

Sermon Outline for FBC Mar.17th, 2019

“Why do We Celebrate?”

Good morning!

Today my message is entitled “Why do We Celebrate?”

Mankind loves to celebrate! We will create a reason to celebrate, just so we can have a party which is a get together to have a fun time. Birthdays, Anniversaries, Weddings, and special events are traditional times we celebrate.

The question is why do we celebrate? Why do we need this time together having fun? Today we look at this question and hopefully we will find the answer.

What does it mean to celebrate? Webster’s Dictionary states: to frequent, honor. To perform publicly and formally, solemnize. To commemorate with ceremony or festivity. To honor or praise publicly. To mark a happy occasion with a pleasurable activity. To observe a holiday, anniversary, etc. with festivities. ¹

Today is Saint Patrick’s Day. Wikipedia tells us that Saint Patrick's Day, or the Feast of Saint Patrick, is a cultural and religious celebration held on 17 March, the traditional death date of Saint Patrick, the foremost patron saint of Ireland. Significance: Feast day of Saint Patrick, commemoration of the arrival of Christianity in Ireland. ²

We are also in the season of Lent, the 40 days leading up to Easter Sunday, the day Jesus Christ arose from the grave where He was put after His death.

BBC in the UK states: Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter in the Christian calendar. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, Lent is a season of reflection and preparation before the celebrations of Easter. By observing the 40 days (not

¹ Webster’s Dictionary, Pg. 120

² Wikipedia – Saint Patrick’s Day

including Sundays) of Lent, Christians replicate Jesus Christ's sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for 40 days. ³

Most of these celebrations you will not find in the Bible. These are days that have been chosen by people to commemorate a special person or time. Even Christmas and Easter celebrations are manmade traditions based on special events around our belief in Jesus Christ. A few months back we celebrated Christmas – the birthday of Jesus. Now we are headed into Easter – the weekend that Jesus died and then arose from the grave.

One distinct difference between these two celebrations and the others mentioned is that both were promises from God that came true. Our Bibles give us God's promises and the actual events that transpired. We celebrate them to remember and to pass the message to others of what Jesus did for us. Isaiah 7: 14 and Matthew 1: 18-24.

We celebrate together with Communion and Baptism services. The difference is these activities are directed by God for our walk with Him. Jesus told us to go and do likewise for both these activities. 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26 and Matthew 28: 19.

Still, why do we celebrate? What makes us want to remember, to make a big deal of something or someone? This answer we seek takes us all the way back to the first day of mankind in Genesis 2. We celebrate because God created us! God made us to walk with Him in the garden, to commune with Him and have an eternal relationship with Him. What a reason to celebrate!

1 Peter 2:9 NIV

9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

We started out in the presence of God our maker. Then we wandered away many times and God had to be harsh to bring us back. The time came when we were so far apart from God that God had to do something huge to get our attention. God gave us Jesus, to show us He still loved us and still wants that eternal relationship with us.

³ BBC - Religions - Christianity: Lent

Jesus's life, death and life again gives us that opportunity to get back into relationship with God. God wants us to decide to follow Him. He calls us to Him and gives us a simple way to rebuild that relationship – just believe and then live your life with Him, which requires commitment and determination.

The Apostle Paul is convinced that that relationship, built on faith, will last eternally.

Romans 8: 38-39 NIV

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, [Or nor heavenly rulers] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,

39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If you believe, as Paul does, then you can and should celebrate what God has done for you. When Christian believers gather together for Sunday services, it should be to celebrate the awesome God who made us, who continues to teach and guide us through the Holy Spirit and forgave us our sins through Jesus's death. Our God will always be with us, now and forever.

Why do we celebrate? I think it is because we have a need to appreciate that we are alive. We find reasons to celebrate so we can keep ourselves excited and happy. It is easier to point out an event or person in history to celebrate, then it is to choose to celebrate God. All people can get behind a party for a worldly cause but only those who know God can celebrate what God has done for us and is doing today.

Over the next few weeks, leading up to Easter, we will look at who we celebrate, how we celebrate, and when we celebrate, in more depth.

I encourage you to consider what you think about celebration and what is truly the celebration at Easter time.

Bibliography:

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**BBC - Religions - Christianity: Lent
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