

A Fitting Celebration

2019-09-15 by Ben Deaver at Tallgrass Church on Luke 15:32

Don't forget:

- Give away AJ's gift cards. Give away *The Call to Joy and Pain*.
- Smile more! 😊
- Develop a burden
- Affection for these people! Gratitude—Paul's heart for people!

Mingle Question: What's a memorable celebration you've been to? What made the celebration memorable?

- Weddings
 - Renberg Wedding Celebration—bubbles, 3D phone
 - Deaver Wedding Celebration—chocolate-covered espresso beans
- What made it memorable?
 - Extravagant food and drink!
 - Music, dancing, and laughter
 - Being together with people you love—Community
 - A good reason—Common cause

Luke 15:32 "It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found."

Pray!

A Fitting Celebration

- Definition of fitting—suitable or appropriate under the circumstances; right or proper.

Four Questions:

1. Why was it fitting to celebrate?
2. What makes for a fitting celebration?
3. What prevents us from celebrating fittingly?
4. How will we celebrate more fittingly moving forward?

Why was it fitting to celebrate?

- ...for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.
- Go home and start with this chapter of the Bible! Look at the rest of Luke 15. One lost sheep out of 100 is found, so it's time to throw a party! One lost coin out of 10 is found, so it's time to throw a party!
- We want to continue to cultivate a culture of celebration based on
 - 1) the fact that God is Creator of this abundant world and
 - 2) the fact that God is Redeemer when things go wrong. Creation and Redemption both lead us to celebration!

- Celebrate because of Creation
 - **Psalm 24:1a** The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof...
 - **1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
- Celebrate because of Redemption
 - *Happiness* by Randy Alcorn “Historically, God’s people always celebrate *more* than the surrounding nations, never less!” -p. 299
 - For example:
 - The Passover (Exodus 12:3-14)—April 19-27, 2019
 - The Feast of Weeks (Deuteronomy 16:9-12)—June 8-10, 2019
 - The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) (Leviticus 23:26-32)—October 9, 2019
 - The Feast of Booths (Deuteronomy 16:13-15; Nehemiah 8:9-18)—October 14-20, 2019
 - The Sabbath (Leviticus 23:1-3)—Every Saturday
 - “Why shouldn’t we do the same, since the gospel gives us even more reason to celebrate?” -p. 299

What makes for a fitting celebration?

Participation

Luke 15:22-24 ²²“But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate. ²⁵Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.”

1. Extravagant food and drink!
2. Music, dancing, and laughter
3. Being together with people you love—Community
4. A good reason—Common cause

One of the sneakiest ways Satan has influenced this world is by convincing many that God is a Cosmic Killjoy who doesn’t want anyone to have fun. God is NOT a Cosmic Killjoy! He invented joy. He came up with festivals and feasting and celebration. That was all His idea!

Extravagant food and drink!

- “Words describing eating, meals, and food appear more than a thousand times in Scripture, with the English translation ‘feast’ occurring an additional 187 times. Feasting is profoundly relational, marked by conversation, storytelling, and laughter. Biblical feasts were spiritual gatherings that drew attention to God, his greatness, and his redemptive purposes.” -p. 298
- **Story:** One of the best parts of our Xenos Summer Institute trips is feasting together! Piada’s, etc.
- And bear in mind, it is fitting for this to be EXTRAVAGANT food and drink! The cost of the party for the one found sheep surely is more than the value of that sheep being sold at market. The cost of the party to celebrate the one found coin surely is more than the value of that coin. The cost of the party to celebrate the one found son (possibly two...if the older brother will join the party) surely is more than the value of the sons...wait a minute. No, the sons are the most valuable thing to the father, so spare no expense to celebrate the return of the son. That’s a fitting celebration!
- Jesus’ first miracle—John 2:10
- “In Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, Alyosha—a monastery novice—hears a priest read John 2, about Jesus turning water into wine at the wedding. Alyosha ponders, ‘I love that passage; it’s Cana of Galilee, the first miracle...Ah, that miracle! Ah, that sweet miracle! It was not men’s grief, but their joy Christ visited, He worked His first miracle to help men’s gladness... “He who loves men loves their gladness, too.”’” -p. 302
- Jesus’ anticipation of drinking with His disciples—Matthew 26:29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

