



Sunday, May 31, 2026 | “Stretch Marks, New Wine, and New Wineskins” | Katrina Brown-Graham

Lesson Summary

Katrina Brown-Graham walked us through a powerful lesson on “**Stretch Marks, New Wine, and New Wineskins.**” She connected the science of physical stretch marks with our **spiritual stretch marks**—the marks left by seasons where God stretched us beyond what we thought we could handle. Through Luke 5:33–39, she showed how Jesus calls us out of **empty tradition** into **living relationship**, reminding us that **new wine cannot be poured into old wineskins**. It was a rich time of conviction, healing, and freedom for our sisterhood.

See below the full recap of Katrina’s lesson:

1. Theme: Stretch Marks as Signs of Growth

Big Idea:

Physical stretch marks show that the body has been stretched beyond its previous capacity. In the same way, **spiritual stretch marks** show that God has stretched us beyond what we thought we could handle.

How Physical Stretch Marks Form

- Stretch marks appear when:
 - The body grows **faster** than the skin’s capacity (e.g., pregnancy, weight gain).
 - The **dermis** (deep layer of skin) begins to **tear** and becomes inflamed.
- They start out **red/purple/blue**, then fade to **silver/white** over time.
- You can **lighten** them, but they **never fully go away**:
 - Creams, lasers, and treatments may fade them,
 - But the marks remain — they are part of your story.

Spiritual Stretch Marks

- Spiritually, God sometimes:
 - Stretches us through **loss, grief, health issues, financial strain, broken relationships, or major transitions**.
 - Grows us **faster than we feel ready for**.
- Result: we get **spiritual stretch marks** – visible evidence that:
 - We have **been through something**.
 - God has **grown, refined, and matured** us in the process.
- **You cannot fake stretch marks**.
 - Just like you can’t fake physical stretch marks, you **can’t fake a real testimony**.
 - Spiritual stretch marks are **proof** that you’ve survived something with God.

The Shame Factor: Hiding Your Marks

- Katrina shared how, as a young woman, she wore **long sleeves in Alabama heat** to hide her stretch marks.
- Spiritually, many of us do the same thing:
 - We wear “**spiritual sleeves in summer**” – hiding our past, our struggles, and our scars.
 - We are **embarrassed** by how God had to grow us:
 - The relationships we were in
 - The sins we committed



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- The choices we made
- Yet **those very scars**:
 - Are often the **exact testimony** someone else needs.
 - Show where **God’s mercy, grace, and power** met us.

Reflection question:

What spiritual stretch marks are you still covering up out of shame that God wants to use as **testimony**?

2. From Stretch Marks to Wineskins: Luke 5:33–39

Text focus: **Luke 5:33–39**

Key images:

1. **Wedding guests & the bridegroom**
2. **Old garment with a new patch**
3. **New wine in new wineskins**

Katrina walked the sisters through these three illustrations as **one big truth**:

When God does a **new thing**, you **cannot** stuff it into an **old system, old mindset, or old traditions**.

3. Illustration 1: The Bridegroom & Fasting

The Pharisees’ Question

- The religious leaders asked Jesus:
 - “John’s disciples **fast**. The Pharisees’ disciples **fast**. Why are **your** disciples **feasting** instead of fasting?” (Luke 5:33)

Jesus’ Answer

- Jesus responds with a wedding example:
 - **Do wedding guests fast when the groom is present?**
 - As long as the **bridegroom** is with them, it’s a **time of celebration**, not mourning.
 - But a time will come when the bridegroom is **taken away** — *then* they will fast.

What Jesus Is Really Saying

- **While Jesus was physically present on earth**:
 - For the disciples, it was **feast season**, not fast season.
 - Fasting is for **longing, waiting, grieving, and seeking**.
- **After Jesus ascended**:
 - We now live in the “**bridegroom is away preparing a place**” season.
 - This is a season where **fasting** is a powerful, necessary tool:
 - To seek direction
 - To stand in the gap
 - To press into God during storms

The First Crack in the Old Wineskin

- The Pharisees were:
 - Trying to **apply ordinary religious routines** to an **extraordinary moment** (God in the flesh, standing in front of them).
 - Tied to **religious duty** instead of **relational presence**.
- Jesus didn’t **abolish** fasting; He **re-ordered it around Himself**:
 - Fasting is no longer about **proving religious discipline**.



