



LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS for the week of March 30, 2025

See, I Am Doing a New Thing: *Out with the Old; In with the New!*

1. “Confirmation bias” is the tendency to process information in ways that agree with what we already believe. It’s the tendency to seek out information that supports the views we already hold, and to discredit any evidence that disagrees with us – regardless of how strong or valid the opposing evidence may be. We automatically reject or resist any evidence that conflicts with our most cherished views or beliefs.

Terry Pratchett, the late English author and satirist, writes: “Be careful. People like to be told what they already know. Remember that. They get uncomfortable when you tell them new things. New things ... well, new things aren’t what they expect. They like to know that, say, a dog will bite a man. That is what dogs do. They don’t want to know that man bites a dog, because the world is not supposed to happen like that. In short, what people think they want is *news*, but what they really crave is *olds* ... *Not news but olds*, telling people that what they think they already know is true” (*The Truth: a novel of Discworld*).

What is your personal response to this? Do you tend to agree or disagree? Why?

What are some recent examples of confirmation bias that have caught your attention?

2. **Read Luke 5:27-35.** In what way are the Pharisees and teachers of the law exhibiting confirmation bias here in their interactions with Jesus?

Why do you think they are so resistant, and even hostile, to the new Gospel message Jesus proclaims and practices? What seems to trouble them the most about Jesus and his disciples?

3. How would you paraphrase Jesus’ words to the religious leaders in **Luke 5:34-35**?

Do you personally tend to think of the Christian faith as predominately *somber and serious* ... or *joyful and celebratory*? Why?

4. The famous atheist, H.L. Mencken, once defined Puritanism like this: “*The haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be having a good time.*” Would you say this remains

an accurate description of how many non-Christians view Christians today? And, *if not*, how would *you* describe their view of Christians and the Church? Why do you think so?

5. **Read Luke 5:36-39.** The Pharisees and religious leaders were skeptical and suspicious of Jesus and his teachings. They saw themselves as Guardians of the ancient law of God given to them by Moses, and they were convinced they understood it and lived it far better than Jesus and his disciples. What do you think Jesus is trying to tell them (and us!) in these two parables?

Is Jesus saying whatever is “new and novel” is always better than the old “tried and true?” Is there something to be said for continuing to honor and be guided by the old wisdom and traditions of the past? Why or why not? (**Cf. Matt 13:52; 1 Cor 10:1-11**)

Is Jesus saying: “Now that the New Covenant is being fulfilled, God’s Old Testament law is rendered totally unnecessary and obsolete?” Why or why not? (**cf. Matt 5:17-20**)

What would you say is the relationship between the Law and the Gospel today? Which came first? God’s Law ... or God’s Grace? What is the significance of this?

6. Why does Jesus say new wine must be poured into new wineskins (**Lk 5:38**)? What do you think he means by this (**see also Ezekiel 36:26-27**)?
7. Who is Jesus describing when he says: “And no one after drinking the old wine wants the new, for they say, ‘The old is better’”? Why does he say it?

Why do you think so many Christians continue to say, “*The old is better,*” or “*good enough,*” and cling to the shore, rather than surrender their boats to Jesus and dare to launch off with him into the deep waters of a brand new adventure (**cf. Luke 5:1-11**)?

8. Paul writes: “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off the old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires ... and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (**Eph. 4:22, 24**). Just how do we go about doing this? And how does this relate to “new garments,” and “new wine and new wineskins”? (**cf. Romans 8:5-6; Colossians 3:12-14**)