



# New Wine In New Bottles

**"And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles" (Mark 2:22).**

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**"But new wine must be put into**

**new bottles; and both are preserved" (Luke 5:38).**

Illustrations provide powerful imageries for effectively communicating gospel messages. In this parable Jesus continued His teaching on the theme of **the incompatibility of the old with the new** by using the illustration of new wine in old bottles. At the time of His teaching, wine bottles were made of animal skins. Therefore, an old wine bottle may be worn out and weak, and consequently unable to cope with the gas pressure emitted by new wine. The result - both the wine and the bottle are lost. The message is clear: the power of the new life in Christ, cannot be contained in an old untransformed life; and any attempt to do so will result in damage to the old life as well as loss of the new life. Through regeneration, God turns an old life into a new one that is fit to retain the new life of God. **"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work"** (2 Timothy 2:21).

**"Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved" (Matthew 9:17).**


**"And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. 38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. 39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better" (Luke 5:37-39).**

We learn from this parable that:

- 1) What natural human being would not do, based on their earthly knowledge, some religious people foolishly try to do. No wonder Luke 16:8 says that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light". Note these phrases from our text. **"Neither do men** put new wine into old bottles" (Matthew 9:17); **"And no man** putteth

new wine into old bottles" (Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37). Why would 'spiritual' people try to do what natural people would not even think of doing? We must realise that faith does not call for the annihilation of our God given faculties of reasoning and senses.

- 2) We cannot put new wine into old bottle and expect to have either of them.
- 3) Old wine bottles can carry old wine that has lost all its fervour (from gas pressure).
- 4) The fervour from new wine is powerful enough to destroy old wine bottles. Note how Jesus rendered this truth in another context: "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Luke 20:18).
- 5) New wine bottles possess enough strength to withstand the fervour from new wine.
- 6) The admonition that "new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved" (Luke 6:38); provides a guiding principle that salvation of the soul must precede baptism of the Holy Ghost or any attempt to make some one a Christian by works; because works without grace will both ruin the worker and make the works unacceptable to God.
- 7) Luke 6:39 points out the danger of lack of exposure. A person who is not exposed to the things of God may not be able to appreciate their benefits. The 12 disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7) were saved for many years (estimates of 20 years), but were not baptised in the Holy Spirit because they were not exposed to that teaching. Right exposure leads to possession. **Do not bury yourself alive, in ignorance!**



This principle of **“the incompatibility of the old with the new”** also applies to many other areas of life including:

- 1) Friendship
- 2) Career
- 3) Marriage
- 4) Relationships
- 5) Membership of organisations (e.g. churches, schools, work places, etc.)

Have you ever heard the slogan “Once bitten, twice shy?”.

Many people today, carry with them emotional backlogs from previous sour relationships and experiences into new ones. These become like ghosts from the past that haunt and ruin the new relationships, because everything good or bad in the new relationship is being viewed from the coloured spectacles from the old, thereby mar- rying correct interpretations, attitudes and ac- tions.

God gave everyone two powerful tools: (a) Memory and (b) Imagination to help with effec- tive living. They each have their proper place, context and use. Rightly used in their correct context, these can become best allies for suc- cessful living, but wrongly used they can be- come the worst foes to building effective rela- tionship for victorious living.

Life is supposed to be lived using imagination as the compass and memory as ‘lesson learned’ log for carving out better choices and path. However, when these are reversed, it opens up a can of worms that poison and damage new shoots of relationships before they have the time to grow into plants.

A person that does not learn to leave the past behind, will drag it along all through life, like a bag of stones that weighs him/her down and hin- der progress and productivity. It is for this rea- son, that the scriptures teaches extensively on:

- 1) Forgiveness
- 2) Renewing of the mind, and
- 3) Focus on the destination

Failure to forgive destroys the essential bridge over which one must cross to the other side of happiness, joy and success. “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Fa-

ther forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:15).

Failure to renew the mind blinds one to the perfect will of God, leaving the person like the blind, groping in darkness amidst abundance of light. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

Failure to focus on the destination, makes one to wander aimlessly in the wilderness of life, on the route to nowhere. “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight be- fore thee” (Proverbs 4:25).

When imagination is used as the wineskin, it is capable of architecting appropriate new wineskin capable of incubating, hatching and nurturing the vision of our destiny into reality. With imagination as the compass setting the direction, making decisions and leading ac- tions, etc., the memory serves a subservient role of helping to craft a safe and secure path that avoids previous pitfalls, enabling one to effectively navigate to the desired destination.

However, when memory is used as the wine- skin, it creates an old storehouse that is totally unsuitable for the new realities. Attempting to fit the new life / relationships into the old in- compatible mould end up destroying both of them, The repeat of the old failures and expe- riences reinforce old feelings and thinking, bringing discouragement and paralysing fruit- ful actions in the right direction.

Every situation in life present us with the op- portunity to apply these principles. How we chose to apply them, will determine our joys, happiness and success in life, and ultimately our destiny! This is so important that we should prayerfully determine to jettison all old wineskins and prepare new wineskins to hold the new wine that will sustain us to the desti- nation that God has in mind for us.

With God, it is never too late to start afresh. May we be wise enough to use the grace that God has already given us to humble our- selves, be sober and adopt the right attitudes that enable us to deploy new wineskins for the new wines from heaven for our eternal good!