

A. NEW WINE

- Many followers of Christ know what is true but have a difficult time actually incorporating the truth into their everyday circumstances.
- We know that Jesus has promised newness and abundance but we haven't yet learned how we can have a lifestyle that is consistent with that.
- Our thought lives are at least part of the reason for this inconsistency: Eph 4:17-24 NIV— So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed. ²⁰That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
- Lifestyles are a byproduct of the thinking patterns that we have acquired over time.
- The Scripture says that our old, unrenewed thoughts have these characteristics:
 - Futile = emptiness as to results (Vines' Expository Dictionary)
 - Darkened = obscure or blind (Strong's 4656)
 - Ignorant = lack of knowledge (Strong's G52)
 - Insensitive = to become callous or apathetic to truth, honor, and shame (G524)
 - Impure = to become defiled or unclean (G157)
 - Corrupt = to shrivel, wither, spoil, ruin; to deprave, defile, destroy (Strong's G5351)
 - Deceitful = to cheat, deceive, beguile; that which gives a false impression, whether by appearance, statement or influence (Vines)
- Mindsets that bear any of these traits engage the old nature and qualify as old wineskins that need to be replaced.
- Just as in the parable, their corruption limits their capacity. If the New Wine that Jesus offers were placed in them, they would rupture ruining both Old and New.
- Use this list of characteristics to help you understand and identify any part of your life where you have not been experiencing the newness of God's mercy and grace.
- *Isn't it wonderful that we have another option?*
- We will "be made new in the attitude of (our) minds" by exchanging our old thought patterns for the truth as revealed in God's Word as the Spirit of Truth does His work.
- Our default response to life will be changed as we follow God step by step: Gal 5:16 AMP-- But I say, walk *habitually* in the [Holy] Spirit [seek Him and be responsive to His guidance], and then you will certainly not carry out the desire of the sinful nature [which responds impulsively without regard for God and His precepts].
- Insights:

B. NEW MIND

- Our new selves are “created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”
Though we may not yet fully display God’s character, we have all we need to do so:
 - Gal 2:20 NLT-- My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
 - Ezek 36:26-27 NLT-- I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.
 - 1 Corinthians 2:16 NLT-- For, “Who can know the LORD’s thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?” But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.
- We can live differently now. We are equipped with new power, new motivation and the very mind of Christ Himself!
- Working God’s truth into our lives causes a new lifestyle to emerge that begins to stretch, grow and remain stable no matter what the circumstances: Mt 7:24-27 MSG-- These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built his house on solid rock. Rain poured down, the river flooded, a tornado hit—but nothing moved that house. It was fixed to the rock. “But if you just use my words in Bible studies and don’t work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach. When a storm rolled in and the waves came up, it collapsed like a house of cards.
- Working these principles into our lives over and over again develops new mindsets based on the knowledge of God and what He says is true.
- Insights:

C. NEW MATURITY

- We were created to be like God in our thinking. He intends to use every circumstance to make us more and more like Jesus: Eph 4:13 AMP-- [That it might develop] until we all attain oneness in the faith and in the comprehension of the [full and accurate] knowledge of the Son of God, that [we might arrive] at really mature manhood (the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ’s own perfection), the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ *and* the completeness found in Him.

- In order to grow into that purpose, let's identify and discard those fundamental processing habits that don't work for us:
 - Returning to our default perspectives and strategies
 - Starting with our circumstances
 - Looking to other people for answers
 - Being preoccupied with our feelings
- These old patterns will not lead us to a new and better outcome. God wants to train us in godly living but often this new way is awkward and hard: Heb 12:10-11 MSG-- Why not embrace God's training so we can truly *live*? While we were children, our parents did what *seemed* best to them. But God is doing what *is* best for us, training us to live God's holy best. At the time, discipline isn't much fun. It always feels like it's going against the grain. Later, of course, it pays off big-time, for it's the well-trained who find themselves mature in their relationship with God.
- We must not forget God's invitation for us to draw near to Him to for help in our time of need. (Heb 4:16) Let's remember to seek the Lord first:
 - Come to Him to receive mercy where our thoughts have been corrupted
 - Look to Him to find grace, His enabling power to move forward differently
 - See every situation as an opportunity to know Him and trust Him more
 - Find wisdom in His Word to exchange our thoughts for the truth: "His word is truth." (John 17:17)
- As we walk out our circumstances with God over and over again, tapping into the Mind of Christ, our thoughts become populated with the truth of God.
- We find that we return less often to those old wineskins. Our taste buds have changed so that we do prefer the New Wine more than the old stuff. 😊
- Instead we begin to enjoy our new wineskins that have stretched and grown into vessels that contain the very life of Christ Himself!
- Insights:

D. 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:

- PONDER THE TRUTH

Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH

Using the handout "Tools & Techniques: I Feel But God Says," work through a few life circumstances during the week. Ask the Spirit to guide you to the Scriptures that speak to your feelings and yet establish truth in your heart. Write down your processing.