

The Significance Of Celebrating God Together

Intro: As we celebrate the completion of this project, we are here to celebrate more than sheetrock and walls. We are here to celebrate God! We are not here to celebrate Foothills. We are here to celebrate the God of Foothills! The project simply reflects God. It reflects who He is and what He has done! God commands His people to celebrate Him because of the significance behind this activity. Today, we are going to celebrate AND understand its importance to the life of this church. WHY? Because this will hardly be the last time!

- 4 key truths about celebrating God we need to understand today.

I. Celebrating God Together Multiplies Joy In The Church

Ps. 35:18 "Then I will thank you in front of the great assembly. I will praise you before all the people." (NLT)

Ps. 149:1,5 "Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song. Sing his praises in the assembly of the faithful...Let the faithful rejoice that he honors them..." (NLT)

Ps. 32:11 "Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!" (NLT)

1. The rejoicing and celebrating that God commands is a public event for the church. It's not something we keep to ourselves about. We proclaim the Lord's goodness publicly.
2. One of the results of this is that it multiplies joy in the church. When you see God at work and publicly talk about what God has done, it just makes the church a fun place to be. God is real and alive in our midst and that's just plain fun!
3. Celebrating God impacts us emotionally. When we choose to see and acknowledge the work of God in our midst and publicly talk about it, it gives us hope / encouragement / gets our eyes off our circumstances / builds our faith / unleashes the joy!
4. Churches have a reputation for being boring. Maybe it's because they've never trusted Jesus enough to have anything worth getting excited about? How can following Jesus on this adventure He has us on possibly be boring? (Like a rollercoaster ride!)
 - Some believers / churches act as if God is dead...unconcerned...uninvolved. Not here!
 - I remember in the early years seeing God work in such tangible ways that I could hardly contain my joy. (God giving us money for a tape duplicator – share)
5. It's my desire that Foothills is just permeated with a spirit of joy. How is that possible? When celebrating God is just the normal experience of His people. When we're constantly talking about what God is doing in our midst. How can that not be contagious?

II. Celebrating God Together Instructs The Next Generation

Ps. 145:4 "One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts." (NLT)

Deut. 31:13 “Do this so that your children who have not known these instructions will hear them and will learn to fear the LORD your God. Do this as long as you live...” (NLT)

1. This is what we are doing here today. There is a younger generation listening to the the older generations talking about the greatness of our God. We’re not talking religion. We’re talking about the tangible works of God in our midst!
 2. Times of celebrating God are actually times of instruction. They are real life lessons with God put on display for all to see...especially the next generation. This is not a wasted weekend. This could change a person’s life!
 3. I guarantee you that some of the young people here today are wondering if this whole God thing is real. They wonder if it’s really worth following Him fully. They wonder what it will look like if they completely trust Him? They wonder if church is just a big joke!
 4. Great questions! When we celebrate together, those answers are on display for all to see. Those questions are answered by real people in real life situations experiencing a real God.
 5. Can you imagine bringing up the next generation where they just believed seeing the supernatural power of God in their lives / their churches / in their circumstances was just normal? This is what celebrating God does!
- How I wish I would have been exposed to people like this when I was younger!

III. Celebrating God Together Influences The Leaders Of The City

Ps. 107:32 “Let them exalt him publicly before the congregation and before the leaders of the nation.” (NLT)

Ps. 96:2-3 “Sing to the LORD; praise his name. Each day proclaim the good news that he saves. Publish his glorious deeds among the nations. Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.” (NLT)

1. What God does is not to be kept a secret. It is to be proclaimed / it is to be published / it should lead to praise. Even the leaders of a nation (or city) need to hear about what God has done.
 2. WHY? Because when the people of God publicly celebrate Him it has opportunity to influence those in positions of authority. In our church family, we have plenty of people who hold positions of influence in our city and county.
 3. Do we think it matters to God that they follow Him...that they recognize God put them in these positions to influence for good...that they can have a godly influence for His Kingdom? Celebrating God influences!
- Imagine what would happen if those in positions of authority and influence started believing that God is real...that He would actually help them lead?
4. When we celebrate, even the leaders who don’t attend Foothills hear about the greatness of God. What God is doing is a testimony to the city. We’ve done nothing in secret. Everything God has been doing is on display.

5. Buying a building on Main St. and transforming it is a testimony. The city doesn't want empty buildings in the downtown area. I can't wait until the Café is up and running so that I can have a cup of coffee with some of them and I can say; "Look what God has done."
6. As we not only celebrate God today, but take this celebration outside the walls of this building, God will use this to influence the leaders of our city.

IV. Celebrating God Together Increases Our Boldness For His Kingdom

Rom. 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes..." (NLT)

II Tim. 1:12 "...Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day." (NLT)

1. Celebrating together helps us get past our fears of being a testimony for Jesus and His Kingdom. This world wants to shut us up and wants us to be embarrassed that we are followers of Christ. (How can you believe all that?)
 2. Celebrating together builds our corporate boldness. How can we be ashamed at what God has done in the past year? How can we be ashamed at what God has done in the past 12 years? How can we possibly be silent about it?
 3. Celebrating together helps us get past our insecurities. Helps to change our thinking. Helps some of you to say; "Why am I embarrassed about this? How can I be ashamed of the reality of God?" Why am I timid about something that is so real to so many?"
 4. The more we celebrate God, the more you are exposed to the reality of God, the more you will look for the work of God in your own life, and more boldness for God you will eventually have.
 5. When experiences in your life are very real and meaningful, it's pretty natural to be unashamed about them. I've never been ashamed of catching steelhead / going on vacation / shooting an elk / or BBQing a nice rack of baby back ribs /
 6. When God is real and alive in your church and personal life it's pretty easy to be unashamed. Celebrating God helps us with this. It helps remind us just how tangible God really is and how bold we really should be!
 7. Notice all these new chairs? Guess whose responsibility it will be to help fill them up? Will you be ashamed to invite people to Foothills or will you be bold and unashamed to invite someone to a place where God is alive and well?
- As we celebrate today what God has done, we also realize that with His blessing comes with it additional responsibility. Each empty chair represents a responsibility we all have to reach out to others unashamed!

Why is celebrating God so significant?

It multiplies our joy

It instructs the next generation
It influences the leaders
It increases our boldness

- The best thing about today...there will be countless more times in the future where we will come together to celebrate the greatness of our God.