



Celebration – Philippians 4:4-7

As Lutherans, we do not often consider celebration as a spiritual discipline. Knowing that we are undeserving of God's grace, there is a certain guilt among us, which prevents us from believing that we deserve to celebrate. Yet, an examination of the church year should teach us that celebration is a central part of our lives together as the church.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Each week we celebrate the Lord's Supper. We rightly do this in reverence, recognizing the undeserved blessing that we receive as we partake. Yet, we should still remember that this is to be a time of celebration also. We should allow ourselves to rejoice as we receive God's grace in bread and wine.

Beyond the celebration that we do corporately in worship, the Christian life should be marked by celebration. We can celebrate our faith generally. We can celebrate one another as we live life together in that faith. We don't need major things taking place in our lives to justify celebration. Each morning it is appropriate to mark the start of a new day in celebration of God's grace and provision.

Celebration points ahead to our time with God in eternity, when we will celebrate and feast with God and one another. In this life, we live in the already and the not yet. Thus our celebrations are in some way muted. Yet, anticipating our celebration with the saints in heaven, we should seek celebration here and now.

When our lives are marked by celebration, we bring joy into our lives and the lives of others. Food is a natural connection to our celebrations which is likely why God uses the imagery of feasting in heaven as a way to explain what eternal life will involve.

As we bring our Lenten preparation to a close and look forward to Easter, celebration should be first and foremost on our minds and in our hearts.

Thoughts for Reflection

What are celebrations that you make a part of your life and how can you share those with others?