

Celebration Key Passages

Transcript from David Hamilton's Video project for
the SourceView Reader

June 2023

Note for transcript use:

The blue text was used for editing purposes, and should all be gone, but if it is there, compare with video.

The use of red text is to draw attention to scriptures used. While checked for use in the video project, it would be best to confirm when used for the written projects coming. The spoken may have altered a word or added a comment ...and sometimes only selections were used out of a large passage.

The use of green text is to highlight the need to take extra care to find exact spelling or wording, especially quotes used and words in Hebrew. Also any questions on correct wording.

Celebration Sphere Key Passages

God and the Sphere of Celebration

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|---|---|-------------|
| 1 | God's Kingdom Promotes Righteousness | Psa 145:7 |
| 2 | God's Kingdom Promotes Peace | Col 3:15 |
| 3 | God's Kingdom Promotes Joy | Zep 3:16-17 |
| 4 | Beauty and Function | Psa 19:1 |
| 5 | Masterfully Created to Be Master Creators | Eph 2:10 |
| 6 | Beauty Within and Without | Isa 53:2 |

The Purpose of Celebration

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| 7 | Affirms That We Are Destined for Joy | Heb 12:1-2 |
| 8 | Creates a Safe and Welcoming Space | Gen 18:1b-8,16 |
| 9 | Creates a Sacred and Restorative Space | Exo 25:8-9 |
| 10 | Releases Gifts of Anointed Craftsmen | Exo 35:30-36:1 |
| 11 | Builds Community | Est 9:26b-28 |
| 12 | Clarifies Identity/Destiny | Psa 137:1-6 |
| 13 | Blessings and Cultural Honor Protocols | Mat 26:7-13 |
| 14 | Creates Cultural Heroes/Role Models | Gen 10:8-9 |
| 15 | Promotes True Love | 1Co 13:4-7 |
| 16 | Strengthens Truth | Isa 42:10-12 |
| 17 | Reinforces Hope | Psa 146:5 |
| 18 | Helps Us Cope with Sorrow | Ecc 7:1-4 |
| 19 | Catalyst for Good or Corrupted for Evil? | Num 21:8-9 |
| 20 | Use and Abuse of the Arts | 2Ti 3:4b |

The Five Senses and God's Design

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| 21 | Affirmation of Creation and Community | 1Jo 1:1-4 |
| 22 | Taste: An Enjoyable Gift | Ecc 2:24-26a |
| 23 | Taste: Culinary Excellence Shows Honor | 1Sa 9:22-24 |
| 24 | Touch: Strengthens Relationship | 1Sa 18:4 |
| 25 | Touch: Displays True Love | Luk 7:36-47 |
| 26 | Smell: Identity and Connections | Gen 27:26-27 |
| 27 | Smell: Triggers Opposing Reactions | 2Co 2:14-16a |
| 28 | Sound: Carries Cultural Stories | Jdg 5:11 |
| 29 | Sound: Declares Redemptive Hopes | Psa 150:1-6 |
| 30 | Sight: Dramatic Arts in the Scriptures | 2Sa 14:1-11 |
| 31 | Sight: Visual Arts in the Scriptures | Eze 37:1-10 |

The Prophet/Artist

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| 32 | The Inner Life of the Prophet/Artist | Hab 1:1 |
| 33 | Use of the Dramatic Arts | 1Ki 11:29-39 |
| 34 | Use of the Literary Arts | Lam 1:1 |
| 35 | Use of the Musical Arts | 2Ki 3:15 |
| 36 | The Whole Church as Artists | Eph 3:10 |
| 37 | Individual Financing of the Arts | 2Ki 4:8-11 |
| 38 | Corporate Financing of the Arts | 1Ch 25:1-8 |
| 39 | Repetitive Events Platforming the Arts | Nah 1:15b |
| 40 | Unique Events Platforming the Arts | Rev 7:9-12 |

Jesus and the Arts

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| 41 | Jesus Employed Humor | Luk 14:18-21 |
| 42 | Jesus Sang and Quoted Songs | Mar 15:34 |
| 43 | Jesus Attended Celebratory Events | Joh 2:1-11 |
| 44 | Jesus Created Celebratory Events | 1Co 11:23-26 |

Biblical Principles for Sports

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| 45 | Target Practice | 1Sa 20:18-42 |
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Crossover Passages

47	Crossover with FAMILY	Gen 21:8
48	Crossover with ECONOMICS	Pro 17:22
49	Crossover with GOVERNMENT	1Ki 1:32-40
50	Crossover with RELIGION	Act 16:25-34
51	Crossover with EDUCATION	Deu 31:19-22
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Celebration Sphere Introduction

The sphere of Celebration involves Arts, entertainment, and sports. God's purpose for the sphere of Celebration is to strengthen hope and build community. Ever since the days of Jubal as recorded in [Genesis 4:21](#), artists have used their skills to entertain people and speak to the heart issues of their culture. Biblically, these artistic gifts are often linked with the prophetic ministry. When God's ideas are embedded in story form, the truth resonates with both heart and mind, maximizing their impact. Stories of God's work in the past, produce courage and strength for the present and hope for the future.

The first section that we're going to be looking at, as in all the spheres, is God and how he relates to the sphere, in this case the sphere of celebration. There are going to be six key passages. And the first three are based on [Romans 14:17](#), which says for the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. We'll see how God brings righteousness, peace and joy and uses celebration. And it's not just our human endeavours, but we do this in the Holy Spirit with his participation. The second three in this category will consider the nature of God's creation. This sphere celebrates creativity. We're to live as his masterpieces, the fruit of his craftsmanship exhibiting both inner and outer beauty.

Number 1: God's Kingdom Promotes Righteousness

[Psalm 145:7](#) says everyone will share the story of your wonderful goodness. They will sing with joy about your righteousness.

There is power in story. There's power in song. Propositional truths, just abstract statements about reality, about who God is, who humans are, what the universe is like, tend to engage only the mind, but truths that are embedded in story, truths that are connected with life and, and can be told in an artistic way, touch both mind and heart. And so they make a deeper and more lasting impression. Biblical righteousness is not about religious performance. It's about living in right relationships, loving relationships, vertically with God and horizontally with neighbor. It's about being kind and forgiving. It's about acting like God acts. Imitating God's character and nature, how he relates to people. And this like [Colossians 3:12-15](#) describes biblical righteousness. You must cloth yourselves with tender hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember the Lord forgave you. So you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourself with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony and let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body, you are called to live at peace and always be thankful.

When we use the sphere of Celebration to advance these qualities of righteousness and how we relate to one another, then the sphere is being used in the right way.

Number 2: God's Kingdom Promotes Peace.

Reading from Colossians 3: 15 and let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts for as members of one body, you are called to live in peace. Always be thankful.

In the world the thinking is ‘conflict sells’. So our news media is filled with stories of bad news. Focusing on the works of our common enemy. Wars, riots, disasters, economic hardship, acts of injustice. Are these tales of wrongdoing being used to cultivate division? Or promote unity in our society? Are we looking at the evil in the world and considering how do we get even? Or how do we move towards reconciliation and peace?

When we think about Celebration and how we portray the stories and the events of our lives, we need to be people who encourage us in a movement towards peace, towards unity, towards harmony. This is not by being superficial or covering up, covering up difficulties. God does not hide problems. He's a realist, but not to live like ostriches with our heads' stuck in the sand, pretending if we don't see it and we don't hear it and we don't speak it, then it's not there. We don't live unaware of injustice or unaware of the things that work against peace. But we need to act in such a way and use the power of this sphere to advance the cause of peace and unity, relational harmony. That's what this sphere is all about.

