

February 4
Partying and Fasting

Judah, what shall I do to you?
For your love is like a morning cloud,
and like the dew that disappears early. – Hosea 6:4

[Mark 2:13-17, Capernaum] As Jesus passed by from there, he went out again by the seaside. All the multitude came to him, and he taught them. As he passed by, he saw Levi [Matthew], the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax office, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he arose, left everything, and followed him. Levi made a great feast for him in his house. There was a great crowd of tax collectors and others who were reclining with them, for there were many, and they followed him. The scribes and the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why is it that he eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

When Jesus heard it, he said to them "But you go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' [Hosea 6:6], Those who are healthy have no need for a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

**As long as they have
the bridegroom with
them, they can't fast**

John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting, and they came and asked him, "Why do John's disciples often fast and pray and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples don't fast?"

Jesus said to them, "Can the groomsmen fast [and] mourn while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they can't fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that day. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, or else the patch shrinks and the new tears away from the old, and a worse hole is made; and also the piece from the new will not match the old. No one puts new wine into old wineskins, or else the new wine will burst the skins, and the wine pours out, and the skins will be destroyed; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins and both are preserved. And no man having drunk old wine immediately desires new, for he says, 'The old is better.'" [Luke 5:27-38, Matthew 9:9-17]

1. How did Levi respond to Jesus' call? How do you respond to his invitation to follow?

2. Is our Bridegroom taken from us? Do you fast? What did Jesus mean about old/new?

3. Jesus, in Acts your people fasted and prayed, yet you were with them, please show me...

