

Title: The Exclusivity of the Gospel – Part 2

Text: Luke 5:33-39 (36-39)

Date: October 5, 2025

Proverbs 3:3 tells us that we should *“bind God's steadfast love and faithfulness around our necks and write them as tablets upon our hearts.”* And so, if you have your copy of God's word with you this morning, and I hope you do, please turn to Luke 5. We are going to finish a passage that we began studying last week, which is Luke 5:33-39, a passage that is all about the exclusivity of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now in our culture we don't like that term exclusivity. We don't want to be exclusive. We want to be inclusive. Or at least that's what we like to say. For example, I have a hat at home that has just two words written across the front of it, radically inclusive. And before you think I'm turning liberal, no, the reason why I bought this hat is because it actually was made by a pro-life company that hires people with intellectual and developmental differences. And that statement is making the point that in a culture that's supposedly so inclusive, how about we take a radically pro-life approach and say that literally everyone conceived, every human being is worthy to be included in our society. And I love that hat because it exposes that our culture is not actually inclusive at all. It's only just inclusive of ideas that already agree with it. Everything else is excluded. Our culture has an exclusive inclusivity. Well, in our pluralistic society it applies the same way to religions and matters of faith.

I'll never forget sitting in another separate college class while growing up, different than the one I talked about last week. And again, the professor went completely off topic, again. He like a good postmodernist was leading us in some discussion about the subjective nature of truth. And I'm like, where was this in my reading for today? But anyway, he was saying that everyone is on their own personal journey to discover truth and that we shouldn't judge one another as we go on that journey and that we should be inclusive of everyone's views, recognizing that none of us have arrived at the truth since it's all in the eye of the beholder anyway. And then he asked this question, would anyone like to raise their hand and say that they've arrived at the truth? Did I tell you I was homeschooled? I should have known a trap when it was coming. I raised my hand. The professor looked at me with a rather haughty smirk and said, really, tell us, what is this truth that you think that you have found? In that moment, I started doubting his inclusivity.

But nonetheless, I said, well, Jesus said, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one comes to the Father, except by me.”* And with disgust, one woman sitting next to me in the class turned towards me immediately and said, do you mean that if I don't believe what you're telling me, I'm going to hell? And I looked at her and I said, you know, you're probably going to hate me for saying this, but according to what the Bible says, yes. And with that, all semblance of cultural inclusivity flew out of the window. Students started coming out of their chairs and the only person who came to my side at that moment and called everyone down was an unbelieving coworker I had befriended at work who stood up and said in front of the whole class, guys, we're always talking about finding the truth why are you so angry at him

when he claims that he's found it? Well, it's because their inclusivity isn't inclusive. It was actually exclusive of any idea that disagreed with it.

Our culture has an exclusive inclusivity. But what I want you to see and what this passage that we're looking at this morning actually shows is that the gospel of Jesus Christ is actually the polar opposite. The gospel has an inclusive exclusivity. See we as believers of Jesus Christ readily admit the gospel is exclusive. That there is only one narrow gate. There is only one path to eternal life. There is only one way of salvation and that is through faith alone in the finished and perfect work of Christ our Lord who died on the cross as a payment for the sins of sinners. There is no other way to be saved. *"No other name under heaven given among men whereby you must be saved,"* but the name of Jesus. The gospel is exclusive. But it is exclusive in order to be inclusive.

Yes, the gospel does make it clear those who are in and those who are out. But the gospel does so in order that those who are yet outside of Christ can receive the call to enter in. The gospel is inclusively exclusive. And that truth is going to be highlighted once again in our passage this morning in Luke 5:33-39, the truth that the gospel is incompatible and cannot be mixed with any other world view, religion, or former way of life. This is the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. He saves you by getting all of you, by claiming you in your entirety. This is the saving glory of the gospel. You don't invite Jesus into your old life, as I mentioned last week. Jesus invites you into his.

We saw this truth teased out last week when we examined the delight of the gospel in verses 33-35, where Jesus declares that he is the bridegroom that God's people have been waiting for. He is the one whose arrival changes everything, whose presence secures all of our focus, whose life demands all of our devotion, and whose love invites all of our delight, a delight that no one else can bring, only Jesus. And so, we've already seen this in verses 33-35 of how the delight of the gospel points to its exclusivity.