- Primary and Secondary Pleasures
- **Psalm 104:15a** ...and wine to gladden the heart of man...
- Wine is a secondary pleasure that isn't meant to be primary.
 - **Psalm 4:7** You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.
 - **Psalm 34:8a** Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!
 - Don't drink too much—Ephesians 5:18; Proverbs 20:1; 23:19-21, 29-35
 - If wine is your primary pleasure then you're an alcoholic. If God is your primary pleasure and wine is secondary then you're a mature follower of Christ!
- "I'd never encourage anyone who struggles with addiction to drink alcohol, any more than I'd encourage my fellow insulin-dependent diabetics to eat freely from the desert table. But even when I can't eat dessert, I can still celebrate the fact that others find happiness in doing so and that God finds happiness in their happiness. Likewise, someone who abstains from alcohol can still rejoice that for others there is 'wine that cheers both God and people.'" -p. 300
- "Festivities were commanded by God! Certainly it was possible to lose self-control at the parties, although most made sure they didn't. But the primary way to offend a holy God was to *decline to join his party*. (Indeed, in the story of the Prodigal Son, the elder brother's sin is refusing to participate in the father-ordained party to celebrate his brother's redemption.)" -p. 301
- Why we do what we do! We want to cultivate a culture of celebration.
 - After Parties
 - Meal Night at LIFE Groups
 - Annual Celebration
 - The Lord's Supper is a celebration! That's why we use mini red solo cups.

Music and Dance

- We need help with our celebration through music and especially need help with dancing here at Tallgrass Church!
 - We want to incorporate more celebratory songs.
 - We'd like to incorporate more music in our LIFE Groups...perhaps.

What prevents us from really celebrating fittingly? Participation.

- Busyness
- Shyness/Timidity/Insecurity
- Self-Centeredness—Inability to rejoice with those who rejoice
- Spiritual Oppression
- Guilt by association
- "The Bible's many references to singing, dancing, celebrations, feasts, and festivities depict not only worship but also fun, laughter, and pleasure. Part of what blinds us to God's emphasis on happiness is our knowledge that pagans worshiped pleasure deities and their celebrations centered on drunkenness and immorality. Today celebrating suffers from guilt by association." -p. 295
- "The logic goes like this:
 - Since immorality is bad, sex is bad.
 - Since drunkenness is bad, alcohol is bad.
 - Since laziness is bad, rest is bad.
 - Since greed is bad, money is bad." -p. 296
- "We might as well say that since gluttony is bad, food is bad; and since drowning is bad, water is bad. Because sin often happens at parties, some conclude that parties must be sinful. (Of course, sin happens at work and church, too, but people seldom conclude that work and church are sinful.) The partying described in Scripture reveals the happiness of the God who invented feasts and festivals, and who commands and encourages singing, dancing, eating, and drinking." -p. 296

- **Illus:** building fences to keep us from the sin
- Anyone know what the five forbiddens are? Playing cards, dance, theatre, drinking, and smoking
- **Joke:** Never just bring one Baptist fishing with you! Know why? If you bring one Baptist, he'll drink all your beer. But if you bring two, neither of them will touch it.
- **Joke:** Three universal truths: 1) Jews don't recognize Jesus as the Messiah. 2) Protestants don't recognize the Pope as the head of the church. 3) Baptists don't recognize each other at the liquor store.
- Jesus did not refrain from food and drink with all sorts of people. In fact, it appears that He partied too hard for the religious establishment of His time.
 - **Luke 15:1-2** ¹Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."
 - **Luke 7:34-15** ³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."

How will *you* celebrate more fittingly? How will *we* celebrate?