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- Fasting is about **seeking Him**.

Key takeaway:

Don't fast, serve, or “do church” just because “this is what we do.”

Make it about Jesus, not just routine.

4. Illustration 2: New Patch on an Old Garment

“No one tears a piece from a **new garment** and puts it on an **old garment**; if he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.” (Luke 5:36)

Value of the Garment

- In Bible times, **clothing was valuable**:
 - Handmade
 - Time-consuming to create
 - A **cloak** could even be **used as collateral** for a loan (Exodus 22:26–27).
- You didn't casually tear up a **new garment** to patch an old one.

The Problem with Patching

- A **new piece of cloth**:
 - Has **not shrunk yet** (hasn't been washed or worn).
 - When sewn onto an **old, already-shrunk garment**, it:
 - **Pulls differently**,
 - **Doesn't match**,
 - Can actually **tear the old garment more** when washed.
- Spiritually:
 - You **cannot just “patch” Jesus** onto an **old religious system or old mindset**.
 - Jesus isn't a **patch** – He's the **entire new garment**.
 - You can't say, “We'll keep all our old ways and just **add a little Jesus on top**.”

Modern Application: Tradition vs. Truth

- Many churches and believers:
 - Try to keep **old systems, old traditions**, and just **tack on** Jesus' teaching.
 - Treat Jesus like an **add-on** instead of the **center**.
- Examples Katrina highlighted:
 - Assuming certain church orders (like when to take communion) are **biblical laws**, when they may just be **traditions**.
 - Doing things simply because, “That's how we've always done it,” instead of asking, “Is this truly about Christ?”

Key takeaway:

Jesus did not come to be your **religious upgrade** or **cosmetic patch**.

He came to **rebuild the whole garment** of your life and faith.

5. Illustration 3: New Wine in Old Wineskins

“And no one puts **new wine** into **old wineskins**. If he does, the **new wine will burst the skins** and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But **new wine must be put into fresh wineskins**.” (Luke 5:37–38)

The Science of Wineskins

- **Wineskins** were made from **animal hide**, like a portable **Tupperware** for wine.
- **New wine = unfermented juice**:



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- Full of **active yeast** and **natural sugars**.
- It is **alive**, **chemically active**, and **building pressure**.
- As new wine ferments inside a new wineskin:
 - The gases cause the wineskin to **stretch**.
 - When the process is complete, the skin has reached its **max capacity**.

Why Old Wineskins Can't Handle New Wine

- An **old wineskin**:
 - Has already **stretched as far as it can**.
 - Has **no more capacity** to expand.
- If you pour **new, active, expanding wine** into an **old, rigid skin**:
 - The skin **bursts**,
 - The **wine spills**,
 - Both **wine and wineskin are ruined**.

Spiritual Meaning

- **New wine** = the **gospel of grace**, the **kingdom**, the **living, active work of Jesus**.
- **Old wineskins** = old religious systems, rigid traditions, unexamined assumptions, and fixed mindsets.
- Jesus is saying:
 - You **cannot force** what He is doing **now** into the **old containers** of how it has “always been done.”
 - New assignments, new seasons, and new revelations require **new capacity**, new flexibility, and new structure.

Our Lives as Wineskins

- God may be:
 - Pouring **new wine** into your life — new callings, new boldness, new healing, new spiritual maturity.
 - But if your **mindset** and **habits** stay old and rigid:
 - “This is just how I am.”
 - “This is how church has always done it.”
 - “We tried that back in the 80s.”
 - That new wine can't be contained.
- Result:
 - **Burnout, frustration, church hurt, division**, and the **silencing of new voices**.

Key takeaway:

When God is pouring **new wine** into your life or ministry, you must **become a new wineskin** — **expanded, flexible, willing to be stretched**.

