

# SERMON BASED CURRICULUM

**Date & Sermon Series:**

September 19/20, 2015; The Moral of the Story

**Speaker:**

Pastor Joel Schmidgall

**Scripture Focus:** Matthew 9:14-17

**Note To Leaders:**

This weekend we discussed the parable of the cloth and wineskins. These questions provide a framework to prompt or foster discussion in your small group. Don't feel you have to use all or any of these questions and you don't have to make it to the end! Use the questions that best fit your group and let discussion flow.

**Icebreaker Suggestions:** Pastor Joel spent some time talking about his favorite jeans – his “Friday Jeans” – stating that, *“that pair of jeans happens to the world,”* and *“have you seen the way I walk in these things?”* What article of clothing do you have that brings out that level of enthusiasm? How would you describe it to someone who needs to fully understand the awesomeness of your “Friday Jeans” equivalent?

**Sermon Series Questions:**

1. What thoughts are still resonating with you from the sermon?
2. What was most encouraging or challenging about this weekend's message?
3. In what ways did this parable speak to where you are now in your life?

**Specific Questions:**

1. Pastor Joel started the sermon with the thesis question, *“Have you ever just barely missed the point, but in doing so completely missed the purpose?”* Have you? What was the outcome of the situation? What have you learned since that could help you next time?
2. Pastor Joel stated that *“God doesn't want a formula, he wants us to live in relationship with him,”* followed by the assertion that sometimes the very things we're using to help us seek God can be the things that halt us from experiencing His presence. Does this resonate with you? Why or why not? Have you ever missed out on experiencing God's presence because you were caught up in a formula? If so, what were you focusing on instead? How can you learn from that experience to help you in the future? If not, do you have any habits – even good ones! – that might need to be examined to ensure they're not becoming distractions?

3. *“We’re not called to do what our fathers did, but to follow the Spirit that our fathers did.”*  
What is your response to this call? What does it mean to you to “follow the Spirit?”
4. Referring to the need to avoid getting stuck in formulas, Pastor Joel stated that *“whatever got you to this point, good or bad, you’re here now.”* He then asked, *“But what’s His fresh thing for today?”* What is it? How do you discern what the Holy Spirit’s “fresh” thing for you is? How can you act upon it once you know?
5. Pastor Joel stated that, *“Sometimes we try to patch what needs to be made new. It had a function and purpose at one time, but holding on is the only thing keeping us from hearing a fresh vision and reminder of who God is.”* Are you holding on or “patching something” that you need to let go? If so, what is it and how can you take steps toward doing so? If not, can you remember a time you’ve done this in the past? How did it turn out?
6. When discussing the parable of the cloth, Pastor Joel stated that:

New revelation + same lifestyle = bitterness and guilt

He further stated that the most stressful point isn’t before the revelation, but after the revelation yet before you’ve made a change. Have you experienced this before? What revelation did you receive? How long did it take you to make a change? What spurred you on?

7. What habits have made you inflexible to the work God is trying to do in you? What has made you incapable of God “pouring new wine” into you? What can you do to make yourself ready to be used by God?

**Challenge:**

**Read, Pray, Act:** Read through Isaiah 43:16-21, Romans 12:2, and 2 Corinthians 5:17, praying that God will reveal to you ways you can remain open and flexible to the work he wants to do in you. Write down the ways as they’re revealed to you and pray over them, asking for opportunities to grow in those areas in the coming weeks.