

The Just shall live by Faith

Volume 1 - Study 21 **New Cloth on Old Garment; New Wine in Old Bottles; Touch the Hem of His Garment.**

C. Ronald Johnson, Christian Wilderness Press: Matthew 9, New Wine in Old Wineskins bursts (destroys, ruins) old skins and wine runs out; Touch His Garment, '**Faith hath made thee whole**'; Man Sick of Palsy, '**Arise and walk**'; Laborers to the Harvest; Mercy and not Sacrifice.

Studies - The New Wine and New Cloth of Jesus Christ introduced us to ‘**Thy faith hath made thee whole**’.

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These are brief studies, not “teachings” or “doctrines”.

Volume 1, Study 21

**Mathew 9:4 ‘Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?’**

I sent out the following email (New Patches and Old Blankets...New Wine and Old Bottles) a week ago to a friend who is into political things and is quite “conservative”. Hopefully you will see later in this study why I revived it for this occasion. Indeed, the Bible text is the same. Whatever your political bent, please stay with me in this.

This morning I was reading Mark 2:21 before getting up for the day (normally I just open somewhere and start reading). The knowledge contained in that verse is nothing new. All wise individuals know of it. Certainly God, His Son, and Satan know of it. For years I have said the very thing that this verse contains:

Therefore: consider an old but strong blanket that is not only comfortable to those directly under its coverage, but the blanket also gives varying kinds and degrees of covering to those not directly under it. There have long been efforts to sew on new cloth-patches of progressivism, socialism, varying degrees of communism, new-ageism, humanism of the world and of the Church, and other isms (depending on the persons and groups in power at any given time and/or those with enough influence to have some of their patches applied to the dear old blanket).

However, the ism controlling the power now had early on decided that the new cloth-patches applied to the old blanket had to some degree only weakened the blanket and its character. They also noted long ago that the ism-patches over time had made the hole (i.e. the particular hole which had been perceived as "bad") even larger. But also those patches had created even more tears which have done much damage to the old blanket. Therefore, they had 1) studied the applying of patches, 2) learned that not enough “change” was made to the blanket by the patch for their liking, and 3) noted that though they had accomplished their desired end that even so the patches had severely weakened the old blanket. Those people that applied ism-patches did so because they never did like the grand old blanket for itself and they thought they could affect its functions by the patches. Considering that they were stuck with the old blank, they applied patches whenever they had the power to do so. To their mind, there has always been much that needed to be “changed”.

In the process, however, their idea evolved to simply do away with the old blanket and fabricate a new one, which to their minds would function much better for the people. Having learned about “patches and tears”, then, they will use the “patches and tears” concept to apply enough “new-change patches” onto the old blanket that it will become torn to shreds and become useless for anything.

“The death of the blanket” is the goal and not "change-patches to modify the blanket".

With the blanket in shreds, and after the dust clears, then the strongest ism left standing shall (supposedly) weave a new stronger blanket entirely different from the old blanket, which has comforted its people and given much comfort to other peoples.

The idea of “changing (i.e. to modify) the blanket to make it better” is a deception, which seems to have been accepted by most of the people covered by the old blanket and by the many other peoples aided in some fashion by the old blanket. The new blanket that (supposedly) shall take its place, if one could view it today, would be unrecognizable to American eyes, Canadian eyes, and even European eyes; in that such eyes have no concept of it. Is the new (supposed) blanket to be a new and better form of progressivism? Or is it to be fascism of an old sort or of a new and better sort? Or is it to be something else? Whatever it is supposed to be, it will not be anything like the old blanket, America. The planners think they know. Ah, but only the God of the Bible knows. Only the God of the Bible knows if the grand old blanket's demise is imminent.

And in consideration of “wine skins” (verse 22): The questions are 1) how much new ism-wine can be poured into the grand old wine skin and 2) how long, in the fermentation of the new wine, will it be before the old wine skin might burst? The God of the Bible knows all about such things within His Plan of the Ages in Jesus Christ.

I love my country and even more I love my Lord and Master and His Plan of the Ages in Jesus Christ.



Please bear in mind that I have political views, but that I am not a political person. I have studied history over the years and know that history moves on (i.e. that God is in control of history). I am a simple student of God and of His Word. So let's get into the study of this passage for our benefit. For the purpose of this study I have switched over to the Matthew account of the same message by Jesus.

**Matthew 9:1-3) And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.**

The word, ‘**man**’, just above in the verse is not included in the original Greek. The scribes were not saying *this man blasphemes*. They were saying *what he said is blasphemy*. Besides being very religious, the scribes and all the rest of the religious Jews were entirely political. That is, in their society they were protecting not only the Bible, but they were protecting *their understanding* of the Bible.

