if we don't have to do so: Jn 8:12 -- I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.

2. Identify its source

- Jesus investigated the origin of enemy access: Mk 9:20-21 NIV-- When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. ²¹ Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered
- Pride, shame or fear can gain access to our lives through one of these routes:
 - Our own choices, past or present
 - Pain inflicted by others, past or present
 - Unbiblical beliefs we've held knowingly or unknowingly
- We can often suppress our painful memories in an attempt to cope. It's needful for God's Spirit to search the pages of our lives and bring revelation in His time: Ps 43:5 ERV-- Why am I so sad? Why am I so upset? I tell myself, "Wait for God's help! You will again have a chance to praise him, your God, the one who will save you."
- Once the Old Wineskin is named and its source found, it's time to engage with God and His plan for New Wine.
- Insights:

D. IN WITH THE NEW

- Obviously the most important part of our strategy is the work we do to follow through on the revelation we've received in steps 1 and 2.
 - Once we know the components and the cause, we can seek the Lord for specific counsel on how to rid Old Wineskins from our lives.
 - We see Jesus giving such instructions to His disciples as they were learning to do effective work against the enemy: Mk 9:28-29 NLT-- When Jesus was alone in the house with his disciples, they asked him, "Why couldn't we cast out that evil spirit?" Jesus replied, "This kind can be cast out only by prayer.
 - The specifics may vary, but there are always 2 aspects to God's renewing work – the long term and the short term components of the strategy: Hos 10:12-13 NAS-- Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD Until He comes to rain righteousness on you.¹³ You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, You have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your way, in your numerous warriors
 - Here are a few ideas to help you as you juggle your day to day walk with Jesus while pursuing those deeply rooted Old Wineskins over a longer stretch of time:
- ### 3. Short Term Strategies:
- As you wait on New Wineskins to replace the old, sow righteousness into your life every day. Become skilled at staying close to the Lord, doing what you already know to do:
 - Cultivate abiding in Jesus through Spirit led means. Especially ask Him to show you particular distractions in your life that can be reduced or eliminated. (Jn 15:5-8)
 - Expand your prayer life. Increase your awareness of the Lord by including Him in the "little things" of your day as a means to "pray without ceasing." (1 Thes 5:16)
 - Praise Him relationally and as you practice the principles of worship. Tell Him how great He is. Find songs that apply to your circumstances and sing them!

- Express Gratitude whenever you sense God's nearness or favor or intervention. Thank Him as you begin to recognize Him and His work in you more and more: Ps 92:1 NLT-- It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to the Most High.
 - Meditate on those Scriptures that have touched your heart and that apply to your circumstances. Concentrate on a smaller quantity of verses and take them deeper: Mt 4:4 MSG-- Jesus answered by quoting Deuteronomy: "It takes more than bread to stay alive. It takes a steady stream of words from God's mouth."
4. Long Term Strategies
- In Christ, there will always be opportunities for more freedom and healing. We must be willing to "break up fallow ground" in order to taste of New Wine on a regular basis:
 - Surrender to God and His process is one of the most powerful strategies there is! Our cooperation is necessary: Jm 4:7-8 ESV-- Surrender to God! Resist the devil, and he will run from you. Come near to God, and he will come near to you.
 - Waiting on God is required as we cooperate with His transforming work: James 5:7-8 AMP-- See how the farmer waits expectantly for the precious harvest from the land. [See how] he keeps up his patient [vigil] over it until it receives the early and late rains. So you also must be patient. Establish your hearts [strengthen and confirm them in the final certainty], for the coming of the Lord is very near.
 - Faith and Trust—Unwavering trust is at the foundation of any committed relationship. It is vital as we look to our unseen yet ever present God: Heb 10:35-37 NLT-- So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. "For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And my righteous ones will live by faith."
 - Ask Jesus to live these strategies out through you (appropriate them!). Lean on Him and you will find Him faithful to "accomplish all that concerns you." (Ps 138:8)
 - Insights:

E. PERSONAL APPLICATION

- ONE THING
The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH
Prayerfully consider the short- and long-term strategies presented. Ask the Lord which Old Wineskin to tackle first (pride, shame, or fear) and then work through it prayerfully:
 - Name It: Use the synonyms to help you name it in a way that best describes it for you
 - Identify Its Source: let the Spirit take you to a time or repeated situation that contributed to the Old Wineskin being present in your life
 - Short Term Strategies: practice abiding, prayer, praise, gratitude, and meditation, Mix and match, focusing on different ones based on where you are on any given day.
 - Long Term Strategies: while your New Wineskins (mindsets) are being formed, seek God's help in pursuing surrender, waiting on Him and greater faith and trust.