Number 3: God's Kingdom Promotes Joy.

Zephaniah 3: 16-17. I love this passage and we often don't quote anything from the book of Zephaniah. So listen well. On that day, the announcement to Jerusalem will be cheer up. Zion. Don't be afraid for the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness, with his love He will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.

He will rejoice over you with joyful songs. You know, when a young man falls in love with a young lady, you can tell almost immediately. He starts walking two feet off the ground, has a lilt to his step and a song in his heart. He stops talking in prose and begins writing poetry. Everything changes in how he communicates, in how he faces life. You can't help but break into poetry. You know, actually in the Bible, the first time poetry is used is when Adam lays his eyes on Eve for the first time. He erupts into this magnificent form of artistic literary communication.

You know, to live well people need love and joy as much as they need food and water. And what this passage tells us that when God is in our midst, He too sings. For the subject of that song is you and me. He sings over us. He sings to us, He sings about us. Have you taken time to pause and listen to God singing to you?

You see, joy is not a circumstantial feeling that comes and goes with changing realities. True joy is that deep delight which comes from the confidence that it we have when we look into someone's eyes and know that that someone treasures us and loves us.

When we look to God, that's what we see in His eyes. When we listen to God, that's what we hear in His songs. And that's what gives us joy.

In God's presence we're told in **Psalms 16: 11, there is fullness of joy**. There is absolute joy in all his most complete expression. Why? Because He loves us fully and is always communicating His love to us, if we'll take time to listen, if we're willing to hear. Biblical celebrations are designed to help us reflect on God's joy-giving love for each one of us.

Number 4: Beauty and Function.

Psalm 19:1 says the heavens proclaim the glory of God, the skies display His craftsmanship. God's creativity is limitless. It's extraordinary. It's magnificent. It's breathtaking. It's both functionally excellent and aesthetically exquisite.

When He creates with a word, He calls the galaxies to spring into existence. And though they function within the laws of physics, which to some might sound very dry and mechanistic, they also display extraordinary beauty. When we do things in this sphere, they should be things that are both pragmatic and aesthetic. They function, it works. It's real. And, and it's also beautiful and delightful, winsome and attractive.

Number 5: Masterfully Created to Be Master Creators.

Ephesians 2: 10 says for, we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus. So we can do good things He planned for us long ago.

The word in Greek is we are God's poem where we get the English word poem. We can write in many different ways, but poetry is more elegant. It's more artistic than just prose. It requires additional thought. You think about rhyme and meter and, and symbolism. And you do a lot of things through indirect allusions. It's a masterful way to write. Many people can write prose well. Only a few can write poetry well. God says that we are his poems. We are his masterpiece artistic expression, And he's made us to participate with him in being creators. He's made us to do good things in every sphere, including the sphere of Celebration. Not all celebration that is done in the world is good. We're to do... We're called to do good celebration. What are the good things that enable arts, entertainment and sports to make a beneficial contribution to our society? We know that these very powerful tools have been used to destroy lives of individuals and families of corrupt society, but they when used correctly, they're good things that I can participate in in this sphere that can advance God's masterpiece plan.

Number 6: Beauty Within and Without.

We read from **Isaiah 53:2** the following, **my servant grew up in the Lord's presence like a tender a green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful and majestic about his appearance. Nothing to attract us to him**

In this passage, it's a prophecy of the coming Messiah, of Jesus. And what it is telling us is that God steps into our world in such a way that there wasn't a big splash, a big

there wasn't a red carpet and a trumpet sounding and saying, look, what a magnificent thing is happening.

He was born in a very ordinary way. He lived as a, in a very ordinary way. He was common to us. Incarnation is absolutely extraordinary. The glorious majestic wondrous king of the universe stepped into our ordinary world and just was with us. **He was like us, Hebrews says, in every way, except that he did not sin.** And he brings life-giving beauty into the ordinary things of life. 30 years he lived in our midst. It was kind of unsuspecting. No one would've thought. And the neighbors grew up with and said, ah, look at this guy. He's the son of God. He's God incarnate. He was just one of us. There was nothing majestic about his appearance. He was just like all the others.

But when he began his ministry in our midst, wow, the difference it made. **2 Corinthians 4:7** says something similar about what happens with God's spirit inhabits our hearts. He said that **we are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure.** God was in Christ. God and man blended together in just a remarkable indescribable way. This treasure and in a clay jar. And that true beauty that is within him, changes us. We're attracted to Jesus, not because of, of externals, but because of his heart, his love, his sacrifice, his identification with us. Jesus makes all the difference. It's not a beauty of externals, but a transforming eternal beauty that calls us all to Himself.

SECTION INTRODUCTION

In this next section, we're gonna be looking at 14 passages that focus on the purpose of celebration. Celebration is very purposeful and very powerful. It is the least authoritative and the most, perhaps the most influential of all the spheres. If we understand why God gave us this sphere, we can use it in a way that really enhances God's purposes on earth. So let's consider these things together.

Number 7: Celebration Affirms that We are Destined for Joy.

Hebrews 12: 1- 2 says this. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially this sin, that so easily trips us up and let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith because of the joy awaiting him. He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.

This phrase that is so interesting is "because of the joy awaiting him". Jesus was able to embrace a lot of very difficult, painful things. The cross was costly. But he had a destiny in which he was aware of joy. And of course, as we looked at it earlier passage, he's thinking about the restored relationship with the Father. **Psalms 16: 11** says that in **God's presence, there was fullness of joy** and he was expecting to be returned to the Father with all of that relational richness. And that motivated him. This needs to be what motivates us in the sphere of Celebration. We see this theme throughout the Bible. In **chapter 15 of Luke**, there are several parables that are only found in that

portion of the Bible. There's a lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son. We often call the prodigal son and each of these stories, the idea is that something or someone gets lost and then they get found and get recovered and they are. And when that happens, there's a concluding statement. This is a symbol of what happens when a sinner repents and is restored to relationship with God. And in **verse seven and verse 10 in chapter 15 of Luke, it says that when the, this happens there's joy before the angels of heaven when a sinner repents.** There is joy before the angels of heaven, that's an interesting phrase. Think about it. If you are an angel in heaven, what would you be looking at? Now, you wouldn't be looking at streets of gold or this or that or the other. You've been there all your time, and those are just like common, ordinary things. If I was an angel in heaven, I'd be looking at the one who is the centerpiece attraction. You're looking to the person of God all the time. So when it says when they rejoice, because they're, they saw joy before the angels is that they're seeing God face erupt in joy when a sinner repents. It's not a casual, oh, yes. One more for the kingdom. Lets notch it up. It's not a task that God is dutifully fulfilling. He delights. When a person comes to faith in Jesus, he throws a party. He calls his friends. He celebrates. It's real. He really celebrates and its God's joy and anticipation of living joyfully with him, in that presence that should guide all of our activities, including how we do celebration.

Number 8: Celebration Creates a Safe and Welcoming Space.

We're gonna read selections from Genesis 18:1-8, 16. One day Abraham was sitting at the entrance to his tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up and noticed three men standing by. When he saw them, he ran to meet them and welcomed them bowing low to the ground. My Lord, he said, if it pleases, you stop here for a while. Rest in the shade of this tree, while water is brought to wash your feet. And since you've honored your server with this visit, let me prepare some food to refresh you before you continue on your journey. When the food was ready, Abraham took some yogurt and milk and the roasted meat, and he served it to the men. As they ate, Abraham waited on them and the shade of the trees, then the men got up from their meal and they left. Abraham went with them to send them on their way.

