

Images:	Cheesehead	Terps Logo	
	Redskins Logo	Navy Seal	Iwo Jima Pic
	Dallas Star	American Flag	Tomb of Unknown Soldier

Each one of these images does 3 things in the mind and heart of those that recognize and love them

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| 1. Identifies You: | Celebrates identity: This is who I am! |
| 2. Reminds You: | Carries you to the past, some significant place: This is where I have been. |
| 3. Calls You: | Evokes commitment of some kind, This is what is important to me, my values! |

Those are all things that any good celebration does in the hearts of those that participate.

First Service @ original Bldg
FaithWalk (3)

Continue our Series: "Living Up In A Down World" Today

I want us to talk about Spiritual Celebration...Something that we in our culture are awful at!

I believe we are so focused on the FUTURE that we often neglect to Stop, Reflect, Celebrate God's work!

We see some amazing thing take place; God performs an incredible work on OUR behalf...We say...Thanks...Move On
And almost immediately our heart is looking for the NEXT BIG THING! We have the (What have you done for me lately)

If we are ever going to get our IS replaced with our SHOULD we are going to have to learn to Celebrate and Honor God!

Premise: Instead of living our lives as God intended us to live them:	Diagram (Should)
We have allowed our culture/our personal desires/and others to turn us upside down!	Diagram (Is)

Reality: If we are to truly have a redemptive influence and impact upon our world as God intended,
If we are going to do what Paul did and "Turn Our World Upside Down!" (Rightside up!!!)

As we talk about Celebration we are going to the most unusual of places in the bible. Leviticus! Rules/Regulations/Sacrifices
Honestly I think of the book of Leviticus as the graveyard of people who start a "read through the Bible" plan (Everest)
Leviticus is that way. Start...Gen; Exodus; Then Leviticus....

But buried in the middle...this is this amazing chapter on Feasts! Religious Celebrations! Party With A Purpose!

God is telling His people...These are the things (sacrifices, offerings, ceremonies) that MARK you as MY PEOPLE!
And Oh, BTW...There are 7 Parties that you have to throw EVERY year...So that People will

Identify, Remember, Be Called Forward!
Leviticus 23 Page 88

1. Spiritual Celebration Is All About God's Work In The Life Of His People! 23:1-2

- Who they (feasts) belong to
~My (Belong to God) This is HIS party!
- Who they are for
~For Us as God's people to Bless us/Remind us/Call us forward
~For Others as a TESTIMONY to them of God's work
- What they are made up of: (Common Elements)
~Celebration/Honoring God/Dancing! ~Worship (Sacred Assembly) ~Food
~Sacrifice ~Testimony (Reminder) ~Calling Forward to Commitment

APPLIC: When we STOP the RUSH of our everyday lives to Celebrate God's work...It Honors Him!
When we STOP and Remember...it builds our faith and makes us stronger
When we STOP and Value what God has done for us...Calls us forward...Evokes love/Service/Sacrifice

Look with me at just 3 of the 7 Feasts that are listed in the Book of Lev 23

Each one of them does one or more of the things we talked about earlier

2. Spiritual Celebration Identifies Us As The People Of God. 23:3

- Sabbath: The First of the Celebrations Detailed Clearly is designed by God to identify His people!
~Clearly originated with the God of Creation: It is celebrated to Confess Him: As we join in we say: That's my God
~Requires a time of "sacred assembly" That is the heart of the celebration: Gather to worship God of Creation!
~Distinguishing Characteristic of worship of Jehovah. All other religions expressed worship in a different way
~Identity element is seen in the penalty for breaking Sabbath: Cut off from the people, no longer identified with them
~Ex 31:12-17: Sabbath is a Covenant Sign between God and His people...identifying them as belonging to Him!

Illus: How did that set them apart? Agricultural people: Not only you shouldn't work...but you CAN'T

Couple months ago: Eating lunch and heard someone talking with friend Eastern Shore: Chicken farm

Appl: Baptism does that for us! It is a sign and celebration you are part of God's family...(Part of Church) Identity

3. Spiritual Celebration Reminds Us of God's Work In Our Life!

23:4-8

- **Passover: To Commemorate/Remember God's Deliverance of His People in Egypt (Sin)**
~Lev 23:4-8
~Ex 12:26-28 "When your children ask tell them: "The LORD passed over us and spared us" Because of Blood The Israelites were just as sinful..They were just COVERED ...because of the blood of Passover! They were not innocent...but they were spared! God's lovingkindness and Mercy on their behalf
~Lk 22:1-20 Jesus took the Passover; RePurposed it! (Fulfilled it) And now we Celebrate His Sparing Us God's work on our behalf at the cost of His Son's lifeblood is the foundation of our Celebration!

Appl: Every Single time we celebrate it, As Jesus said, "Do This in REMEMBRANCE of me!" Reminds us of God's Work!
We Remember: We have relationship with God because of Jesus Blood

4. Spiritual Celebration Calls Us Forward To Serve God!

23:9-14

- **Firstfruits:**
~Lev 23:9-14 First part of the harvest was dedicated to the Lord, remembering His provision of the Land Looking FORWARD to the rest of the harvest.
God, I am going to give this to you, the first, in recognition of your provision...
And as an act of FAITH that all the rest will both come...and be sufficient!
Before I ever see the balance of the harvest God, I am going to honor you!

Applic: In the NT this concept of Firstfruits is used to talk about Christ's Resurrection and those who came to faith in Him early as a promise of all the great spiritual harvest in the Church

Applic: In a little different way, somewhat closer to OT, We have something very similar to Celebrate today!
Dec We set a goal for our Year End giving: Just like a part of the sacrifice/Harvest Festival of Weeks

55K 50 Rainy Day fund
2500 New Awana program
2500 City Serve

All Received: 50k Rainy day
2500 Awana (55 kids attending!)
2500 CityServe (Had about 10 Churches agree to join us...all over AA County!
Problem: not 55 85K!
What to do with the other 30? God provided for snow removal/missed offering...
BEFORE we ever knew we needed it!

As the people of God we need to Celebrate His provision...He Goodness, His Gifts to us

CONCL:

So what does this all mean to us? As my wife told me on Friday when I was talking about my sermon,
"Make sure it has a practical application to our everyday life!

3 Questions that make this live for each of us:

1. Have you ever been forgiven?

Does the Lords Supper truly express the reality of your spiritual life?
Has your sin been forgiven, was His body broken for you? Was His blood applied to your life?
We each individually have to come to that place in our life where we say to Him,
Lord Jesus, I know you are God's Son
I know you came and lived the perfect life
I know you died an awful death on the cross, with Nails in your hands and feet, Thorns on brow, People
I desperately NEED to have forgiveness of my sin, and surrender to you as Lord of MY life
(I have a collection in my office of "Communion Tokens")

2. Have you identified yourself as a part of the family of God? Have you ever been baptized

It is one thing to believe...Quite another to Publically Identify! Important
If you have not yet done so, I want to challenge you to Consider following Jesus in baptism

3. Have you sensed the Call forward to Serve God and His people?

Today after the 11:00 service Mission Interest Mtg (Local, National and International)
Sunday Morning Kidz Central Love to have your participation
Awana program
Small Groups, Trustees, Band of Brothers, Women's Ministry Opportunities abound!