

A WORD ON WORSHIP

REVIEW OF MESSAGE FROM APRIL 8, 2018

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Hear Sunday Sermons at www.SunriseTC.org

Luke 5:33-34

They said to him, “John’s disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking.” Jesus answered, “Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast.”



Many people saw the Puritans (incorrectly) as “people who suffer from an overwhelming dread that somewhere, sometime, somehow, someone may be enjoying himself.” That definition is incorrect because the Puritans had as their purpose “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.” But we all have met someone who fits that incorrect definition -a religious person who only seems to be content when everyone else is miserable. These folks are like Garrison Keillor’s Lake Wobegon Lutherans, who are suspicious of a place like Hawaii that doesn’t have harsh winters.

Why is it that there are so many “dill pickle” Christians around, who are more like the Pharisees than those who attended Levi’s reception? It is because Satan has warped our conception of the Christian life. Jesus’ disciples, unlike the disciples of the Pharisees and even of John the Baptist, feast, while the others fast. The real issue is not stated, but it is there: “Why are your disciples able to enjoy life, while we merely endure it?” Note the contrast in the attitude of the Pharisees with that of the “sinners.” The sinners are celebrating; the Pharisees are grumbling. The sinners are happy; the Pharisees are sad. The sinners are enjoying life; the Pharisees only endure it. The sinners are “grabbing for gusto,” the Pharisees are gripping to Jesus.

There are times when fasting is appropriate. There are times when the most spiritually mature Christians will be sad, when they will grieve, when they won’t be marked by joy. But Jesus is the bridegroom and when He is with His people, then we should experience the joy of the wedding feast. The joy of the Christian life is being personally related to our loving Bridegroom! If you know the joy of a personal relationship with Him, there will be times when you fast. You will discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. You will obey His Word. But your motive will not be to earn right standing with Him or to impress others with your spirituality. Your motive will be the joy of knowing and pleasing your Bridegroom.

Joy, not sorrow, not sadness, should be the dominant characteristic of the Christian. The Christian life includes sorrow and suffering and sacrifice, but these are not the melody line of our life, or they should not be. These are the harmony line. Suffering and sacrifice are means, but they should not be the end. Joy is the goal, it is the climax, it is the reward of forgiveness and fellowship with God.

Sunrise Community Church
Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst
EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.