



DEVOTIONAL

Dedication
12 - 17 July 2010

gracepoint
www.gracepoint.co.za

Monday 12 July 2010

Celebrating God

Scripture readings:

2 Chronicles 7 vs 10

John 4 vs 24

God gave the Israelites many rules and laws to govern and order every aspect of their lives. Amongst these laws and commandments, God ordained and decreed specific times of feasting and celebration – times when His people were to draw aside from their everyday tasks to remember what He had done and to rejoice in Him and His goodness. We, like the Israelites, need to take time now and then to stop and look back on our journey and to remember where we have been and how God has been moving and working in our lives. We too, need to dedicate time to celebrating God; all He is and all that He has done.

Celebration flows out of an understanding of Who God is. As we come to know Him more intimately and experience more of His love and power in our lives, we should have more and more to celebrate. As we become more aware of what He is doing in and through us, this awareness should overflow in worship and gratitude. When we truly worship and rejoice in God, we open ourselves to experiencing even more of Him and therefore, have more to celebrate and worship Him for. Therefore, the cycle of joy and celebration in God begins simply by choosing to live with a grateful heart and rejoicing in the goodness God shows us in the present moment.

May you celebrate in God today and in what He has done and is doing in your life. May you stop and reflect on whether the way you are living your life celebrates His goodness and may you pause long enough to truly appreciate and worship Him.

Dedication leads to celebration

Scripture readings:

2 Chronicles 2 vs 4

Psalms 51 vs 16-19

Romans 12 vs 1

In 2 Chronicles Solomon dedicated the temple to God. In other words, the Israelites offered and devoted it to God as a place where He would be worshipped and honoured. They were giving back to Him what He had given them and they were proclaiming His Lordship over their lives and their place of worship.

In the same way, God asks us to dedicate our lives to Him. We are called to offer ourselves to Him as living sacrifices who are set aside for His use and purposes. He wants our hearts to be places where He can make His home and in which He will be honoured and revered. When we choose to dedicate ourselves to God, we are offering all we are back to Him in an act of worship.

As you reflect on what it really means to be dedicated to God today, may you be encouraged to examine your life and determine whether it really is set aside for God's use and plans? May you be challenged to truly come before God, daily, as a living sacrifice. May your heart be a resting place for God Almighty and your life a vessel for His light and love. May you boldly pray this prayer for your life and of your heart:

"Now arise, O Lord God, into your resting place, You and the ark of Your power."

– 2 Chronicles 6 vs 40

Wednesday 14 July 2010

For His renown

Scripture readings:

Genesis 11 vs 3-9

Daniel 3 vs 1-6

2 Chronicles 7 vs 1-3

2 Chronicles 6 vs 8 (AMP):

“But the Lord said to David my father, ‘Since it was in your heart to build a house for My Name and renown, you did well that it was in your heart.’ ”

Genesis 11 and Daniel 3 give accounts of things people built for their own glory. The people who built the tower of Babel wanted to build something so magnificent that it would establish a name for them, but the project ended in confusion and mayhem. Nebuchadnezzar erected a giant statue in honour of himself, but when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down to it and God saved them from the fiery furnace, the king’s vainglory was shown up by the true God and King of all. Whenever people attempt to build things – statues, towers, empires, businesses, reputations and lives – that honour themselves, they inevitably end up in disaster.

On the other hand, in 2 Chronicles we read about the dedication of the magnificent temple of Solomon – something that was established not for man’s glory, but for God’s renown. In this place, God’s glory and presence was revealed in such a powerful and tangible way that the priests could not continue their work and all were brought to their knees in worship and awe.

What is in your heart and what are you building? Are you building a life and a legacy that honours you, or are you building one that honours God?

Thursday 15 July 2010

A dwelling place for an infinite God

Scripture readings:

2 Chronicles 6 vs 18-20

1 John 4 vs 15

1 Corinthians 3 vs 16

John 3 vs 30

God is limitless and infinite and yet, He chooses to make His home in every heart that is willing to accept Him. He chooses to place His Spirit in us and to dwell among us. It is a mystery too great to comprehend and it is certainly something to celebrate!

May you consider today whether you have accepted Christ's invitation to come and dwell in your heart, and if you have, how much room you have given Him in it? How much of your life does He really occupy and how much is filled with other things – worry, fear, sin, anger, greed or pride?

He is infinite and will fill all the emptiness we bring to Him, but we must first empty ourselves so that we *can* be filled with more of Him. He longs to reveal more of Himself to each of us – to fill us with more of Himself, His love and His power... He is simply waiting for us to make more room.

"God sends no one away empty except those who are full of themselves."

– D.L. Moody

Friday 16 July 2010

Sacrifice and celebration

Scripture readings:

2 Chronicles 5 vs 6

1 Samuel 15 vs 22

Hebrews 13 vs 15

It is interesting to note that all the great feasts and celebrations in the Bible go hand in hand with sacrifice. The Israelites brought animal sacrifices to God during their celebrations to honour and worship Him. When Solomon dedicated the temple they sacrificed oxen and sheep too numerous to count and so, their celebration was very costly.

Great sacrifice leads to great celebration. When we choose to obey and follow God, especially when it costs us a great deal to do so, we will reap the rewards and be able to celebrate His faithfulness. When we do things His way, no matter what the cost, we will be blessed. When we step out of ourselves and our comfort zones, we will experience His power and presence and see His miracles.

Perhaps when we find that we don't have a great deal to celebrate in our walk with God it is because we have been unwilling to step out and make the sacrifices it requires to truly follow Him. 1 Samuel 15 reveals that what God really desires is obedience. That is the greatest offering we can bring to Him and that is the requirement for really experiencing Him and His glory.

May you bring Him the sacrifice of praise and obedience today. May you be willing to step out and follow Him, no matter what the cost so that you will be able to celebrate the things He will do in and through you.

Saturday 17 July 2010

Celebration in darkness

Scripture readings:

Job 1 vs 20-21

Hebrews 13 vs 8

Romans 8 vs 28

John 16 vs 33

Sometimes praise is costly because it requires us to be obedient when it is difficult, but sometimes praise is a sacrifice because we find ourselves in a place of darkness where there doesn't seem to be much to celebrate. Sometimes we are overwhelmed by pain and suffering, or by uncertainty and fear, and we see can find no reason to rejoice.

In these moments, we have to hold onto the truth that God is the same, yesterday, today and forever and that Who He is does not change depending on our circumstances. We have to trust that He is always good and gracious, always loving and merciful and that He will use all things – even the darkest moments of our lives – for our good and for His glory. In those moments, we can still celebrate that Jesus endured the most awful and desperate darkness imaginable so that no matter what we faced, we would never have to be alone and we would never have to be beyond the reach of God's love, mercy and comfort. We can celebrate in knowing that He has overcome the world for us and that one day, He will wipe every tear from our eyes and we will be able to rejoice in and with Him forever.

Revelation 21 vs 4:

“And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there will be no more death, nor mourning, nor crying out, nor will there be any more pain; for the first things passed away.”