

GOSPEL PEARLS

The essential

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They said to him, "John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking." Jesus answered, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast." He told them this parable: "No one tears a piece out of a new garment to patch an old one. Otherwise, they will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say, 'The old is better.'" (Luke 5: 33-39)

Jesus said he came into the world not to abolish, but to fulfill revelation. With His preaching Jesus points out that the essentials of God's Law are not found in acts of piety such as fasting, which we must nonetheless do, but instead in our love for God and our neighbor. Acts of devotion are useful, but then they must lead to us to act according to heart of the Law. Let us make sure that our pious acts do not become mere tired forms which are unable to lead us to act according to what is essential to God and His Law.