You know, in our Christian tradition, we celebrate Abraham as the man of great faith. And he believed in God and so was counted to him as righteousness. So he is known as the father of faith. And that is appropriate. That that is as we, as we should do. But within the Jewish tradition, the characteristic that is most celebrated about Abraham is his hospitality. Because he was hospitable. And we read on this story. We see these three men was actually some representation, Biblically it is called a theophany of God and a couple of angels. And he actually had an encounter with God. And he offered his hospitality to God. Because he welcomed God, he became God's friend. And that is the foundation.

So whether it's faith or hospitality, each tradition is celebrating attributes that are really important for a relationship with God.

Hospitality is telling a stranger who's in a place that's unknown - it might be a place that creates fear and insecurity- come be with me. When you're with me, you'll be safe. You are welcome. And I want you to be safe. This was a very, very high value in the cultures of the ancient middle east. The value of hospitality was supreme. If you welcome somebody into your home, as long as they were in your home, you defended them. You protected them. Even if their enemies came, you stood up for them, even though you were just getting to know him. So this protocol around hospitality is very, very strong in the roots and the foundations of biblical thought and in the Hebrew people. And so we see that this provision of food, the caring, the culinary arts expressed in all of these activities were related to making a place that is that safe and welcoming. And we should make sure that when we do theater or movies or symphony or art in any form, that we do it in such a way that those who come and gather to our place, that they feel safe, they feel welcome. They know that while they're being entertained, no harm will come to them. They are protected.

Number 9: Celebration Creates a Sacred and Restorative space.

We're going to read from Exodus 25: 8-9. Have the people of Israel build me a holy sanctuary. God says, so I can live among them. You must build this tabernacle and its furnishings exactly according into the pattern I will show you.

God's instructions to Moses, give an extensive and detailed description of what the tabernacle was supposed to look like. And the execution of its creation was followed with absolute obedience to every single detail. It involved beautiful craftsmanship that went into the furnishing of the tents and all the accessories that filled the tabernacle. They used finest materials, the best threads, the best leather, the finest gold, the precious stones, everything was just absolutely top of the line materials and the most skillful artistry.

But the most exquisite aspect of the tabernacle was not the furnishings or the tent. It was God's Emmanuel presence. That was the wonder. That this gorgeous setting with all of the artistry that was involved in it, housed the presence of God. He lived among them. Artistry done according to God's pattern, what he shows us, creates a platform of God's redemptive presence to be in our midst. Thus the artist has a great responsibility and a great privilege and opportunity, a unique opportunity to create a space that God can inhabit and reveal himself to his people.

Number 10: Celebration Releases Gifts of Anointed Craftsmen.

Exodus 35: 30 all the way through 36: 1 here's some selections. Then Moses told the people of Israel, "The Lord has specifically chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. The Lord has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, ability, and expertise in all kinds of crafts. He is a master craftsman, expert in working with gold, silver, and bronze. He is skilled in engraving and mounting

gemstones and in carving wood. He is a master at every craft. And the Lord has given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach their skills to others. The Lord has given them special skills as engravers, designers, embroiders in blue, purple, and scarlet thread on fine linen cloth, and weavers. They excel as craftsmen and as designers... The Lord has gifted Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other skilled craftsmen with wisdom and ability to perform any task involved in building the sanctuary. Let them construct and furnish the Tabernacle, just as the Lord has commanded.

You know, Bezalel is the first person in the Bible described as being filled with the Spirit of God. This might surprise you. It's not Moses or Noah or some of the famous patriarchs, it's an artist who's talked about in this way. God anointed the countless years that he undoubtedly spent in cultivating his craft and developing his skills. Multifaceted! you can see he worked with cloth. He worked with leather, he worked with wood. He worked with fine metals, gold and silver and bronze. He was a craftsman, jeweler, designer, textile artist, goldsmith, leather worker. The list goes on and out on. He must have been a remarkable person to meet. Such ability. But it wasn't just his natural skills. He was filled with God's Spirit and he used his skills in conjunction with God's Spirit to obey God's purposes. When this happens, the excellence of artistic gifts are yielded in total obedience to God, His Spirit, great things can happen in us and through us that benefit many.

Number 11: Celebration Builds Community.

This is taken from Esther 9: 26-28. So because of Mordecai's letter and because of what they had experienced, the Jews throughout the realm agreed to inaugurate this tradition and to pass it on to their descendants and to all who became Jews. They declared they would never fail to celebrate these two prescribed days at the appointed time each year. These days would be remembered and kept from generation to generation and celebrated by every family throughout the provinces and cities of the empire. This Festival of Purim would never cease to be celebrated among the Jews, nor would the memory of what happened ever die out among their descendants.

You know, this is true. Thousands of years later, two and a half millennial later, Purim is still being celebrated by Jews all around the world. It's on calendars that you can look up, even for those who aren't Jews. Festivals that happen on a regular basis are community events that create a sense of common experience. They give us a common story, a shared history, and this shapes our identity, our culture, and our values. It's a point of societal connectedness. It gives us a sense of belonging to one another. When we do these events together, we strengthen our solidarity as a community.

Celebration is really important. It binds us together. It makes us one. It gives history and a future. It gives identity for the present. Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks did a Ted talk in April 2017, which is one of the most viewed Ted talks of all time. He's talking about these very issues and he mentions this. He says, "Jews have been scattered and dispersed in exile for 2000 years. We never lost our identity. Why? Because at least once a year on the festival of Passover, we told our story and taught it to our children.

And we ate the unleaven bread of affliction and tasted the bitter herbs of slavery. So we never lost our identity. [?].

Here are people for millennia without a homeland. And yet they maintained an identity. He was talking about the feast of Passover. We read about the feast of Purim, there were multiple other feasts that are described in the Bible. God gave instructions to these recently liberated slaves who came out of Egypt and said you're gonna start a new nation. And he spent a lot of time talking about how they're to party, how they're to gather and have a feast, what to eat and what to do and what to talk about. And it's quite incredible, but these are very important aspects. If we're going to be a people, we can only be a people when we learn how to celebrate together and tell our story to one another, remind ourselves what God has done and what we could become.

Number 12: Celebration Clarifies Identity and/or Destiny

Psalm 137:1-6. This is written during the time of the exile in Babylon. An unknown author says this: Beside the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept as we thought of Jerusalem. We put away our harps, hanging them on the branches of poplar trees. For our captors demanded a song from us. Our tormentors insisted on a joyful hymn: "Sing us one of those songs of Jerusalem!" But how can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a pagan land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget how to play the harp. May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth if I fail to remember you, if I don't make Jerusalem my greatest joy.

Here's an artist who is grieving. When we think of celebration, we're not just thinking of happy, clappy, go lucky. You know, festivities. The whole sphere of Celebration helps us experience the whole range of human emotion and builds a sense of community together. Songs create deep synaptic pathways in our mind, in our brain, that just help us forge a sense of identity. Singing together creates a sense of shared identity, shared destiny. We belong.

So when you are in a rough place like they were, the enemies were urging them to sing that songs of happier days in a sense of mockery. But he remembered that he would sing songs of deepest love for Jerusalem, for who they were and where they'd come from and where one day they would be going again. And that's, that is what this sphere is supposed to be about. It's supposed to help us live and relive the story of God in arts, as a people over and over again, so that we can achieve his purposes and we can make it through the rough times because better times lie ahead.

Number 13: Blessings and Cultural Honor Protocols.

Matthew 26: 7-13. While he was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume and poured it over his head. The disciples were indignant when they saw this. "What a waste!" they said. "It could have been sold for a high price the money given to the poor."

