

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN F E L L O W S H I P

Jesus Responds to Critics **Matthew 9:14-17**

First the Pharisees (9:3 & 11), now John's disciples.
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What is Jesus trying to do here?

- He is trying to guide their thoughts to God's thoughts
 - Their way of thinking to His way of thinking
 - Their values to His values
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Vs. 2-6, What is the real issue here?

- Eternal healing, not temporal healing
 - **Matt. 16:26**, Gain the world & lose eternity
 - He healed physically to convince them He is God
 - Physical healing isn't **The Prize**
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Vs. 9-13, Who is God calling?

- Those who don't yet **share in the prize** (sinners)
 - Not those who believe they've made themselves right with God
 - **Not just Matthew/Levi**, but all who saw it
 - Like his brother, James the son of Alphaeus (10:3)
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Vs. 14, Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"

- **Why don't** Your disciples fast **like we** and the Pharisees **do?**
 - Interesting they identify themselves with the Pharisees
 - Spiritual pride & comparison (John 21:21)
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Jesus doesn't follow John or the Pharisees

- He only follows the Father (John 5:19)
 - And sends us to do the same (John 20:21)
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Colossians 2:16-23, So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God. Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

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Vs. 15, And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

- **Jesus was speaking of Himself, and the church**
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Ephesians 5:22-32, Husbands & Wives

- **Vs. 31**, This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

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Fasting is to remove hindrances & draw close to the Lord

- **How can you be closer than being with Him?**

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Vs. 16, "No one puts a piece of **unshrunk cloth** on an **old garment**; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse."

- **It must be tested & tried to be made fit for joining together**
- This is what He attempted to do in **8:4**. But...

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Vs. 17, Nor do they put new wine into **old wineskins**, or else **the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined**. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

- **Which is what He knew was happening**
- Yet, He didn't come to destroy the synagogue system
- And He hasn't called us to refute it

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Matthew 13:52, Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed **concerning the kingdom of heaven** is like a householder who brings out of his treasure **things new and old**."

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We face the same dichotomy today:

- The new separating before being prepared to be joined
- The old stiff & rigid rejecting the new & effervescent
- **Both missing the fulness of Christ in pride & comparison**

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Increasingly we're going to find critics challenging Him at every turn

- He warned us they would treat us like they treated Him.

So, how shall we respond to such things?

- Like Him, beginning with the devil himself

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Are we preparing ourselves to not counterattack?

- But to state where we stand on God's Word

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We don't tell the critic what they've said wrong

- We tell them what's right with our conduct

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How to respond to critics...

- Don't be one.