Well, today in verses 36-38, we're going to see the difference of the gospel, plainly stated, that it is in fact exclusive. And then we'll finish in verse 39 by seeing the disregard of the gospel. And we're going to discover how even people's rejection of the truth highlights its exclusivity. So, the delight, the difference, and the disregard for the gospel, it all points to its gloriously saving exclusivity. And so, with that in mind, if you're able, please stand with me at this time out of readiness and respect for the word of God as I read our passage before us today from Luke 5:33-39. Luke, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes these words for us today,

"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.' And Jesus said to them, 'Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.' 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. 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. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good.'"

Friends this is the word of God, and his steadfast love comforts us according to his promises.

Let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for the opportunity we have this morning to sit under your word. Father, I pray that your spirit would be at work during this hour to behold the glory of your son Jesus Christ and of the glory of the gospel that he brings. I pray, Father, that you would be working conviction in the hearts of any unbelievers here this morning. And I pray that you would be working confidence in the hearts of every follower of Christ. For your honor and for your glory, I ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated.

So, after Jesus highlights the exclusive delight that the gospel brings back in verses 33-35, he then explains with abundant and unmistakable clarity the difference of the gospel in verses 36-38. And he begins in verse 36 by telling them a parable. Luke writes here, *"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.'"* All of us would admit this morning that no one does this.

Okay, let me make this as 21st century applicable as possible. When you get a massive hole in your favorite pair of jeans, what do you do? You go to an American eagle or someplace like that and you buy a new pair, right? And then what do you do once you have that new pair of jeans, you throw the old pair away, don't you? And you wear the new pair in public instead. I'll tell you what you don't do when you buy a new pair of jeans. You don't take that brand new pair of jeans and cut a patch out of them to put on your old jeans. If you do that, it destroys the new pair and it won't match the old ones. And then what will you have achieved? Absolutely nothing. Your lousy pair of jeans are still lousy, and your new pair of jeans are now ripped up and have a hole in them and are lousy too. Now that's a parable, Luke tells us, that is a physical story with a spiritual meaning.

So, what is Jesus' teaching here? He's saying to the Pharisees, to the disciples of John, to his own disciples, you can't just patch my gospel, my person, my work, my coming into all of your old ways of thinking and living. Even first century Judaism, what I am offering you in my coming is something completely brand new. And I want you to notice how many times here Jesus describes the good news of Jesus Christ that he is bringing as something that is new, something that is not at all like the old. He contrasts it over seven times in these three verses alone.

He says in verse 36 on into verse 39, he says, *"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. 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. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine desires the new, for he says, 'The old is good.'"*

Do you get the point? Jesus, I don't want you to miss the forest for the trees, right? Jesus is stating here over and over again that what he is teaching and what he is offering, namely the gospel, the new covenant relationship that is found through faith in him is not like the old covenant. It is something different. It is something new. He says it seven times over and over and over again, this gospel that I'm bringing, this new covenant relationship is new, new, new, new, not like the old.

I have to belabor this point as your pastor because there is a teaching being propagated in our area currently called the Hebrew roots movement. And this movement is trying to say that the new covenant promised in scripture that Christ brings isn't really a new covenant it's just a renewed covenant. One that is fundamentally the same as the Mosaic Covenant. And so, the laws, the Sabbaths, the feasts, the ceremonies, the sacrifices are all still legally binding on the life of a believer.

But Jesus here is clearly teaching the very important point that that idea is categorically not true. Jesus says here over seven times back to back to back that the new message and the new covenant that he is bringing is not like the old. It is what? New. And this isn't something, by the way, that Jesus came up with. This is something that was always predicted and always foretold. It is an old newness.

In fact, in the very passage that the scribes, the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31 the Lord says this, *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah."* So, what does he mean by new? He tells us in the very next verse, verse 32, that this new covenant is *"not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord."* What covenant is that that he's talking about? The Mosaic Covenant.

And God is saying, I'm not going to renew that old covenant. I, as the bridegroom, as the husband, am going to make a brand-new covenant, one that is not like the first, the first covenant that was broken that severed you from me God says in Hebrews 8:13 will be made *"obsolete."* How? Verse 33, *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord."* So, this is how this new covenant is going to be different from the first. The new covenant will be different from the first, first, because it gives a new heart. Jeremiah 31:33 says, *"I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts."* This was not true, ladies and gentlemen, under the first covenant.

