

NEW YEAR'S

NEVER SAY NEVER

JANUARY 5

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own or get together with your group, spiritual running partners, or family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Finish the sentence: "If I'm being honest, when it comes to hyperbole, my favorite word/phrase to use is _____ (i.e. - never, always, the best, the worst, etc...)"
2. Share a quick story of something you said you would never do, you did it, and it proved you wrong.
3. Read **Mark 2:1-22**

Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?):

- What do you notice and what are you curious about?
- Based on what we read and the message on Sunday, what do you observe about wineskins?

Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?)

- What do you learn about God and how he views those who might be considered outsiders?
- What do you learn about humanity?
- What do you learn about Jesus wanting to preserve the old and the new?

Now make some applications (what's my response?)

- How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?
- What should be our response to this passage?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Mark 1:1-22 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, “How is it that John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?” Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast. “No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.”

PRAYER

our lives can shift when we are fully present with you, and in that confidence we are able to say “yes” to things that maybe our fleshly desires and comforts do not want to do. God we give you permission to interrupt our personal agenda, and to take on your heart for those things you’ve entrusted to us. Today I acknowledge that I may or may not be ready for new things in my life, but I also commit to the process of creating a new wineskin that can house whatever new things you would like to do in my life. I am your vessel, shape me, mold me into your image.

PRACTICE

1. Challenge everyone in the group to fill out a prayer card and to participate with our church body in this.
2. Encourage everyone to sign up for a prayer slot in the 24 hour Gateway prayer challenge for 21 days.