Here is as good a place to say what I need to say: Jesus was not performing miracles or moving people to accept him as Lord and Savior. Jesus constantly said that his words and his actions were not his own, but were the Father's words and actions. Thus, it was the Father in heaven and His spirit that was motivating people to believe in His son, and it was God the Father and His power that was performing the miracles and not Jesus. There are several passages that show Jesus doing the same that he was doing here (in teaching and in laying on of hands, etc.) and in those passages the power did not flow except for very few people, and the spirit was not moving people to believe in Jesus except in very few people.

In line with the above paragraph, we see that in protecting the Bible the scribes were missing the fact that God in heaven was performing miracles on Earth. They were more

interested in words than in power behind words.

**9:4) And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?**

Jesus, in his own way, was pointing out what I just stated above: That it is not his words which are in action here, but rather God in heaven was doing something outstanding on Earth. God was honoring the words that He had given His son to say.

**9:6) But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house.**

**9:8) But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.**

Of course God had not given such power to men. Even so, He was honoring this man, Jesus, His son, whom He had sent to do His will. And God chose to do within that will both signs and wonders. This verse also shows the comparison that the people were making regarding Jesus on the one hand and on the other hand the religious men of the day with whom the people were familiar.

**9:9-11) And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?**

**9:12) But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but [rather] they that are sick.**

Try not to get doctrinal here, but take what Jesus said as simple fact.

**9:13) But go ye [to the scriptures] and learn what that [i.e. that which I shall now say] meaneth, I [i.e. God] will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I [i.e. Jesus] am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

Again put doctrine aside and concentrate on the simple words that Jesus spoke. He came from the Father to call sinners to repentance. In other words, he did not come to delve into the Jews' religious system or into the Law of Moses...even though these were functioning in a rather poor manner and, in fact, had become quite politicized. The scribes, then, were not into their own scriptures, for there God stated that He preferred 'mercy over sacrifice'.

The scribes, religious leaders, and other Jewish zealots were doing fine in the *sacrificing* part, but not in the *mercy* part. Under the law, they were expected to do the sacrificing part; yet, within the spirit of the law, God expected them to take on something of His own character...which He would work in them if they would stop the religious politicizing and get on with the higher intent of the Righteous Law.

For a long time God's people had been splintered between the victorious righteous ones (according to the law) on the higher side of society and the poor, pitiful, and disenfranchised of God's people Israel on the lower side of society. This was why God had had to send His only begotten son to the poor, the pitiful, and the disenfranchised of His people. The scattered sheep needed a Good Shepherd.

If you pay attention to the words of the new administration in Washington (both now and during the campaign) you will see that their words are very similar to the words just written. Indeed, they are in a "righteous quest" (i.e. in their minds and hearts) to do this very thing for "the poor, pitiful, and disenfranchised people".

Yet, there is a difference from God sending His son to do such work and the administration's doing its work. God did not send His son to work within the circle of the law nor in the circle of the Jew's long established religion. Jesus worked entirely within the

circle of *the kingdom of God having arrived for the season of Jesus' visitation*. Jesus continually preached *the kingdom of God had arrived*.

Please pay attention to this fact: Jesus was not working within the God-ordained and God-established functions of the nation of Israel and all that God had created the nation of Israel to be and to do. God chose not to send His son to fix, rebuild, and reestablish what had begun with Moses. The nation as it stood was an old garment with many holes; it was weak; and God was near doing away with it (i.e. as it stood at that time).

In the last several studies we saw that God had scattered the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel. And to the remnant of Judah, which had returned to the land some 400 years ago, God had also changed (for the time being until Jesus shall come as King) the function of the Mosaic law as it had come to incorporate the function of King (by bringing in David as king). In other words, some 400 years ago God had removed the position of King and had placed the function of head of state upon the high priest (see v1-s20). God's people would not again have a king until He sends His son to claim his earthly kingdom and reestablish a united Israel therein. In the time of the gospels, the work of Jesus was not the "coming to claim his kingdom". Why did he come? We know the answer in retrospect, but in this passage Jesus has told both the scribes and the people why he came.

But how is the administration in Washington even more different? Where Jesus was sent to work outside of the circle of the Mosaic Law, the ism that is presently the administration has chosen to use the ongoing function of all that is the federal government. In fact, changes are being made to make Washington even more Washington than it has ever been; but the concept goes beyond Washington and it has more to do with changing America as a whole because the old blanket of America is considered by the ism to be torn, tattered, battered, and useless for any true good in its present condition.

Interestingly, that was the very problem with 'old' Israel. She no longer functioned according to God's intent for her. He was (is) in the process of compassionately taking Israel apart (i.e. the state and condition to which she evolved) and He was (is) in the process of making her to be much higher and better...which in the end of the age shall become obvious for all to see. All was foreknown and fore-planned in God's Plan of the Ages in Jesus Christ.