But Jesus, aware of this, replied, "Why criticize this woman for doing such a good thing to me? You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me. She has poured this perfume on me to prepare my body for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the good news is preached throughout the world, the woman's deed will be remembered and discussed."

You know, it's, It's worth spending money on celebration. Sometimes we can reduce ourselves to very functional, pragmatic living and just do what's absolutely necessary. If you do on only that which is necessary, life becomes very flat. It's becomes a blend of different shades of black and white and grays. A celebration adds the color. It's not essential, but it's sure enriches everything that we experience. This woman understood this. It was extravagant. It was over the top. It was in some ways unnecessary, but Jesus saw her heart and honored her. He knew that as an artist, she was doing what was so important. She was doing the right, appropriate, cultural honor. And he defended her. It wasn't a waste of time. It wasn't a waste of money. It wasn't a waste of effort. It was pleasing to God. Artists do things that - you go like, oh, that doesn't put food on the table. No, but it brings joy to the heart insight to the spirit and courage to the soul. And those things are as important as enough calories to keep going through the day. So art is very important.

Every culture uses arts in a way to pay tribute and honor those who are praiseworthy. Our cultural icons are celebrated it through protocols of celebration. And they, when we do that well, we enforce our cultural values. Now if our cultural values are biblical, that's a great thing. But when they align with God's character in his ways, great, good is achieved through these protocols.

We elevate certain ones as heroes and role models and put them as a paradigm, say, this is what you should aspire to be like. That is helpful. That points the new generation, the emerging generation towards what real significance, what real importance or real value is all about. So we need to honor these cultural protocols.

Number 14: Celebration Creates Cultural Heroes and Role Models.

Genesis 10: 8 - 9. Kush was also the ancestor of Nimrod who was the first heroic warrior on earth. Since he was the greatest hunter in the world, his name became proverbial. People would say, this man is like Nimrod. The greatest hunter in the world.

Highlighting individuals as heroes is a means of discipleship. When we do that in cultures, we're telling people, be like that! That person exhibits something that is praiseworthy, something you should aspire to. This sets an aspirational goal before young men and women who are from that emerging generation and inspires them to pursue the accomplishments of those who've gone before, of those role models. It

encourages them to exercise discipline and work hard and do the stuff necessary to excel.

Sports heroes, like Nimrod, who, you know, excelled in the sport of hunting and cultural icons like musicians or actors and those in the entertainment industry, become a stimulus for disciplined skill development. If you want to be really good, if you want to win this trophy, if you want to get an Oscar, if you want to be recognized as top in this class, you're gonna have to work at it. And so having the right heroes and who exhibit the right character and values is so important in the society. And where you do celebration right, we help determine what those storylines are so that people are aiming for the right goals.

Number 15: Celebration Promotes True Love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 says this: love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable and it keeps no record of being wrong. It does not rejoice about injustice, but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up. Love, never loses faith. It is always hopeful and endures through every circumstance.

Celebration when rightly done promotes true love. Distorted celebrations pervert love, and lead people down wrong pathways that will end up destroying their lives.

Celebration is really important. It can give life or it can bring death. It can teach about true love or present a facade of a counterfeit love. Let's do it the right way.

Number 16: Celebration Strengthens Truth.

Isaiah 42:10 -12, sing a new song to the Lord. Sing his praises from the ends of the earth. Sing all you who sail the seas, all you who live in distant coastlands, join in the chorus, you desert towns. Let the villages of Kedar rejoice. Let the people of Sela sing for joy; Shout praises. Shout praises from the mountaintops. Let the whole world glorify the Lord. Let it sing his praises.

As you read through this passage, you see it has people on the seas, on the coastlands on islands, in the mainland in villages and cities on mountain tops and valleys.

Everyone is invited to participate in this song.

Truth is best grasped, best understood, best embraced in story form. When truth is conveyed through song, poetry, novels, theatrical performances, movies, literature, paintings, sculpture. It is richer than mere propositional abstract declarations of truth.

Now, if I were to tell you that if you're going to defeat the enemy, you need to cultivate friendship. You need to endure through hardship. You need to be willing to make any sacrifice, to help someone else to serve someone else. You have to be faithful and true and constant and not give up hope when all circumstances seem to be despairing.

Now, what I just said is true, but if you were to try to write this down without pausing and rewinding, it'd be difficult for you to do that. But if I told you, just watch the Lord of The Rings. That's a movie that exhibits those principles. Once you see the movie once

or twice, you don't have to copy my list. You can reflect on the story and draw your own principles, your own insights. That's why story is so powerful. And when it's put to song or some visual form or audio form, and it's even more so because it lands in our hearts and stays with us and it is absolutely transformative. So consider this, make the join in the song, tell the story, participate in celebration. Let the world know God has done a wonderful thing.

Number 17: Celebration Reinforces Hope.

Psalm 146: 5 it says, **But joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper, whose hope is in the Lord of their God.**

When we understand God's purposes for the arts, we understand that He - that the Arts are to be used to reinforce hope in our lives. Movies inspire, songs strengthen resolve, stories point the way. True art helps us see beyond our day-to-day concerns and worries and look to the future beyond our present circumstances to what might be. And this gives us hope.

This is so important for us. We always need to have a goal that is greater than ourselves that we're running towards. And the great stories, the compelling stories of all time point to that great picture in the future that aspiring happily ever after or walking into the sunset, that the kingdom of God coming in its fullness, whatever that metaphor, whatever the idiom.

And that gives us hope to keep fighting the good fight, to keep persevering in the midst of adversity, to keep doing the things that we need to do every day to see that hope realized.

If you see a movie like the Lord of the Rings, you realize it was very hard going. But because they had a dream that one day they would return to the shire, to their homeland, and the evil would be conquered and the beauty would be restored. They endured great sacrifice and difficulty. If we're gonna become culture changers, if we're gonna transform our society, it's gonna take a lot of constant day in, day out sacrifice. Hope inspired by the arts keeps us going.

Number 18: Celebration Helps Us Cope with Sorrow.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-4. **A good reputation is more valuable than costly perfume and the day you die is better than the day you are born. Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties. After all everyone dies. So the living should take this to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter for sadness has a refining influence on us. A wise person thinks a lot about death while a fool thinks only about having a good time.**

Uh, this is an insightful reflection on celebration. It's the day you die is better than the day you were born. You see when you're born, you don't know what life is gonna be like. You don't know if the person that beautiful little child is going end up his life in a praiseworthy model or horrific criminal. We all have great hopes and anticipation. But at the time of death, we can look back on our life that is well-lived. We can truly celebrate. And at funerals you think about what is life really about? How did they live their life? Was it well spent? How should I live my life? Am I doing the right thing? See celebration is not just about throwing a party. It's about coming together as a community in each and every circumstance of life from birth to death and reflecting on what is really valuable in life. Funerals are an important time of reflection. Considering the value of life, the purpose of life, the direction of my life, of your life.

We create events around someone's passing from life to death. We don't just go on as normal. We pause. We have a vigil. We gather, we remember we talk. We tell stories. It's done in different ways in different societies, but it's a time that requires reflection, of gathering of family and friends and to consider what life is about. This is valuable exercise. We grieve when there's war and hundreds die, and there's no time to do that. And the bodies are just put into a mass grave to make sure that illness, disease is not spread among those who remain after the battle is over. Each life is significant and we are to think about the value of life and celebration, coming together in this way enables us to do that. Music and literary reflections are often used at the times of a person's Memorial service to bring comfort and perspective on life, strengthening the community of mourners and their resolve to live their lives well.

Number 19: Celebration - A Catalyst for Good or Corrupted for Evil?

