

SERMON NOTES

Sunday, March 30th, 2025

Rhythms: Spiritual Training for Everyday Life Celebration

Train yourself to be godly. "Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come." 1 Timothy 4:7-8 (NLT)

Rejoice (celebrate) in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice (celebrate)!
Philippians 4:4 (NIV)

Celebration is a spiritual exercise that deepens joy, fosters gratitude, strengthens resilience, and keeps our hearts aligned with the goodness of God.

"We engage in celebration when we enjoy ourselves, our life, our world, in conjunction with our faith and confidence in God's greatness, beauty, and goodness." Dallas Willard (*The Celebration of Disciplines*)

"This [fallen] world is radically unsuited to the heart of the human person, and the suffering and terror of life will not be removed no matter how 'spiritual' we become. It is because of this that a healthy faith before God cannot be built or maintained, without heartfelt celebration of his greatness and goodness to us in the midst of our suffering." Dallas Willard

"I'm working hard every day to celebrate more and more things in bigger and better ways!" (*The Celebration of Disciplines*)

Celebration Training

1. Start today (Psalm 118:24)
2. Move and make noise (e.g., sing, dance, shout, laugh, etc) (Isaiah 55:12)
3. Hang out with people who celebrate well and are joy-full (Proverbs 15:30)
4. Schedule a day of celebration and fill it with things that bring you joy and pleasure (Deuteronomy 14:26)
5. Take a digital fast



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6. Practice gratitude (Psalm 118:1)
7. Celebrate others (e.g., birthdays, anniversaries, special dates, personal wins, etc)
8. Tell celebration stories (Psalm 107:2)

“In the same way there will be more rejoicing (celebrating) in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.” Luke 15:7 (NIV)

Questions for thought and discussion:

1. What is the goal of celebration? What is it meant to produce in our lives?
2. What do you think of celebration as a spiritual discipline? How does cultivating a life of celebration lead to greater godliness?
3. Is it easy or difficult for you to imagine God as joyful and laughing?
4. Do you think Christians in general know how to really celebrate well? If you grew up in church or around Christians, was celebration emphasized or frowned on?
5. Would you describe yourself as a joyful person? Why or why not?
6. In what way does our culture create a tendency toward dissatisfaction? In what ways do you currently practice gratitude?
7. It can be hard to engage in celebration and be a joyful person with so much hardship, pain, and injustice in the world. Why is it important for us to celebrate in the midst of hardship, pain, and injustice? What is the danger of not choosing to celebrate in a fallen world?
8. Review the Celebration Training list. Which ones stand out to you? Which ones do you currently practice? Which ones do you think you would most benefit from starting? What additional celebration exercises would you add to the list?