"Do you really believe God loves for his children to be glad? If so, how does your daily life, your family, and your church reflect that truth for all to see? Theologian Robert Hotchkins wrote, 'Christians ought to be celebrating constantly. We ought to be preoccupied with parties, banquets, feasts, and merriment. We ought to give ourselves over to celebrations of joy because we have been liberated from the fear of life and the fear of death. We ought to attract people to the church quite literally by the sheer pleasure there is in being a Christian.'" -p. 302

Schedule/Build celebration into your life—personally, as a family, and as a church.

- Build anticipation for celebration
- Refocus back to the meaning of some holidays—Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter
- Redeem some holidays—Halloween, Valentine's Day

Celebrate Your Spiritual Birthday!

- Our focus here is on celebrating our spiritual birthdays, or as Dave likes to call it, your rebirthday.
- We are now going to celebrate the new life in Christ that three Tallgrassians have found; Charis Greeve and Hanna Hertzig.
- Another Tallgrassian will be baptized next Saturday afternoon.
- When Charis and Hanna are baptized I want you to celebrate with them in a fitting way.
- Last year three Tallgrassians took the plunge of baptism. Celebrate that!
- Kate's baptism was 9/18/16.
- Maris' spiritual birthday is 12/9/00
- My baptism day was June 12, 1988.
- **Acts 16:30-34** ³⁰Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³²And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. ³⁴Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.
 - There was no convincing this man of his sin in this story, just mercy shown to him, and then response to mercy.

Marriage Feast of the Lamb

- “Close your eyes and imagine what it will be like to enjoy a feast handmade by God for all his children! If anticipating that doesn’t make us smile, what will?” -p. 299
- **Matthew 8:11** I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven...
- **Isaiah 25:6, 9** ⁶On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.
⁹It will be said on that day,
“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.
This is the LORD; we have waited for him;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Sing first!

Then Baptism Celebration

The Chopping Block:

Resources:

- *Happiness* by Randy Alcorn
- My article
- *The Call to Joy and Pain: Embracing Suffering in Your Ministry* by Ajith Fernando
- *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* by Dallas Willard
- Dave Geldart talk *Reclaiming Joy: The Art of Celebration*—
<http://newhopeks.org/messages/2015/04/12/reclaiming-joy-the-art-of-celebration>

Guilt by Association

- Billy Sunday (1862-1935) sermon *Theater, Cards, and Dance*—
https://www.biblebelievers.com/billy_sunday/sun12.html
- Rook cards developed in opposition to playing cards.

Music & Dance

- Psalm 5:11; 47:1; 63:5, 7; 150; Isaiah 12:6; 44:23; Ecclesiastes 3:4; Exodus 15:20-21; 1 Samuel 18:6; Song of Solomon 6:13; Matthew 11:17; Luke 7:32
- “Some might object, saying that pagans danced to worship their false gods (see 1 Kings 18:26). And Salome danced immorally before Herod, who lusted after her (see Matthew 14:6; Mark 6:22). True. But what does that prove? Only what we already know—that humans twist what God intended for good, including eating, drinking, dancing, and making music.” -p. 301

Feasts

- **Proverbs 15:15** All the days of the afflicted are evil, but the cheerful of heart has a continual feast.
- **Luke 22:29-30** ²⁸ “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, ²⁹ and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, ³⁰ that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Post resurrection feasting
 - **Luke 24:40-43** ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.
 - **John 21:9-14** ⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

More passages on feasting

[Isaiah 25:6](#)

Verse Concepts

The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.

[Luke 14:13](#)

Verse Concepts

"But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,

Colossians 2:16-17

Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day-- things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

Leviticus 23:2

Verse Concepts

"Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations--My appointed times are these:

Exodus 5:1

Verse Concepts

And afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

Zechariah 8:19

Verse Concepts

"Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth months will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.'

Luke 15—Lost things found then celebrate parables!