Numbers 21:8- 9. Then the Lord told him that's Moses, who was facing a difficult situation because this incredible plague of this illness had swept through the people. He said this, **make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who are bitten will live if they simply look at it.** So Moses made a snake out of bronze and attached it to a pole. Then anyone who was bitten by a snake would look at this bronze snake and be healed.

Now, this is a fascinating story. There was no healing properties in the bronze snake itself. Healing happened when people obeyed God in faith. God said if you'll look at it and you'll be made well, they did that in obedience to God and they were indeed healed. So this act of celebration, it took time from the time the Lord gave him this instruction. He would've given instruction, maybe Bezalel or Oholiab or one of the artists would've assist him in fashioning this bronze snake, making this image and then putting it up on this pole. It was a thing of blessing and redemption and healing in that generation.

But time went on and if you read in **2 Kings 18:4**, you see that many generations later, this bronze snake had been kept and was being used in inappropriate ways. It had actually become an object of idolatry. So different from the original purpose of being a source of blessing. Because they were looking at the artistry rather than the purpose of the artistry, the faith that it inspired and the focus on God and trust in God and returning to his ways. So we see that this story was used well in Moses's time and later generations, it was used incorrectly, but Jesus picks up this theme again when he's talking to Nicodemus. We all probably can say **John 3:16 for God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son. Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.** Do you know what the two verses that are just before that? **Verses 14 and 15**, because it begins with, "for God", there's a connector. What happened just before is what gives the foundation for that very famous verse that we often cite. So **John 3:14 and 15**, Jesus is talking about the same snake. There was a blessing at one time and used in idolatry as another time. **As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the son of man must be lifted up so that everyone who**

believes in him will have eternal life. So it became once again a paradigm of virtue, of ultimate redemption, because Jesus would be lifted up on a pole. This was a metaphor for him dying on the cross. And if we looked to him with faith in our hearts, just like they looked at the snake with faith in their hearts in Moses' generation, we would be safe as they were healed. And so once again, God comes to restore this artistic expression, which was well used, then misused and then redeemed in its use to point us toward God's ways of redemption.

Number 20: Use and Abuse of the Arts.

2 Timothy 3:4 says that Time will come when people will love pleasure rather than God.

Now the arts are pleasurable. When done well, they are delightful. They're attractive, they're inspiring. They are engaging. But there's always a danger of worshiping the gift and forgetting about the giver. So we need to be careful that we do not become lovers of pleasure.

We should not absolutize pleasure, which is called hedonism, making that the ultimate goal. It's destructive to the individual and to society. If pleasure is the goal, we are on a dangerous ground, but when pleasure is the fruit of our pursuit of a loving God and His good and kind and righteous purposes in our lives, then we are on solid ground. Let's keep pleasure as the fruit and keep God as the goal.

SECTION INTRODUCTION

This next section is about the five senses in God's design. As we're gonna look at 11 different passages, the first one, one will be introductory giving an overview of the concept and the other ten paired in five sets of two, talking about each one of the five senses, taste, touch, smell, sound, and sight. You see God designed us for relationship, for relationship with himself. And with one another. He wanted us to live in a loving relational context. He wanted us to live in community, and when we understand God's purposes and see how he designed us, these senses are tools that enable us to have community. They're designed to increase relationship. And so, it gives meaning for how God made us and why we have these particular faculties. And this only underscores the importance of celebration, which perhaps more than any other of the spheres really uses the five senses to the maximum to achieve the power of the storytelling, the dramatic narrative that's often communicated through this sphere of celebration.

Number 21: Affirmation of Creation and Community.

1 John 1:1-4 says this, We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, talking about Jesus, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own. He is the word of life. This one whose life itself was revealed to us. And we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. Just love it. Doesn't say he's the one who has eternal life. He is eternal life. He was with the father and then he was revealed to us. We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have

fellowship with us and our fellowship, our community, our belonging to one another is with the father and with his son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share in our joy.

You know, this is, is a pivotal hinge passage that informs all of our thinking about the sphere of celebration. This is really the overarching conclusion of the purpose. This could have been the culminating passage for the last section on the purpose of celebration, but it's also the introduction to this section about how we engage with the five senses, how they contribute to God's design. That we as human beings live in right loving relationships in community with God and with one another. When reality is truly experienced, when we touch God, when we see God, when we hear God - as the apostles did, as John writes, and it is then shared, it is done in such a way that others may enter into and participate and be a part of that same community and share in the joy. This is what this is all about. We pass on our experiences to others. We convey what God has done in our lives. So they too can participate in the community of God. The kingdom of God, the purposes of God are advanced on planet earth.

Number 22: Taste: An Enjoyable Gift.

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26. So I decided there was nothing better than to enjoy food and drink and to find satisfaction in work. Then I realized that these pleasures are from the hand of God, for who can eat or enjoy anything. Apart from him. God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to those who please him.

We've all enjoyed a good meal. Taste is absolutely an incredible gift from God. We didn't have to have taste buds in our mouth. It wasn't necessary. We could have eaten with flavorless. And if we didn't know what flavor was, we wouldn't know what we were missing. What a delight that we have flavors. Why does God do this? This is the first of the five senses we're gonna be looking at. And it's the most intimate sense your taste happens inside of you. Now you can stick out your tongue and put a little bit of sugar on it, or a little bit of salt, but most of the time, our tongue is well inside of our mouth, as we're chewing our food, right? It's something very private. If I chew my food, I say, oh, this tastes so good. I don't take it out and offer it to you and say, would you like to have some of this? You go, "no, thank you. If you've already chewed it". You chew another portion of that same food that's presented on the table and you're not chewing the exact same food that I am, but it's a liking kind and forms a bond. You go, oh yeah, this is so good. This is the best, whatever, that I've ever had. It's intimate. It's internal. It happens inside of us. And yet it creates a profound sense of belonging.

You know, as I travel the world and visit our missionary friends in different places, I often ask, well, what do you like about this place? And they'll talk to you about things and what do you miss about home? And they'll talk about things. Invariably, one of the first things someone says about what they miss of all is they'll mention a certain kind of food and I'm aware of that. So I often travel with food in my suitcase, food from the homelands of the people that I'm gonna be visiting to give them a little bit of that flavor, or when the people from other nations in my home, I prepare food from their Homeland

to make them feel welcome. These are important things to be doing. It's something special.

You know, there are special flavors that you associate with the good memories of your childhood. Things that your mom made things that your grandma made, things that are neighbor or your favorite aunt made things that were just, uh, you go like, oh, that was so good. And that delightful memory is impregnated into your mind in association with that food. It gives you a sense of belonging. And we talk about food as being Korean or Mexican or Thai or Chinese. And what are those? That's the experience of a culture, of a people. And this gives a sense of identity.

We all eat food. We all use spices, but the way they're combined gives us uniqueness. And so taste shapes our unique cultural communities; that gives us a sense of belonging. And that is really important. We need to cultivate the culinary arts.

Number 23: Taste: (Culinary Excellence Shows Honor)

Once again, we look at taste a second time. Culinary excellence shows honor. ¹ Samuel 9:22-24. Then Samuel brought Saul in his servant into the hall and place them at the head of the table, honoring them above the 30 special guests, Samuel instructed the cook to bring, Saul the finest cut of meat. The piece that had been set aside for the guest of honor. So the cook brought in the meat and placed it before Saul. Go ahead and eat it. Samuel said it, I was saving it for you even before I invited these others. So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

Wow. In every culture, there's a special food that you bring out when there are special guests. This is what was happening when Saul was first met with Samuel. And as shortly after he was anointed to be king. And these statements of favorite foods or best foods or honoring foods, are cultural ways of celebrating people who are to be respected. They build, help us build relationships. Now, some places in the world where I've traveled, I hope I would not be so honored because if you're really, really honored, you get to, to eat the lamb head or the fish eyes or the palm of the gorilla. So I would prefer to not be quite so honored from my cultural perspective. But you know, as I've traveled, I've learned to eat things that I might not relish in my own culture, but it's really important to say thank you and eat with joy with a smile. Even though it's a have to work at that smile, because people are trying to give you their best.