**9:14,15) Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.**

**9:16) No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up [i.e. fill the hole] taketh [away] from [i.e. the strength of] the garment, and the rent is made worse.**

Hopefully you see why I put in the political e-mail at the beginning and why the new administration is hopefully (their hope, not mine) doing what it is doing. New patches destroy old things. The "Old" must go for a "New" to begin. In the end, the old Washington would not be saved nor would be the old blanket of America. Their hope is that with the "New" a better new Great Society shall be built.

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

Men normally think to 'preserve' both 'new wine' and 'old bottles', yet the new wine of "progressivism" is being poured fast and full into the old Washington and is overflowing throughout the entire old countryside.

On the other hand, though Jesus came by way of old wine Israel, he did not come for it

or to help it with patches from heaven. The new wine that Jesus brought was not to help, to hurt, or to hinder Israel in anyway. The old wine of Israel was the Father's business and not the business of Jesus. The Father would take care of the old wine of Israel as He had long proposed in His Plan to do. Jesus came to fulfill the Father's will for Him within the Plan of the Ages. All else was not his business, even though he knew and understood the Father's Plan of the Ages.

Versus 14 through 17 was an answer to the disciples of John the Baptist. John also knew and understood the Father's Plan of the Ages from olden time and onward as it would include the new wine of God's doings in Jesus.



Matthew is writing of these things of the new wine. And so he continues with the theme of *the Father in heaven and the son on Earth doing the will of the Father*.

**9:18,19) While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus [of the new wine] arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples.**

**9:20-22) And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.**

In the old wine of Israel the people needed faith in God and in the Mosaic Law, which He had created as a moderator between Him and His people Israel. If they would do their part in obedience then He would faithfully do His part.

But here we also see faith in a different mode of operation, and Jesus is pointing this out to the woman, to the disciples, and to the people walking along with Jesus. The woman was not approaching Jesus thinking that he was a part of the old wine Israel; she was approaching Jesus as the Promised Messiah of the new wine of God's Promise. Neither she nor any of the others realized or knew what was happening, which is why Jesus was explaining. Jesus of the new wine had immediately sensed the unique power of the Father flowing within the new wine Promise. Note the good cheer of Jesus when he said to her. **“Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.”**

There were times when Jesus would point out the faith of a person when it was working within the new wine of the Promise. An example was when some men brought a man on a portable cot and lowered him down through the roof. The faith manifested was not only in the sick man, but in the men aiding him. Yet, there were many times when Jesus healed and cast out demons, etc., and the faith that was operating was on his part and not much on the person's part...wherein Jesus would not mention faith.

The faith Jesus was speaking of was not a new faith. It was the same faith, Biblical faith; yet, heaven was energizing the person's faith within a 'new wine mode'. That is, God in heaven was going to do something in 'the new wine mode'. I repeat, the woman's faith was the same; and God was determining her faith-function at the time according to what He would do. The woman, the disciples, and those walking along with Jesus were hearing Jesus explain this and were seeing how it was working according to the Father's Intent. Note that Jesus had nothing to do with the healing except that the Father's power flowed through him to the woman. Jesus, taken by surprise, sensed the new wine situation and gladly, indeed joyfully, explained it. He did not explain it in full (as my many

words are trying to explain what Scripture in just a few words explains).

**9:23-26) And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise [i.e. the wails of mourning], He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.**

The ruler, and father of the girl, perhaps was functioning within his faith according to the old wine of Israel (which had its many prophets that performed some signs and wonders) such that he thought Jesus was one such prophet. On the other hand, he may have been functioning in faith according to the new wine; but Jesus chose not to explain about the new wine function of faith on this occasion because of the many people who had **'laughed him to scorn'**.

Note that even so, **'the fame hereof went abroad into all that land'**. This was because of the magnitude of the miracle; many people then were and many people now are looking for signs and wonders. Ah, but with the greater miracle did not come the wonderful teaching of simple faith in a believer when God decides to energize his or her faith in the new wine mode.

**9:27-29) And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.**

Obviously, Matthew was still writing about the new wine mode of faith. Obviously, these men had "gotten it" from heaven and were loudly and anxiously functioning in it so as not to lose out on their moment in time given to them of the Father. Jesus also was glad and he used this new wine occasion to emphasize the faith that was functioning momentarily in these two men; and he said, **'According to your faith be it unto you'**. In this, Jesus was pointing out that their sight shall come, but not by his touch nearly as much as according to the new wine faith which the father was at the moment energizing in them.

Indeed, Jesus always claimed that his words and the signs and wonders were not his but were the Father's. However, he needed the new wine faith function in operation to explain its operation, because God's people understood then (understand today) according to the normal "believing in God" mode. In other words, the people then and now needed "show and tell" to understand.