As Moses himself says in Deuteronomy 5 and Deuteronomy 29, *"Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it may go well with them and all of their descendants forever!.... But to this day the Lord has not given you a heart to understand or ears to hear or eyes to see."* In other words, Israel had God's law written externally on tablets of stone, but not internally on their hearts of flesh. Well, that changes under the new covenant in Christ's blood, where God says, *"I will put my law,"* where, *"within them, and I will write it on their hearts."* This is a totally new type of covenant because unlike the first, it gives its participants a new heart. It changes who you are. It literally transforms you from the inside out. It gives the participants a new heart.

Second, unlike the first covenant, it gives a new relationship. The end of Jeremiah 31:33 goes on to say, *"And I will be their God, and they shall be my people."* That was not true under the first covenant. Because of Israel's faithlessness in breaking the Mosaic Covenant, the Lord declares in Hosea 1:9, *"call his name Lo-ammī, for you are not my people, and I am not your God."* In other words, that covenant relationship that had been forged in the Mosaic Covenant was broken and severed due to the sinful acts of the party of Israel.

So how would Israel ever find their way back into the saving relationship of belonging to God? Answer, by means of a new covenant, one that is not like the first, one that cannot be broken by the sinful works of mankind because it is established forever upon the perfect and finished work of the substitute Jesus Christ. This is a totally new type of covenant because unlike the first, it gives a new heart. Unlike the first, it gives a new relationship. Third, unlike the first, it gives a new knowledge.

Jeremiah 31:34 says, *"And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall,"* what? *"All know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord."* That was not true under the old covenant. We're told in Judges 2:10, immediately after Israel enters the promised land that *"there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord."* And the prophet Isaiah says in Isaiah 1:3, *"The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know me, my people do not understand."* You see, in the Mosaic Covenant, you could be under the covenant. You could be circumcised in the flesh and yet still not know the Lord, still be uncircumcised in your heart. And that's why you would have prophets in Israel preaching to those under the first covenant to come to know the Lord.

Well, that changes under the new covenant because how you enter into this new covenant is not by some external circumcision or baptism, but by the circumcision of the heart, by coming to know experientially by grace through faith the character of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ. That's how you get into the new covenant, by coming to know God through faith in Jesus. *"So that no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord."* This is a totally new type of covenant because unlike the first, it gives a new heart. Unlike the first, it gives a new relationship. Unlike the first, it gives a new knowledge.

And then finally unlike the first, it gives a new forgiveness. Jeremiah says at the end of verse 34, and *"I will,"* what *"forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."* You might not have ever thought about this, but that was not true under the means of the first covenant. Even though the Lord provided a system of sacrifices to cover over and atone and pass over iniquity and transgression and sin for a time, even the Old Testament authors understood that those sacrifices themselves accomplish nothing salvifically beyond just showing them their need for a greater sacrifice yet to come. As Micah 6:6-7 states, *"With what shall I come before the Lord.... Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my own firstborn for my transgressions?"* The prophet Micah knew that none of those sacrifices could ever pay for any of his sins. The prophet knew this.

Just as the Lord himself declared in Isaiah 1:11, *"What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats."* Right, for sin to be forgiven there must be a sacrifice that is more pleasing in the eyes of God, a payment of infinite more value that must be given. As Hebrews 10:4 says, *"it is impossible by the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."* The first covenant could not forgive sins. As Hosea 9:9 says, *"They have deeply corrupted themselves.... the Lord will remember their iniquity; and he will punish their sins."* He says this to a nation under the first covenant performing sacrifices.

Well, all of that changes under the new covenant where God says, *"I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more."* You see there is a perfect forgiveness available in the new covenant that Christ brings because there is a perfect sacrifice that is given in the new covenant, the blood of Jesus Christ, the God man himself, and he can pay for the sins of his people. This is a totally new covenant being described here by Jeremiah because unlike the first, it gives a new heart, it gives a new relationship, it gives a new knowledge, and it gives a new forgiveness. This is a new covenant, not a renewed one.