Food, taste, honor, relationship. They're all connected. Think about this. We build relationships around food. [Leonard Sweet has written a great book From Tablet to Table](#). The by-line is Where community is found, an identity is formed. The idea of this is that we might have concepts of principles and truths that are on the tablet. You know, the commands of God, but they really only take place in our lives when they start becoming real around a table, as we eat and celebrate with family and friends. That's where life really happens. Would you consider using taste and your gift of your own culinary arts to advance the kingdom of God? Have a special meal at your home. Invite

your neighbors, share a meal, invite someone who's homeless. Someone who you don't know so well. Show hospitality. Allow taste to be a bridge to declare "I care for you" and display the relational realities of the kingdom of God.

Number 24, Touch. (Strengthens Relationship)

This is the second of the five senses the move. We'll be looking at two passages on touch. This one is how touch Strengthens Relationship. It comes from [1 Samuel 18:4](#), [Jonathan sealed a pact that he made by with David by taking off his robe and giving it to David together with his tunic sword, bow and belt](#).

I wonder what that looked like. There's not a lot of details in scripture, but I'm sure he just didn't throw these down at David feet and Say, take them. They're yours. He probably handed it to David touched him. They exchanged something that was an intimate gift giving time.

I sometimes ponder on [Genesis 3](#) after Adam and Eve sin. This says that God to, um, models, what it was necessary to restore them from sin and sacrifices an animal and, and takes the skins and prepares clothes. This must have taken some time. They were watching him. You don't just kill an animal and, and in an instant have clothes. And this process would've been intimate and compelling it, and I would've fashioned it just the right size for him and for her. And, and then it says this amazing thing. And he clothed them before they left the garden. God was like at the Butler, helping them get dressed, um, before they left the garden. Can you imagine the way he touched them? The way he would've done this with tenderness and love and kindness? I imagine there were lots of tears shared, shed that day, as they realized what they'd given through their rebellious sin.

Touch is important. We can touch in right ways and we can touch in wrong ways. Our different cultures have different ideas about touch and what's appropriate. And what's inappropriate. As I've traveled into over 200 nations of the earth, I've learned a lot of things of what to do and what not to do. Where I grew up in south America, we are very affectionate people among, Latin Americans. And depending on the country you're in, when you'll get introduced to someone new, you will extend your hand and, and probably, uh, touch your cheek with their cheek and kind of blow a kiss into the air, both on the right side and then on the left side. And sometimes you do on two sides and other countries you just do once. And in some countries, you do it with both men and women together, or sometimes you do it just with the genders are opposite. It varies from place to place. And if you know the right way to touch then people know, oh, he knows my culture

And in North America, you tend to shake hands and very close; in Europe, you shake hands a little further away. And in Asia touches too, too intimate. If you just meet someone, so you don't touch it just bow. Which is the right way? That's not the correct quite they're all right within their culture. They're all exhibiting different forms of values of one of honor and respect or one of intimacy and caring and touch, the way you touch, tells the other what part of the world you're from. See again, the way you touch,

what is considered appropriate - tells you something about the community you're from that establishes your identity, your cultural values. We need to touch in ways that are appropriate and avoid inappropriate touch.

Number 25: (Touch displays True Love)

Our second passage on touch. And this is how touch displays true love Luke 7:36-47. And we are just gonna look at some selections. One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him. When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell at his feet and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them. Jesus turned to the woman and said to Simon, look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't... But she has ... and then again, you didn't, but she has. And then again, you neglected...but she has... you can fill in the details by reading the whole scripture. I tell you her sins though they are many have been forgiven. So she has so much love, But a person who is forgiven little Shows, only little love,

Touch, genuine touch, Appropriate touch, compelling touch is a sign of true love. She has. He didn't. Simon didn't wash his feet, didn't anoint his head, didn't care for him, but she had. True touch is something to be highly valued and celebrated.

Number 26: Smell: (Identity and Connections)

This is the first of two passages on the, the sense of smell. And this one is about Identity and Connections. Genesis 27:26-27. Then Isaac said to Jacob, please come a little closer and kiss me my son. So Jacob went over and kissed him. And when Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he was finally convinced and he blessed his son. He said, ah, the smell of, my son is like the smell of the outdoors, which the Lord has blessed.

You see Isaac was old. He was almost blind. And he couldn't tell his one son from the other son. He couldn't tell Esau from Jacob. And Jacob was tricking his father with his mother's home into getting a blessing that Esau should have had. And so mom knew that dad wouldn't see very well that sense of the five senses wasn't functioning. So she made sure that that Jacob was clothed with Esau's clothing because he smelled different. And so Isaac thought that when he smelled Esau's clothing on Jacob, that he was blessing Esau. Aromas are powerful.

We often say that when we tell the stories of romance that it was love at first sight. Actually science tells us that it was probably love at first smell. But that doesn't sound nearly as romantic. But the aromas often that are very subtle that we pick up- even we can't even, and our brain doesn't even register that we're making a judgment or a decision, but they tell us, I like this person. I don't like this person- right from the very beginning. And think about it. Maybe you had a really wonderful grandma. Now not

everyone does, but more often than not, Grandma's house is a place of comfort and delight. You get a lot more candies at grandma's house right now than you did for mom and dad. You got a little more spoiled and a little more pampered at grandma house. And there's a place of acceptance. You are always, always welcome at grandma's house. At least that's the hope for desire

And grandma's house probably has some aromas associated with it. I remember my grandma's house, she always had African violets and she canned fruit and she, there were aromas about that house that I later in life when I smelled something like that, for some reason, I thought "I like this place" and I wouldn't think why do I like this place? And I pause and consider it her life. Ah, that was like, grandma's home cooking was like the smell in grandma's living room. That was like the perfume that grandma used and that, that delightful association between the aroma and a place of beauty and security of relational comfort made me open in that new context. So we need to understand the, the power of this idea.

We had some friends from Argentina who went to an arts festival in Scotland and they performed a theatrical piece and they got rave reviews. And one of the things that helped this, enabled this, to happen is because they understood the power of the five senses. Instead of just appearing on stage. At the beginning of the drama, the actors all in attire would be, would do the job of being ushers. And as they welcome people in, they would give a rose to the women and they would give a piece, some food that was typical of Argentina to everyone. And so they would smell the flower and they would enjoy the aromas of the Argentine culinary arts. And even before the play started, this doesn't usually happen in the theater. There was a winsomeness, an attraction. Ah, that was great. They knew how to use all of the senses in their artistry.

So when they used all these five senses, they won awards. They won accolades because they wisely used all the gifts that God has given us to build relationship, to bring beauty, to bring delight into our lives.

Number 27: (Smell: Triggers Opposing Reactions)

This is the second passage on Smell that we want to look at. And we recognize that almost sometimes Trigger Opposing Reactions, 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 Now God use us Paul writes to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere. Like a sweet perfume. Our lives are Christ like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved than by those who are perishing to those who are perishing we are a dreadful smell of death and doom, but to those who are being saved, we are a life giving perfume.