However, even "show and tell" does not work with people unless they are receiving it by faith. Man's understanding of the mind is different than man's understanding of mind within faith. Indeed, faith is the primary ingredient of what I'm saying because often the mind of man cannot grasp the high things of God, even when Biblical faith is the lower of God's high things.

**9:30,31) And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.**

Note that it is the miracle, the sign and wonder, which captures the imagination and excitement of God's people and not the teaching about faith. Even so, Matthew is trying to get his readers' attention upon the teaching by his many short descriptions of the signs within the greater context of the teaching.

**9:32-35) As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.**

**And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.**

**9:36-38) But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore [to] the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.**

Throughout the Old Testament (the Bible of Jesus and of the disciples) we see God by means of His prophets castigating the shepherds of God's people. In the New Testament we see God's son also to some extent doing the same. Matthew's entire report of Jesus' ministry comes out of the northern part of the ancient land of Israel and none of it is regarding the times when Jesus ventured south into the kingdom of Judaea. In the north were a smattering of Gentiles along with Israelites of all the tribes of Israel, the poorest of which were in Samaria and also east of the Sea of Galilee.

It was there that Jesus and his disciples spent most of their days. What shepherds there were for Israelites were in Judaea. The closest thing that the northern people had to shepherds were the rabbis in the synagogues of the towns and cities, which is why Jesus was often addressed as Rabbi. However, he was often thought of as a prophet because John the Baptist had prepared the way for him and John was definitely considered a prophet.

John definitely was a prophet for he carried the message of God regarding God's son, the Messiah, the Promised One. Jesus, therefore, was instructing his disciples to request of the Father (when Jesus was gone) to raise up more shepherds of the new wine sort, because many shepherds of the old wine already existed.

I know that the church, especially the evangelical part of the church, considers itself of the new wine variety, and in doing so has often offended the rest of the church. However, if one simply pays attention to all of the doings of the church, including the evangelical part, and compares those doings to the doings of Jesus and his disciples then one might conclude that both the wine and the wineskin of the new wine church might be getting rather stretched out, fully aged, comfortable, etc...and then a question might pop up something like this, "If Jesus arrived today (not to wage war with his enemies as in the second coming) to shepherd God's people for three years as he did in the above text, would he function within the circle of the church and would he collect disciples from within that circle?" As the people compared Jesus and his disciples to their old wine shepherds, should we not at least do some wondering about things?

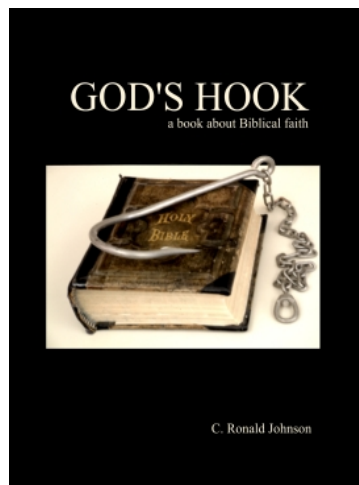
When speaking to his disciples (above), Jesus implied to them that they should pray to the Father for Him to raise up men and women like unto themselves who would walk entirely by the faith of heaven.

I am simply a student of God and of His word to the best of my ability with perhaps some little help from Him. As I study and contemplate, I also do a fair amount of wondering about things; therefore, nothing here is a conclusion; instead I wonder about the things that are, about things that might have been, and about things that might come to pass. If I had answers then I wouldn't have to wonder so much.

Many many of God's people fall into the category of '**because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd**'. I'm not speaking of the typical priests and pastors of the New Testament churches. I'm speaking (as much as I can speak with my little mind and heart and spirit and faith) of what Jesus was speaking about. We have the entire New Testament record and we have God's Spirit to aid us as we work at study-

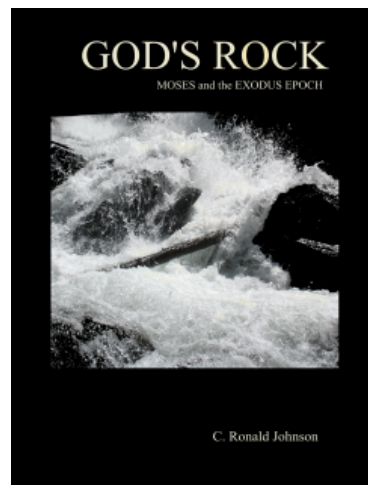
ing the Whole Word; so I continually encourage you to get into the Word for yourself.

**These are short Bible studies by C. Ronald Johnson at Christian Wilderness Press.**



a book  
about  
Biblical  
Faith

the life of  
Moses  
and the  
Exodus



C. Ronald Johnson