



Part 7: God's Commanded Partying

Deuteronomy 16:12-17

What we celebrate and how we celebrate shapes our identity.

- Shaped by slavery
- Re-shaped by worship: joy, rest, provision.
- Re-shaped in community: reminding ourselves together, inviting others to the party.

Resources for Application:

Gratitude Practice: <https://greenwoodcc.com/gratitude/>

Sabbath Practice: <https://greenwoodcc.com/sabbath/>

Small Group: Contact Katie at kgarringer@greenwoodcc.com to get involved in or start a small group.

For Further Study on the Festivals:

The New Testament points to Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of all the of the festivals of the people of Israel. A fruitful study is reading the Gospels and Acts with an eye for the festivals taking place. Consider using a study Bible with notes on these festivals. How does Christ fulfill or interact with these festivals?

Three Examples of this type of fulfillment:

- The festival of the Passover marked the Israelites' liberation from Egypt as they were "passed over" by the Angel of Death by the covering of the blood of a lamb without blemish. Christ is crucified on the Passover, signifying our own liberation from sin as his blood covers us. When we celebrate The Lord's Supper, we are looking back in joy at our own liberation from the bondage of sin and death.
- The Festival of Weeks is otherwise known as Pentecost. It celebrated the "first fruits" of the harvest, which were feasted on in the presence of God as the people remembered the giving of the law. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit descends at Pentecost. Paul tells us in Romans 8:23 that the Holy Spirit

is the “first fruits” of what is to come: the redemption of all creation at the return of Christ. We live not by the old law, but by the Spirit as children of God. When we celebrate Pentecost, we celebrate that we have this present Holy Spirit as a participation in Jesus and a guarantee of what is to come.

- The Festival of Tabernacles, as we covered in today’s sermon, is the harvest festival. Once the Harvest is completed, the Israelites would feast on all they had been given in God’s presence and remember how once they lived in temporary dwellings in the wilderness, but now they have entered the promised land, their permanent home. In 2 Corinthians 5:1-5, Paul speaks of our present world as a tent, a temporary dwelling, saying that God is preparing a permanent dwelling for us where we will be with him forever, when the “harvest” is complete. This festival points us forward to the day where we will permanently dwell in the uninhibited presence of God at Christ’s return.

While our passage today features three main festivals, scripture tells of seven in all. Listen to this podcast on the understanding of the seven festivals in the life of the people of Israel.

<https://bibleproject.com/podcast/seven-festivals/>

Discussion Questions for Small Groups:

1. What stood out to you from the sermon? What do you have lingering questions about?
2. Do you feel as though your life with God is characterized by joy, rest, and provision? Why or why not?
3. What rhythms or practices help you connect with God in this way? Do you need to pick a practice up in this season?
4. What ways do you feel as though you are tempted towards a mindset of bondage even though you are free? (i.e., distrusting God’s provision, worrying about the future, letting the world define your worth and identity, etc.)
5. When has your community reminded you of who you are or who God is?
6. In what ways do you need this community to remind you in this season?
7. How are each of us inviting those on the edges of community to experience what we have experienced?
8. What are ways we as a small group can invite those who don’t know Christ to experience the goodness of our life in him?