

A. NEW WINE THIEVES

- When Jesus spoke of New Wine He was referring to the newness that God wants to bring to our lives and our relationship with Him under the New Covenant.
- Before time began, The Father made provision for the rich relating He desired: Eph 1:4-6 MSG-- Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of his lavish gift-giving by the hand of his beloved Son.
- Jesus is the One who invites us and makes possible this abundant life: John 10:9-10-- I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.
- Abundantly = superior, exceeding some need, more than necessary, beyond measure (Strong's G4053)
- When Jesus spoke of thieves, He referred to both the schemes of the enemy and the false teachers. Lies about needing Jesus + something else rob us of New Wine.
- It's not possible to enjoy New Wine and God's abundance if we don't recognize and replace our Old Wineskins. The following list includes Old Wineskins named so far:
 - Pride
 - Shame
 - Fear
 - Offense
 - Separation
 - Unforgiveness
 - Bitterness
 - Jealousy
 - Selfishness
 - Bondage to the Law
 - Bondage to sin
 - Unhealthy connection to lesser things
- We can expand this list when we discover anything that we pursue that can/has become a rival to the Lord in our heart of hearts.
- The Lord makes it clear that, as the One who created and cares for us, He intends to occupy a unique place, the highest place in our hearts: Matt 6:24 AMP-- "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [money, possessions, fame, status, or whatever is valued more than the Lord]."
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Have you ever found yourself looking away from the Lord to a created thing that seemed to have a strong hold on your affections and attention?

Is there any specific thing that comes to mind as a consistent thief that robs you of God's provision of abundant life?

- Insights:

B. RECOGNIZING THE OLD

- We hinder the flow of New Wine when, knowingly or unknowingly, lesser things are 1) given access to our innermost being or 2) expected to meet our deepest needs.
- Believers that have allowed any lesser thing inner access do so because they find some value or benefit in doing so. The reasons might include:
 - They offer us at least a temporary measure of satisfaction
 - Their presence in our lives provides some form of gain that's hard to give up
 - They are often learned early in life as a form of coping with life's difficulties
 - They can act as a quick fix, partially relieving some of our unmet needs
 - These things are more easily controlled and predictable than waiting on our perfectly wise and sovereign God to move in our behalf.
- Whenever these things are a part of our lives, in essence they have become rivals of God for first place in our hearts: Heb 3:12 AMP-- Beware] brethren, take care, lest there be in any one of you a wicked, unbelieving heart [which refuses to cleave to, trust in, and rely on Him], leading you to turn away *and* desert *or* stand aloof from the living God.
- When distance exists between a believer and the Lord, some of these potential thieves may be lurking there. These are from the emotional arena:
 1. Attention, affirmation, high regard, support, spotlight, study or recognition
 2. Being admired, adored, treasured, favored, spoiled, or pampered
 3. Having influence, independence, reputation, prestige, position, power or rank
 4. Freedom from stress, pain, weakness, inconvenience, or infirmity
 5. Having control, authority, oversight, supervision, or license to plan or administer policy
- Though these Old Wineskins or thieves have found a way into our hearts and minds, they will always prove disappointing and even wasteful of our attention and energies.
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Are you willing to let the Holy Spirit search your heart for these emotional thieves that may have gained access to your inner life?

Allow the Spirit to show you how the lesser thing(s) have already begun to rob you of the abundance of God's New Wine:

C. REPLACE WITH NEW

- When the Father implemented His plan to restore fallen man to right relationship with Himself, He provided all we need through Jesus in the New Covenant.
- Here are just a few New Wine truths that are ours in abundance. They assure us that we're new creations with the promise of Jesus making "All Things New"! (Rev 22:5)
 1. Jesus inaugurated the New Covenant with His all-sufficient blood. It is able to cleanse and renew our hearts so that we are free from our Old Wineskins:
 - Mt 26:28-- This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

