

The Jesus Who Does Not Fit

March 16, 2025 ▪ Brad Manley

Jesus is not a good fit for the _____ (27-32)

Jesus is not a good fit for those constrained by _____ (33-39)

Luke 5:27-39

²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸ And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰ And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

³³ And they said to him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink." ³⁴ And Jesus said to them, "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵ The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."

³⁶ He also told them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will

be destroyed. ³⁸ But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹ And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good.'" (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: Share about a great meal you had recently.

Read & Discuss: Luke 5:27-32

1. Levi (also known as Matthew) was a tax collector. Given what you know about the reputation of Jewish tax collectors at the time, why might it have been surprising for Jesus to call Levi to follow Him (v. 27)? (*See also Matthew 18:17.*) Why might it have been even more surprising that Levi left his tax practice and followed Jesus (v. 28)? When you think about your choice to follow Jesus, can you identify something you have left behind to do so? Explain. What did you gain in return?
2. What do you think motivated Levi to have a "great feast" (v. 29)? Why would he have included tax collectors and sinners (v. 29)? Why might the Pharisees and scribes have criticized Jesus for being in such company? How would you put Jesus' response to them in your own words (vv. 31-32)? What does this exchange tell us about Jesus? How might this challenge us in how we engage with others?

Read & Discuss: Luke 5:33-39

3. A second criticism by the Pharisees and scribes concerns the failure of Jesus' disciples to fast and pray (v. 33). What are the Pharisees implying about Jesus and His followers in raising this question?
4. Jesus replies by making an analogy to a wedding celebration (v. 34). In that day, a typical wedding event might last as many as seven days and include much food, drink, singing, and dancing. When viewed against that cultural background, to fast at such a time might be considered absurd. Why might Jesus compare Himself to a bridegroom, and what was His point with this analogy?
5. Jesus then implies that a time would come in which it would be appropriate for His disciples to fast (v. 35). What is different about the two different times Jesus is referring to, and how might it apply to us today? How can we discern when to fast, pray, or celebrate?
6. Jesus followed His reply with a parable (vv. 36-39) using two images: a new piece of fabric sewn on to an old garment and new wine poured into old wine skins. What do you think Jesus is saying to the Pharisees through this parable?
7. Jesus concludes His parable by saying people desire the old ways ("*old wine*" in v. 39) rather than what is new and unfamiliar. What are some reasons this may have been true for the Pharisees? How do we see this tendency in our context? How do we know what we must hold to firmly and when we should be willing to let go of something?

Apply: In what area of your life are you sensing Jesus calling you to step forward into something new so that your life better aligns with His character and mission?

Pray: Pray that we will clearly see and embrace Jesus' mission and not overlay our mission onto His.