6. Tradition, Control, and Silencing New Voices

Katrina highlighted how **old wineskin thinking** plays out in churches:

- **Pharisees** tried to:
 - Keep the **Law + traditions**,
 - Add Jesus as an “**add-on teacher**.”
- Many believers today:
 - Try to **add Jesus** to already formed systems,
 - Instead of letting Jesus **rearrange everything** around Himself.



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Story: Silencing New Wine

- Katrina shared about:
 - Her husband as a **new believer**, full of ideas and excitement.
 - Older men in the church **shutting down** his suggestions with:
 - “We tried that already.”
 - “That’s not how we do it here.”
 - Result: he became **quiet**, stopped suggesting, stopped offering his new perspective.
- This is what happens when:
 - We try to squeeze **new wine (fresh ideas, new believers, younger generations)** into **old wineskins**.
 - We **waste their fire, discourage their gifts**, and **stunt growth** in the body.

Key warning:

Be careful not to **crush new believers or new leaders** by forcing them into **old frameworks** God is trying to stretch beyond.

7. Personal & Corporate Application

Personally

- Ask:
 - Where is God **stretching** me right now?
 - What **new wine** is God pouring into my life (new calling, deeper prayer life, bolder faith, healing, leadership)?
 - Am I trying to handle this **new season** with **old habits, old prayers, and old coping mechanisms**?
 - Using **worldly solutions** for spiritual problems
 - Numbing pain instead of **seeking God**
- Recognize:
 - **Your spiritual stretch marks are evidence:**
 - That God **grew you** when you thought you would break.
 - That His **mercy found you again and again**.
- Response:
 - Stop hiding your stretch marks.
 - Let your story **testify** of God’s grace.

As a Sisterhood / Church

- Ask:
 - Where are we **clinging to tradition** more tightly than to **truth**?
 - Are we willing to let Jesus **re-order**:
 - How we gather?
 - How we fast, pray, serve, and lead?
 - How we treat **younger voices** or **new believers**?
- Commit to:
 - **Search the Scriptures** ourselves (Acts 17:11 spirit).
 - Let Jesus **correct, refine, and stretch** our thinking.
 - Use our traditions **as tools**, not **as chains**.
 - Create space for **new wine**:
 - New approaches to women’s ministry



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- New strategies for prayer, accountability, and outreach
- New structures like Power Hours, retreats, and intergenerational mentoring

8. Voices from the Sisterhood – How the Lesson Landed

Several sisters helped “recap” the recap in their own words:

- **Joyce:**
 - “You can’t solve **spiritual things with earthly solutions.**”
 - We must study and not just inherit traditions.
- **Renee:**
 - Traditions are **deeply rooted**, but God is raising **change agents**.
 - We must **search the Scriptures** ourselves so God can **loose us from tradition**.
- **Annette:**
 - Co-signed the importance of **not amening everything** if it doesn’t align with the Word.
 - We are each responsible for our **own soul’s salvation**.
- **Qiana:**
 - Applied it to her **season of grief**:
 - “God’s not trying to break me; He’s **preparing me.**”
 - Stretching is **proof** that God is **growing** us into what we’re called to be.
 - Spiritual stretch marks are **evidence of God’s grace**.
- **Sherita:**
 - Even **damaged but marked** people are still **valuable and usable**.
 - God uses our marks to **help and heal others**.
- **Chariss:**
 - Warned against **mixing old and new** in ways that deny the sufficiency of what Jesus did.
 - Called for **fasting with purpose** in this season:
 - Like the wise virgins, we must be **prepared** for the Bridegroom’s return.

Core Takeaways

Your stretch marks are proof of survival, not signs of shame.

They tell the story of where God met you and grew you.

1. **Jesus is not a patch; He is the whole garment.**
You can’t just add Him onto old ways – He restructures everything.
2. **New wine requires new wineskins.**
New seasons and new callings demand renewed minds, habits, and structures.
3. **Tradition is not automatically truth.**
We honor God by **testing everything against His Word**, not by clinging to what’s familiar.
4. **Fasting, praying, and worship are about relationship, not ritual.**
We fast now because we are longing, listening, and preparing for the Bridegroom’s return.
5. **The Sisterhood must make room for new voices, new gifts, and new growth.**
Don’t let old wineskin thinking silence the new wine God is pouring into this generation of women.