And so, Jesus as the bridegroom and husband of Jeremiah 31 is saying here, that new covenant has come and it is incompatible with any other worldview, religion, or former way of living, even first century Judaism. You can't add Jesus to your old life. The new and saving life that Christ offers as the bridegroom stands alone. He becomes your husband, and you leave everything else behind. That's how you find salvation.

And so, if you're going to take hold of Jesus, if you're going to accept his salvation and be his disciple, then you've got to throw away your old life with all of its sin and self-righteousness and self-centered desires, you've got to be willing to throw all of that away totally and embrace the new life that Jesus offers you. It is all or nothing because the gospel is exclusive. Jesus has not come to patch up your old life and improve the way you're already living. Jesus has come not to upgrade it or improve it. Jesus has come to replace it entirely.

And Jesus gives another example of the same truth in verse 37 when he says, *"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. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins."* See in that ancient culture, your wineskin was your thermos bottle. You take sheepskin, you'd rip the hair off of it, you'd turn it inside out, you'd sew it up, and then you would take it to work with you the next day as your new wineskin. The skins, natural elasticity and strength made it perfect for holding wine. However, over time that wineskin would get dry, it would get stiff, stretched and brittle. And so, you had to be careful with your new wineskins because if you ever took new wine, which was still fermenting, still expanding, still releasing gas and you poured it into that old wineskin that was already stretched and stiff, the gas would expand and then rip the wineskin open and would pour out all the wine and it would be ruined.

And again, this is a parable. So, this is a physical story with a spiritual meaning. So, what is Jesus teaching here? He's teaching once again that you cannot pour his new saving message of the Gospel into any other religious system. You cannot drop it into legalistic first century Judaism. You cannot drop it into works-

based Roman Catholicism. You cannot drop it into Buddhism or liberalism or scientific naturalism. The Gospel of forgiveness by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, to the glory of God alone is exclusive and incompatible with any other religion or worldview. You try to pour the Gospel into any other worldview system, you will ruin the Gospel. They're all old skins that will crack and the Gospel will be lost.

So, listen, you cannot add Jesus to your religion, you cannot add Jesus to your current way of living, and you cannot pour Jesus into your old life. If you are to receive salvation and forgiveness in Christ Jesus, you must lay it all down and be willing to be made brand new through faith in Christ. You must be born again. And that's why Christ came. He did not preach a Gospel of you're so close, here's a few more works to add. He preached a Gospel of you are sinful before a holy God, you must repent and be made new. This is not pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. This is get on your knees before God and beg him to do a divine miracle in your heart and mind. This is why Jesus came.

It's not so that you can invite him into your old life. It's so that he could bring you into his. It's not so that he could be added to your old life but that your old life could be completely thrown away and a brand-new life could begin in him. As 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a,"* what, *"new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."* Jesus has come to make men new because only a new wine skin can hold new wine and only a new creation can walk in a newness of life. And if you're willing, Jesus can this morning make you new. He will fill you with new wine, new life, new affections from a new heart.

He's the bridegroom promised in scripture, and he extends to you the new wine of the new covenant, a new life of joy, of peace and forgiveness in him. If you ask him, he will make you new. That is gloriously good news. Unless you love your old life now, and that's exactly where Jesus goes next. See despite this good news, there are many people who are totally uninterested in Christ and the Gospel that he brings. Why? We'll see it explained for us in verse 39 where Jesus shows us the disregard for the Gospel. He says, *"And no one after drinking old wine desires the new, for he says, 'The old is good.'"* It's like those poor souls among us who are always at a restaurant, and they always order the same things, right. If that's you, I apologize. But there might be the most amazing dish on the menu being offered to you and yet you'll never know it because all you ever want to eat is the regular, what you're familiar with.

And that's exactly the illustration that Jesus is using here. Jesus uses the example of wine that he's already been running with, and he says, so someone comes along, and he says, hey, I've got some really good new wine for you to test, and some people will say, no thank you, I will stick with the old wine because I've been drinking it for years. But this one taste better, it has a better flavor, it comes from a better vineyard. I'm not interested, I am happy with my old wine. This is the very reason why those Pharisees were uninterested in the saving message of the Gospel that Jesus was offering. It's because they had been drinking the old wine of corrupted Judaism for so long that they had absolutely no interest in the Gospel. As Romans 10:3-4 states, *"For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."* And this is exactly the same reason why people reject the Gospel today.