The same aroma can produce different reactions in different people. Flowers for example. A rose is known for as beautiful aroma, and it is! Unless you have hay fever or some kind of allergy. And then that aroma, instead of being a pleasure is painful. We need to understand that using of these gifts are shaped by how the recipients receive

them. And so we need to tailor all of our celebration, all of our use of, of the different senses in a way that advances the purposes of God.

Number 28: (Sound: Carries Cultural Stories)

The first passage on sound. Sound: Carries Cultural Stories. Judges 5:11 says this, Listen to the village musicians gathered at the watering holes. They recount the righteous victories of the Lord and the victories of his villagers in Israel, then the people of the Lord marched down to the city gates.

Wow, what a great passage. Sound, What we hear, impacts us. It changes us. It creates memories that are so important. Now, I, I love music of every kind of classical music, cultural music of various forms, all kinds of contemporary music. Perhaps you've heard this to...

At this point, you could probably keep humming that tune. And you may or may not know that that is the beginning of the choral in the final movement of Beethoven's ninth symphony. It's a masterful piece. It's been played thousands of times in hundreds of stages in probably most every country on earth. And it's just absolutely exquisite. I've had the privilege of seeing it live multiple times. I listen to it on my electronic devices, my digital tools and it's, it is absolutely beautiful. And at times I find myself after having just experienced that, I talked with someone who's also done that, and they've not been, they went out of same concert at the same time I was, but the fact that I know Beethoven's ninth and listened to it live and they, at some point know, Beethoven's ninth and listened it at some other place, at some other time in their life, gives us an immediate opportunity to connect with one another. Music links us together. I don't have to be at the same theater at the same time or the same concert or the same experience, or the fact that, you know this song and great songs live beyond a moment live beyond space and time. They, they expand throughout the world and they are, are connectors for us.

Another piece of classical music that I really love is Handel's Messiah. I've seen it live in concerts in various countries and multiple continents, and I never get tired of it. It's such a more wonderful thing to experience with others or to talk about with others who experienced it at some other place. When you get to the Hallelujah chorus, it's absolutely wonderful as you hear those first sounds being played -to rise to your feet and people all over the world have a custom of rising to their feet. It's a point of unity. This was happened because the king who heard it the first time, this was played by Handel in, in England, he rose to his feet. And as a tradition, we all do that. And so the common music and a common action, millions of people have done the exact same thing at the exact same moment of this musical piece, different generations, different cultures in different venues at different times. And it's a unifier. It gives us something common. Celebration. Song. Sound unifies us.

Number 29: (Sound: Declares Redemptive Hopes)

This is our second passage on Sound and it declares redemptive hopes. Psalm 150:1-6. Praise the Lord, praise God in his sanctuary, praise him in his mighty heaven. Praise him for his mighty works. Praise his unequal greatness, praise him with a blast of the Rams horn praise him with a lyer and heart. Praise him with a tambourine and dancing, praising with strings and flus, praising with a clash of symbols, praising with loud, clangng symbols, let everything that has breath seem praises to the Lord. Praise the Lord.

You can see that invitation not only to have the right focus in our worship and our music making in our production of sound, but an invitation for all to be involved. All these different instruments and not just instruments, but voices and dancing. And these expressions are as a place where diversity of skills come together with a unity of purpose to declare the redemptive hopes that we have because our God is so good. And he deserves our praise.

Number 30: (Sight: Dramatic Arts In the Scriptures)

we introduced the concept of sight, the fifth and final of our five senses. And remember as we began, we talked about taste that happens in us. Touch happens on the edge of us, where my fingers or my hand touches your fingers, your hand or your shoulder or whatever. There's just something that touch. Smell happens close by. You can smell something, a ladies perfume when you're within a few feet of her. But this, this gift of sight lets us look across space and see distant galaxies.

Each of these senses take us progressively towards more and more of God's world to embrace a greater community of being connected in a larger and larger universe. And so sight is very powerful and we see it is often used in the scriptures with dramatic arts, where, where things are visualized. One example of many is 2 Samuel 14. And I'm gonna read some selections from verse one to 11. Joab sent for a woman from Tekoa who had a reputation for great wisdom. Then Joab told her what to say. When the woman from Tekoa approached the king, that's David, she bowed with her face to the ground in deep respect and cried out oh, king help me. What is the trouble? The king asked. Alas I am a widow. She replied, my husband is dead. My two sons had a fight out in the field. And so since no one was there to stop it, one of them was killed. Now the rest of the family want to extinguish the only coal I have left. Leave it to me, the king told her, go home, not a hair on your son's head will be just to her.

So she tells the story. It's a fictional narrative to try to show the importance of extending mercy and doing the right thing.

There's power in drama. There's power in theater, there's power in the visual arts and movie making and films. Hearing a story well told is compelling. Seeing it portrayed on a big screen can be even more captivating. Story is powerful. You know, if you see it,

you believe it. And it's compelling and it gives great connectivity. You feel like you were there. When you see something on the news or you experience something of entertainment at a show, you feel like you are part of that story and you, you connect powerfully to it. That's why about some 80% of scriptures are story, they are dialogue, they're narrative, that help in a picture to help you see what God has done and who he is like.

Number 31: (Sight: Visual Arts and the Scriptures)

...is our second passage on Sight. The final of the five senses. We want to talk about the Visual arts and the scriptures. And we're gonna talk about this from Ezekiel 37:1-10. Here are some selections. The Lord took hold of me. Ezekiel said, and I was carried away by the spirit of the Lord to a valley, filled with bones. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. Then he asked me, son, man, can these bones become living people again? Oh, so the Lord, I replied. You alone know the answer to that. Then he said to me, speak a prophetic message to these bones of say my bones, listen to the word of Lord. So I spoke the message as He commanded me and breath, came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet. A great army.

Wow. You need to read the whole passage. This is such a visually engaging story. Bones, dry, lifeless coming together are forming into reasonably shaped skeletons, then rising to their feet and having flesh attached to them. And then finally, breath of life. Wow. God is the God can do absolutely the most impossible things, not just resurrecting a body that is dead a few hours or a few days, but taking dried out, sun washed bones and making people alive again.

Incredible. Visual arts are powerful. They inspire us. They give us direction. And you know, we experience this in every dimension of our life. When you go to a football stadium or a soccer stadium, and your team is playing an opposing team. And maybe your team wears yellow jerseys and your, the other team wears red jerseys. You're wearing, of course the jersey of your team. You go into the stadium and you look around and you see are the yellow jerseys and where are the red jerseys? And you sit accordingly. And you sit with a bunch of people that you didn't know before, but when your team scores a goal and the people wearing the same color of jerseys that you have on all jump up and rejoice - you're, high-fiving everyone. They become your lifelong friends. You treat them like you've always known them. Why? You, you belong to them. They're your community because they're wearing the same color of shirt, the same color of jersey as you are. Visual signage speaks to us.

Friends when we see things as we ought to see, we envision what God purposes for us. And so we need to learn how to use the visual arts to advance the kingdom of God. And so grateful for all those people of faith who are using their awareness of taste and touch and smell, and sound and sight to advance the kingdom of God.

SECTION INTRODUCTION

This next section is about the prophet artist and will contain nine different passages. Interestingly the Bible, although it has several lists of gifts, it never any one of them has the gift of the artist. However, if you look at the scriptures a little more carefully, the prophets and their ministries often associated with the artistic gift. And I think it's in part because the prophet is like a social commentator. He points out what is amiss in society and calls for change. Very often the artist has a similar passion, using their art to address the ills of their society, whether it's sculpture or painting or literature or theater or, photography or film, it's movies. They're communicating points of passion, highlighting areas of injustice and calling people back to what they deemed is correct. Of course, in the scriptures, these prophets/artists are hearing from God and speaking the word of God, to the people of Israel and to the surrounding nations.

