

This Week's Message: **Celebrate**

*Enjoy the journey (not just the destination)*

**Summary**

Are you ready for some good news?! When you become an aficionado of God's grace you can learn how to savor more subtle facets of God's goodness. You can learn how it is possible that no matter what the day brings, in it there is something good from God to celebrate. We see this pattern of celebration woven through the Scripture: God didn't wait until He had finished His creation before celebrated the goodness of it. Each day, the Lord paused and declared, "That's good!" He was, in essence, saying: "I haven't finished and it will be even better, but what I've done so far is good and worthy of celebration."

Israel's journey across the Jordan into the Promised Land included a stop along the way to celebrate and mark God's salvation. David paused as he took the ark back into Jerusalem (after taking 6 steps!) to celebrate the Lord's favor and provision. The prodigal father poured grace and favor out on His returned son long before the young man had developed the character needed to run the family estate. Profoundly, the gospel reveals that through saving relationship to Jesus, our heavenly father celebrates us before our restoration to wholeness is fully complete. Too often in life we postpone the celebration until we feel like we've completed it or made it perfect. But God invites us into a lifestyle of celebrating every step of the way. God wants His goodness celebrated moment by moment not just when the miracle has been completed! And that's the gospel!

**Getting to Know Each Other**

1. In the closing analogy the mother of the suddenly impoverished family sells jewelry to provide a lavish family feast and concludes, "we need celebration now, not a week from now." Are there parallel stories of dramatic celebration in your own life?

**Read Gen. 1:1-5;**

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

*<sup>3</sup>And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*

**Read Gen. 1:9-12;**

*<sup>9</sup>And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.*

*<sup>11</sup>And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.*

**Read Gen. 1:16-18, 31**

*<sup>16</sup>And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. <sup>17</sup>And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give*

*light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.*

<sup>31</sup> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

**\*See also Gen. 1:20, 25.**

### **Getting Into the Bible**

1. God made everything by simply speaking (Heb. 11:3). This includes glories like “the big dog star,” which is the size of 7 quadrillion earths! How does this revelation of God’s awesome power impact your view of Him? How could this help you savor and celebrate as an ongoing lifestyle?
2. God reflected on the goodness of His creation before it was all finished, and He rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. He was showing us what a healthy life rhythm involves. What do you find attractive/beautiful about this? How are you challenged?

### **Application**

1. How can each of these areas be an opportunity for daily savoring what is good:
  - a. Family – spouse, kids, extended family.
  - b. Relationships – friends, colleagues, neighbors.
  - c. Nature – animals, landscapes, celestial bodies, water.
  - d. God’s work – provision, direction, miracles, God Himself.
  - e. Your work – home, vocation, hobbies, art, relationships of influence.
2. Are you able to enjoy the goodness of God, work and relationships along the way or do you feel like your work has to be completed first? Why or why not? Discuss.
3. If God finish His first creative work before celebrating, God doesn’t have to complete His good work in you before celebrating. Can you envision your own life as a cause of celebration for God? In what ways? If it’s hard to imagine God celebrating you, consider why. Share your reflections.