

☞ Be Made New

When you came to Christ, you had a life change and became a new creation. But what if you haven't felt this "newness" for quite some time. Can all things be new?

Have you ever had instances when during worship and church service you don't feel anything? You know that you should be feeling joy and happiness, but you don't. It's like the joy comes in and then goes right back out. You don't retain it. And you leave feeling just as bad, or sometimes worse than how you felt when you started. It has nothing to do with the church, the preaching, the songs being sung, or the atmosphere. It's about your spiritual soul being run down and dried up. The problem is, you go to church expecting the church to fix the problem when sometimes, it simply can't be done. It's something that God alone has to do as you surrender to him.

I want you to know that **you don't have to be stuck in your same old ruts**. You can be made new. However, you will have to change in order to be the person God wants you to be. Are you ready to make the changes?

I was recently reminded in several different ways about a word from Rod Reynoldson a while back regarding wineskins that was very appropriate and I believe it suits us again today. I preached this basic message in response back then and have freshened it up to share again today because it fits.

☞ Matthew 9:16-17

"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. 17 Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

God's works of grace are always new and fresh and I believe he has some "new wine" he wants to pour into the Church today. We must be willing to make the changes and stretch with the new wine of His presence.

1. ☞ The Purpose of a wineskin is to hold wine.

Wineskins are made to be filled with wine. That seems obvious, but wineskins are not made to sit empty. The purpose of wineskins is to be full of wine, and when they are empty, they are not fulfilling the purpose for which they were made.

God intends for His people to be vessels of the wine of the Holy Spirit. We were created to be full of the Holy Spirit. We are to be indwelt by the Spirit and under the influence of the Spirit. **When we are not filled with the Spirit, we are not fulfilling our purpose.**

Ephesians 5:18

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

☞ **Keep on being filled.** So, even if you've had a spiritual experience in the past, you need to keep on being filled in the present.

Many good church people go through life thinking that they must try to love God and keep His rules. They are sincere and try hard, but eventually become disappointed with their failures. They don't have much joy, but maybe just an occasional warm fuzzy feeling. They are like an empty wineskin. They drag around the empty skin of traditional religion without the Holy Spirit living inside. What they have is nominal Christianity; just enough religion to make them miserable, mad and mean. They try hard to be good church members, even good moral people, but they have not discovered the power of God's new wine. Somehow they have missed the point.

You can't remain static. You can't stay where you are. **Yesterday's experience will not do for today.** Your faith must be current.

☞ **Isaiah 43:18-19**

Forget the former things; **do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing!** Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.

I think that word from the Lord is very apt for this particular time in which we are living. God is working to do a new thing in each of us and in his church as a whole. If you are going to be ready for the new thing that God is doing, you must stop trying to fit the newness of God into the old wineskin. And, guess what, ten years from now, you will need to adapt again to the new thing God has planned for you.

Jesus said, "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse." (Matthew 9:16)

You can't patch up your old experience and try to make it work. **You have to have a ☞ whole new experience for a whole new day.** You have to continue to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ. You may have thought that once you came to the Lord that was it.

But it's not. He wants you to keep on growing. He wants you to stay fresh. His mercies are new every morning and we need that newness repeatedly.

2. ☞ **The Point of having a wineskin is to pour out**

Wineskins were made for pouring. This is not profound either, but wine was never stored for long periods of time in wineskins because the skin would eventually give the wine an unpleasant flavor. The wineskin was used as a container for the time it would take to ferment the drink, and then it was poured out for consumption. The skin was not used for preserving wine, but for pouring wine.

Our hearts were never meant to be a simple storage receptacle for the things of God; they ☞ **were meant to be filled with the Spirit so the Spirit could be poured out in the world.**

Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, **streams of living water will flow from within him.**' By this he meant the Spirit. . ." (John 7:37-39)

John Updike in his novel, A Month of Sundays, has a character that reflects on his experience as a young person in church, and says, "Churches displayed for me the relation to God that billboards did to Coca-Cola; they promoted thirst but did nothing to quench it."

Sometimes this has been true of us. We have asked people to be thirsty for God, but we have failed to quench their thirst. Through fear, or selfishness, or protectiveness, we have kept the Spirit (wine) to ourselves. And a thirsty world is waiting for us to pull the cork and begin to pour out something for them to drink. **We have the wine of the Spirit that will ☞ quench the thirst of the world.**

We need to be wineskins for the Holy Spirit; filled with the Holy Spirit and pouring out the Holy Spirit. And all that really means is to let Jesus shine through your life; in the things you say; in the things you do. Just the other day my Dad was talking about a company that hired him years ago. The employer had heard good things about him, but had also heard that he was a bit of a preacher and was concerned how that would affect his work. Dad assured him that when he was on the job, he would be focused and work hard. But he also added that he probably would talk about the Lord because people always talk about the things they love. That was the end of the conversation. His employer couldn't argue with that. So, let the Spirit shine through you. Pour out that spiritual wine.