People who have been religious or irreligious for years often aren't interested in surrendering to Christ by faith because they are totally fine with their old way of life. I will never forget a gentleman that I was evangelizing in my previous church, sharing with him the Gospel, trying to understand, he understood the Gospel, he could recite it back to me. Why will he not believe? And he replied, it's because I understand that if I trust in Jesus, he's going to ask me to give up my sin. He was right. And because he loved his old life so much, he was not willing to receive the new life of forgiveness and joy and peace in Jesus. Why look for something new because my old life is fine.

And that's what Jesus is saying here. People who are satisfied with their old way of life will never be interested in obtaining anything new. Oh, if you are here this morning having trusted in Jesus Christ, you ought to cry out to God, thank you, that he made you dissatisfied with your sin and your old way of living, that he gave you a holy dissatisfaction so that you ran to Jesus to be saved. People who are satisfied with their old way of life will never be interested in obtaining a new one, but it's the people who are not satisfied, who are broken over their sinfulness and their condemnation, who see that the wages of their sin is death and destruction, not only eternally but temporally in this life and every relationship they know. It is people who are not satisfied, the desperate people who are totally willing to throw out their old wine and receive from the bridegroom the forgiveness and new birth that he brings because the gospel is exclusive. And that's how it saves.

In conclusion, I just have two applications I need to give in light of our celebration of communion that we'll be doing in a couple of minutes. First, if I just described you this morning that you are someone who would admit that your old life, your old wine isn't cutting it in the presence of a holy God and that if you're here this morning desperate for a new life and a new beginning and a new birth, I want you to understand Jesus' offer stands. He will make you brand new and he will fill you with all joy and peace in believing, but it's all or nothing. To grab hold of this new life that Jesus offers, you must let go of all concerns of your old life with all of its sin and unbelief and simply cast yourself upon God's sure promise of saving forgiveness in Christ because the gospel is exclusive. And that's exactly why it saves you.

If this is you and I call on you today right where you sit to confess this to God in prayer. As the elements are being passed over these next few moments to believers in Jesus Christ, I would encourage you to let those elements pass and for yourself in prayer this morning, embrace by faith the new life and covenant in Christ shed blood on your behalf. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. Abandon the old and embrace the new life that Christ gives you.

Second, if you have trusted in Christ, then believer, are you still living in light of this truth that the gospel is exclusive, that it is incompatible with any of your old ways of thinking and living? Have you forgotten that you are betrothed to Christ and Christ alone? Perhaps there's a sin in your life that you need to confess to God right now, something that is incompatible with the reality of your new life in Christ. In light of you receiving communion in a few moments as a believer in Jesus Christ, I urge you to confess that sin right now, right where you sit, in prayer and ask God to forgive you and to cleanse you of that unrighteousness.

Perhaps you've noticed an absence of joy or peace in your life as a believer lately. And you know that it is because you have let other things crowd out your time with Christ. You know this can't continue. The gospel is exclusive. You need to not mix all of those distractions in with following Jesus. This week you need to make some changes. You need to abide in Christ your bridegroom who has engaged you to himself by his own blood of the new covenant and draw near to him afresh this week. Hear his words, think on his love, approach his throne, commune with his people more than ever this week. So that his joy and the new life that he gives may be seen in you for others to behold because the bridegroom offers new wine, new life, the joy in new life that only comes from Jesus. The gospel is exclusive, abandon the old and embrace the new.

This is the word of God from Luke 5:33-39, which I consider a great privilege to have been able to share with you today and which I now commit to your further study and your faithful obedience until Christ our bridegroom returns.

To that end as the men come forward for communion this morning, let's pray.

Father, I thank you. I thank you for Jesus and the new life that is found in him. Father, I thank you that in him we have found a newness of life. I thank you Father that we have found a new heart. I thank you that we have found a new forgiveness. I thank you that we have found a new relationship with you through faith in Christ. Father, I pray that if there is someone here this morning who has not trusted in Christ, they would do so this morning. They would be made new through faith in Jesus. I pray for the rest of us Father, give us grace to abide in Christ this week so that this new life that has been poured into us would be seen by the world around us for the glory and honor of Jesus.

We ask all of this in Jesus' name, amen.

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