

Still Cutting the Roast Ends? (Mark 2:18-22)

“Why do you cut off the ends of a roast before cooking it?” a husband asked his wife. “Because my mother did it that way,” she responded with a smile. Curious, the husband called his wife’s mother and asked her the same question. When she gave an identical answer, he called his wife’s grandmother. The moment the elderly matron heard the question she laughed and said, “I don’t know why they cut off the ends of the roast, but I did it that way because a full roast wouldn’t fit into my pan.”

This story illustrates how most practices are initiated to serve a purpose. But over time, even the best practice can lose its usefulness. It takes wisdom and insight to know when to change something or to innovate. Jesus certainly understood the role of change and rebuked those who stood in the way of innovation.

The Pharisees chided Jesus because he didn’t force his disciples to fast. Jesus informed them that he had not come to add a few new rules and regulations to Judaism. He had something entirely new to impart. The Lord made it clear to the religious leaders that he hadn’t come to patch an old system. Such an effort would be as foolish as putting a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, or putting new wine in an old wineskin. When the patch shrunk, the garment would tear. When the wine fermented, the wineskin would burst. The old forms of Judaism could never contain the spirit of Jesus’ message. **Our old ways of thinking or doing things would not contain the spirit of Jesus’ message that brings a new way.** What new things has God been speaking to you about lately?

Many individuals have plans to make changes in our personal and professional life in 2013. Many individuals provide leadership in various forms or groups, e.g. as parents and guardians and in corporate and ministry, sports, community and social groups, etc. To succeed in making changes, you may focus your attention on these questions:

- What is the old way of thinking or doing things that is hindering me from embracing the new totally? How can I overcome the hindrances and make the new way stick?
- What innovations have I brought or would introduce to the group that I lead? What’s keeping me from proceeding? How can I work past those hindrances?