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

³So he told them this parable: ⁴"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' ⁷Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

⁸"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? ⁹And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

¹¹And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. ¹³Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

¹⁷"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.'" ²⁰And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²²But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

²⁵"Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷And he said to him, 'Your

brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’²⁸ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him,²⁹ but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends.’³⁰ But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’³¹ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.’³² It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

Jewish Celebrations

The Passover

- “The Passover, or Pesach, commemorates the night the angel of death destroyed all the firstborn of Egypt (see Exodus 12:3-14), resulting in the Israelites’ release from captivity. It’s a festival of freedom. Deuteronomy 16:11 commands, ‘You shall rejoice before the Lord your God.’” -p. 297
- April 19-27, 2019

The Feast of Weeks

- “The Feast of Weeks, or Shavuot, celebrates God giving his law on Mount Sinai and the fruitfulness associated with obedience (see Deuteronomy 16:9-12). It’s one of the three feasts celebrated in Jerusalem, including the Feast of Harvest and the Day of Firstfruits (see Exodus 23:16; 34:22; Leviticus 23:10, 16; Numbers 28:26). Later, the Feast of Firstfruits was called Pentecost, the Greek word for ‘fifty,’ because it was celebrated fifty days after the Sabbath that began Passover.” -p. 297
- June 8-10, 2019

The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

- “The Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, follows Rosh Hashanah, which celebrates the creation of Adam and Eve. Both feasts concern God’s salvation of his people (see Leviticus 23:26-32). Even in ancient times, people anticipated the Creator’s redemptive plan.” -p. 297
- October 9, 2019

The Feast of Booths

- “The Feast of Booths, or Sukkot (see Deuteronomy 16:13-15), is also known as the Feast of Tabernacles. It’s a seven-day feast, commonly referred to in Jewish writings as ‘the season of our rejoicing.’ It begins five days after Yom Kippur.” -p. 297
- October 14-20, 2019
- Jeshua the son of Nun (1355 BC)
- King Josiah found the Scriptures (622 BC)—See 2 Kings 22
- Wall Rebuilt (445 BC)
- 910 years had passed!

The Feast of Purim

- “The Feast of Purim is a two-day celebration of God’s deliverance of the Jewish captives in Persia from extermination at the hand of their enemies (see Esther 9:27-28). Purim is preceded by a minor fast, commemorating Esther’s three days of fasting to prepare to meet with the king, but it ultimately moves to great feasting and gladness.” -p. 297

The Feast of Hanukkah

- “The Feast of Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, is an extrabiblical event that invites people to rejoice over God’s intervention. It commemorates the 164 BC recovery and cleansing of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus after its desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes. In John 10:22, it is referred to as the Feast of Dedication.” -p. 297
- December 23-30, 2019
- “The point of all the feasts was to honor God with gratitude and gladness—to celebrate him and his acts of love and to be happy together in his presence. In modern cultures that don’t have such feasts, we should look for ways to incorporate some of their elements into both our holidays and our church and family gatherings.” -p. 297
- “The Sabbath was designed to be a day of restful celebration—and the highlight of every week.” -p. 298
- **Leviticus 23:1-8** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts. ³“Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwelling places. ⁴“These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. ⁵In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is the LORD’s Passover. ⁶And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. ⁷On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. ⁸But you shall present a food offering to the LORD for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work.”

DAY	DATE	HOLIDAY
Monday	Jan 21, 2019	<u>Tu Bishvat</u>
Thursday	Mar 21, 2019	<u>Purim</u>
Friday	Mar 22, 2019	<u>Shushan Purim</u>
Saturday	Apr 20, 2019	<u>Passover - First Day</u>
Sunday	Apr 21, 2019	<u>Passover - Second Day</u>
Saturday	Apr 27, 2019	<u>Passover - Final Day</u>
Thursday	May 02, 2019	<u>Yom Hashoah</u>
Wednesday	May 08, 2019	<u>Yom HaZikaron</u>
Thursday	May 09, 2019	<u>Yom HaAtzma’ut</u>
Thursday	May 23, 2019	<u>Lag BaOmer</u>
Sunday	Jun 02, 2019	<u>Yom Yerushalayim</u>