But what if we feel like the old, dried up wineskin. Is there any hope? Can we be made new and useful again?

3. ☞ **There is a Process for wineskins to be made new again**

When we look at the phrase “New Wine” – the Greek word actually means something that is “brand new” (neos); or new in time – however when we look at the Greek word for “New Wineskin”, it is referring to something that has a new nature or has been renewed (kainos). So renewal is available for us.

It is absolutely necessary for us to go through the process of restoration. We need to become a new container, suitable for the Master’s use. Then, when the new wine, (His presence, purpose and power), is poured into us, we’ll have the capacity to expand and to hold the new things that God wants to reveal. We’ll be better equipped to do what He has enabled and empowered us to do.

How do we become new wineskins? Let’s start by looking at the physical process of renewing a wineskin. Once a wineskin has been emptied of all the old wine, it becomes dry, hard and brittle. So, the wineskin needs to be submerged in water for a period of time to soften it up. Then, it has oiled poured onto it and the oil is massaged into the leather to renew it and make it pliable again. I believe that God follows a similar process when renewing our ‘wineskin’.

Once all the wine of the last season has been poured out, we enter into a season of transition. We are entering the process of renewal. And the first thing to do in a transition ☞ is **accept that God is wanting to bring change**. Do you think this current situation fits? Are we in a season of transition? I think so.

Revelation 21:5

He who was seated on the throne said, **"I am making everything new!"**

To be made new requires that there will be change. Once we accept that God is changing us, then we need to be submerged in the water of the Word. **We need to really soak ☞ ourselves afresh in the Word of God.**

Ephesians 5:26

Cleansing... by the **washing with water through the word**

☞ This includes **reading the Word and also being with the Word**, which is Jesus. This is a very important part of the process and too often we miss or confuse this step. Instead of simply immersing ourselves in Jesus, the Word – we want to work out what is happening and try to figure out the future and what God is doing. But that’s not the aim of this part of

☞ the process. The aim is to **get a fresh revelation of Jesus in your spirit**. So, read the word with the aim of simply knowing the Lord better.

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory NKJV

The more we focus on the Lord and the more we spend time with him, the more we are transformed into his image. That's what we should all want – to be more like Jesus. The aim is to 'load up' your spirit with fresh Word and deeper intimacy.

Then, in due time, God will begin to pour oil over you. This is the oil of the **Holy Spirit**. A ☞ **fresh anointing** will be released over you.

There will be a new awareness of His presence; fresh revelation and understanding of what He is doing in and through you. Soon after this pouring out of oil, the Father begins to massage the oil into you. As He does this, He gently (and sometimes not so gently) ☞ begins to **stretch you** into a new shape. He begins to speak to you and challenge you in your thinking. He wants you to see things differently, from his perspective. He challenges you to step out and do some of the things you have been reading about in His Word; to ☞ **do something new**. The process you have been in has been about getting you to this new place. It is now that you are in a position to be able to reform into a new wineskin. And remember new means new – something that has not been here before, something the world has not seen. I believe God is in the process of renewing his people to be new wineskins for his next season of anointing and outpouring, which is just around the corner.

So what's the process? Simple... really, it is.

Submerge yourself into the Word of God (Water). Refresh yourself. **Just open up the Bible and start reading**. You don't have to find the perfect verse to read. Just begin to read. And read for the purpose of knowing God better.

The next thing to do is the oil. Now, don't physically start rubbing oil all over your body (especially in public as this causes unnecessary embarrassment both for you and the viewer); instead use something that is commonly referred to as oil in the Bible – the Holy Spirit. How do you get filled up with the Holy Spirit? By worship and gratitude.

Ephesians 5:18-20

Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, 19 singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. 20 And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. NLT

☞ **Just worship and start expressing gratitude to the Lord.** You don't have to come up with the perfect words to say. Just start **asking God to anoint you with the Spirit and make you flexible and useful again.**

You may have to do this several times during the day. If you only do it once, it won't last forever because physically and spiritually you are constantly under fire. Submerge yourself ☞ in the Word of God and cover yourself in prayer and worship. **And be thankful!** It works – try it! I would love it if after watching this video, you would comment online with something you're thankful for. Just hit "comment" and type "I'm thankful for...."

It's a new season and it can be a new you! God is the God of second chances. He's the God of new beginnings. He's the God of renewal and he's the God who makes all things new!

☞ ***"Though no one can go back and make a brand-new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand-new ending."***

Let's become new wineskins for God. **Let's get washed in the Word and anointed by the Holy Spirit, so that we can be filled up and poured out for God's purposes!**

Pour out your Spirit.