

(11) Disciples Defended via a Parable (Matt. 9:14-17; Mk. 2:18-22; Luke 5:33-39)

1. The questioners in this episode are the disciples of John the Baptist (Matt. 9:14), the Scribes & Pharisees (Lk. 5:30,33), all of the above (Mark 2:18).
2. The legalistic disapproval of Jesus' eating habits is beginning to spread.
3. Fasting and feasting don't mix (cf. Ecc. 3:4).
 - a. Legalistic fasting was a supposed mark of righteousness.
 - b. In the flawed logic of legalism, since Jesus and His disciples didn't fast they must not be righteous.
4. Fasting was featured in the Old Testament.
 - a. In the period of the Judges (Jdg. 20:26; 1st Sam. 7:6).
 - b. In the period of the Kings (2nd Sam. 12:16ff.).
 - c. Fasting & prayers could be a corporate exercise in seeking God's will and favor (Ezra 8:23; Neh. 1:4; Est. 4:16).
 - d. Fasting and feasting could be a phony exercise as well (Zech. 7:5,6).
 - e. Jesus taught on fasting, with a primary application for Kingdom Law (Matt. 6:16-18).
Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible has a good article on [fasting](#).
5. Fasting was inappropriate for the Dispensation of Israel, Age of the Incarnation (Matt. 9:15a; Mk. 2:19; Lk. 5:34).
6. Fasting will once again become appropriate for difficult times of sadness (Matt. 9:15b; Mk. 2:20; Lk. 5:35; *the present distress* 1st Cor. 7:26).
7. The Lord then utilized the parable method of instruction to communicate truth (Matt. 9:16-17; Mk. 2:21-22; Lk. 5:36-39).
 - a. One parable is given, with two illustrative forms.
 - b. New and old don't mix—both are ruined.
 - c. Human nature clings to the old and resists the new.
William Barclay's Daily Study Bible Series (Gospel of Luke) has a great [commentary](#).