DAY	DATE	HOLIDAY
Sunday	Jun 09, 2019	<u>Shavuot (1st day)</u> (The Feast of Weeks)
Monday	Jun 10, 2019	<u>Shavuot</u>
Sunday	Aug 11, 2019	<u>Tish'a B'Av</u>
Monday	Sep 30, 2019	<u>Rosh HaShana Starts</u>
Tuesday	Oct 01, 2019	<u>Rosh HaShana Ends</u>
Wednesday	Oct 02, 2019	<u>Fast of Gedaliah</u>
Wednesday	Oct 09, 2019	<u>Yom Kippur</u> (The Day of Atonement)
Monday	Oct 14, 2019	<u>Sukkot Starts</u> (The Feast of Booths)
Sunday	Oct 20, 2019	<u>Sukkot Ends</u>
Monday	Oct 21, 2019	<u>Shmini Atzeret</u>
Tuesday	Oct 22, 2019	<u>Simchat Torah</u>
Monday	Dec 23, 2019	<u>Hanukkah Starts</u> (The Festival of Lights)
Monday	-Dec 30, 2019	<u>Hanukkah Ends</u>

Happiness by Randy Alcorn

- “The Bible’s many references to singing, dancing, celebrations, feasts, and festivities depict not only worship but also fun, laughter, and pleasure. Part of what blinds us to God’s emphasis on happiness is our knowledge that pagans worshiped pleasure deities and their celebrations centered on drunkenness and immorality. Today celebrating suffers from guilt by association.” -p. 295
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- “We might as well say that since gluttony is bad, food is bad; and since drowning is bad, water is bad. Because sin often happens at parties, some conclude that parties must be sinful. (Of course, sin happens at work and church, too, but people seldom conclude that work and church are sinful.) The partying described in Scripture reveals the happiness of the God who invented feasts and festivals, and who commands and encourages singing, dancing, eating, and drinking.” -p. 296
 - Illus: building fences to keep us from the sin
- “In worship settings today, ‘fellowship’ has been scaled back dramatically. It may involve subdued laughter, but rarely does it reflect the great happiness described in the Bible. Indeed, the difference between the grand

feast of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament and the symbolic wafers and grape juice offered by most modern churches at Communion is the difference between a great celebration on the one hand and a minimalist ritual on the other. (The symbolic modern Communion is effective only insofar as it calls up the vision of actual feasting to celebrate the work of Christ. If we rarely engage in such celebratory feasts, we leave ourselves with a mere shadow of the real celebrations God's people once enjoyed.)" -p. 296

- "Spurgeon said this about the most sacred rituals of the church, particularly Communion: 'Gospel ordinances are choice enjoyments, enjoined upon us by the loving rule of Him whom we call Master and Lord. We accept them with joy and delight...The Lord's own Supper is a joyful festival, a feast.'" -p. 296
- "The Passover, or Pesach, commemorates the night the angel of death destroyed all the firstborn of Egypt (see Exodus 12:3-14), resulting in the Israelites' release from captivity. It's a festival of freedom. Deuteronomy 16:11 commands, 'You shall rejoice before the Lord your God.'" -p. 297
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- "The point of all the feasts was to honor God with gratitude and gladness—to celebrate him and his acts of love and to be happy together in his presence. In modern cultures that don't have such feasts, we should look for ways to incorporate some of their elements into both our holidays and our church and family gatherings." -p. 297
- "The Sabbath was designed to be a day of restful celebration—and the highlight of every week." -p. 298
- **Leviticus 23:2** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts. ³"Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwelling places. ⁴"These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. ⁵In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is the LORD's Passover. ⁶And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. ⁷On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. ⁸But you shall present a food offering to the LORD for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work."
- **Proverbs 15:15** All the days of the afflicted are evil, but the cheerful of heart has a continual feast.