Number 32: The Inner Life of the Prophet Artist.

We read from **Habakkuk 1:1**. This is the message that the prophet Habakkuk received in the vision.

Now we can read in **1 Samuel 9:9**, this interesting commentary. The author, who's obviously compiling this book generations after the original events says **in those days, if people wanted a message from God, they would say, let's go and ask the Seer for the prophets used to be called Seers**. Now the Seer, **the Hebrew word is raha?** Is different from the prophet, which is n---, uh, and it literally means one who sees one who envisions.

And what we have at the outset of the book of Habakkuk is that he has a vision. He has a visual reception. He sees something in his spirit and his mind's eyes in some way. It is not an abstract conceptual idea, but he has a vision. And that is what informs the prophetic message. And that vision is very artistic.

Number 33: Use of the Dramatic Arts.

I'm gonna read some selections from **1 Kings 11:29-39**. One day as Jereboam was leaving Jerusalem. The prophet, A--- from Shiloh met him along the way. Ahijah was wearing a new cloak. The two of them were alone in the field and A--- took hold of cloak he was wearing and tore into 12 pieces. That he said to Gerald, take 10 of these pieces for, this is what the Lord, the God of Israel says. I'm about to tear the kingdom from the head of Solomon. And I'll give you 10 tribes to you, and I'll place you on the throne of Israel. And you'll rule over all that your heart desires because of Solomon's sin, I will punish the descendants of David though, not forever.

This prophet got the attention of the soon to be king of Israel, through the use of drama, through the theatrical representation of the message that God had given him. As we look through the scriptures, this is the first of many times, at least 30 instances in which the prophets used theater to convey the idea. They, it's throughout Kings and Chronicles and Isaiah, Jeremiah, major prophets, again and again. Jeremiah is a fan of doing this. And chapter 13, he buries a linen cloth by a river bank and later digs it up.

And that, that action, that dramatized action becomes the foundation for a prophetic word.

In [Jeremiah 16](#) in his personal life became a theater. He didn't get married. He didn't have children that becomes a theme for prophetic message. In [Jeremiah 18](#) he goes to a Potter's house. So he looks at how pots are made, and that becomes a theme for a message. In [Jeremiah 19](#), he buys a clay jar and he breaks this clay jar shatters it into a thousand pieces with great drama, with great flare. And that becomes the foundation for another message. And on and on and on, if you keep going with Jeremiah and others, but you get the idea. These guys, not only had a word, but they thought, how do I present it? And they chose visual artistic, dramatic theatrical means to communicate the word of God and then build a conceptual understanding around that.

Number 34: Use of the Literary Arts.

We're gonna read [Lamentations 1:1](#). Jerusalem, once so full of people is now deserted. She was what's great among the nations. Now sit alone like a widow. Once the queen of all the earth, she's now a slave.

Now prophetic literature as a whole is always more elaborate, takes a little more artistry, a little more skill than normal prose. That's true in most languages, certainly true in Hebrew. Now Hebrew poetry is not like English. It's not about rhythm and rhyme. Poetry is about parallelism. Having two ideas match each other, using different words, synonymous phrases to add enriched meanings. This is so wise of God to choose a people who spoke Hebrew and their literary form of poetry, because it's very easily to translate without losing the sense of the poetry. You can't do that from English into other languages, but it does work from Hebrew. So this poetry requires a literary excellence. You don't just, it's not just a flow of consciousness. You think, and then you say, how can I make that better? How can I enrich that? And another statement and how you build on that. And it's a conceptual artistry that is exquisite. And most of our Bibles in English, we are able to see that because the way that text is laid out is different. Instead of being in paragraphs they're in, in stanzas. And this helps us see there's something special. This literature is more, refined, more artistic.

So Jeremiah, like the other prophets was not only a great artist and used poetry in his proclamations, but we also know that he was according to the [2 Chronicles 35:25](#), the author of Lamentations. And he did something more than just do poetry. Lamentations is a quadruple acrostic. What does that mean? And acrostic is a poetry where every line begins with a different letter of the alphabet. In Hebrew there are 22 letters. And so chapter one, chapter two and chapter four each have 22 verses, each verse begins like their equivalent of the ABCDs [alphabet GI do the Hebrew 22 letters](#). And so it makes it really easy for people to memorize, and remember, because each point begins with a different letter. Chapter three has 66 verses because there are three A's, three B's, three C's, three D's all the way down. Now that takes a lot of creativity and thoughtfulness to write something like that in the best of circumstances.

But when he wrote Lamentations, it was the worst of circumstances. It was time of great national tragedy, the most horrific destruction; the weeping and the sorrow the depth of the emotion was so intense. And yet he was able to maintain the discipline of an artist and channel the extreme emotions that he had, the unimaginable pain into this extraordinary literary discipline and keep it ordered by these letters. You can see the self control of the Spirit of God in the midst of the human anguish. What an amazing artistry, what great skill. This is only achieved through years and years of honing this ability.

Number 35: (Use of the Musical Arts)

...the prophet artist Use the Musical Arts. And **2 Kings 3:15**, we read, Elisha speaking.
...Now bring me someone who can play the harp. And while the harp was being played, the power of the Lord came upon Elisha.

Wow. We think of the times when David played the harp before Saul, it by ministry to him. And music released or created a platform for the prophetic gift, for one to step out of their current situations and it will reflect on the character nature of the ways of God.

I remember a time at our conference in Sweden that we had present some renowned classical musicians. They performed in many orchestras around the world and one of them in particular, it was a quartet, was an oboist, probably one of the top five oboist in the world. And they played incredible music. And a couple times, they, they jammed. Not a jazz session, this was a classical music jamming and it was extraordinary. This oboist would walk through the crowd and play his oboe over people. And they would be healed. The Spirit of God would evidence, words of prophecy would come. And what was true back in Elisha's day is still true today. The artist prophets using the music and the Word of Lord, go hand in hand, if we'll hone those skills in a way that pleases God.

Number 36: The Whole Church as Artists.

Ephesians 3:10 says God's purpose in all of this, in this proclamation of the gospel. **And the extension of the kingdom of God was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety, to all the unseen rulers and authority in the heavenly places.**

As the people of God we're called to display his wisdom, to visually portray, to put on a show, to demonstrate in a tangible concrete way. The amplified Bible **says so now through the church, the multifaceted wisdom of God in all of its countless aspects might now be made, known, revealing the mystery to the angelic rulers and authorities in heavenly places.**

We have the incredible as the body of, to display God's wisdom. How amazing that he saved us. And this is a message that needs to be understood by all on earth and all in heavenly places. Let's be a, let's be a thetic presentation of God's good purposes.

NOTE: There is not a video for: "The next two passages are about how you finance the prophet artists. This is really important."

Number 37: (Individual Financing of the Arts)

Passage 37 is the Individual Financing of the Arts. 2 Kings 4:8-11. One day Elisha went to the town of Shunem. A wealthy woman lived there and she urged him to come to her home for meal. After that, whenever he passed that way, he would stop there for something to eat.

She said to her husband, "I'm sure this man who stops in from time to time is a holy man of God. Let's build a small room for him on the roof and furnish it with a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp. Then he will have a place to stay whenever he comes by."

One day, Elisha returned to Shunem.

And there was this prophet's chamber that had been built. And throughout history, the private benefactors have been needed to support the prophet artists. They are the ones who, who champion and undergird, and facilitate the work of the ministry of these remarkable people.

Number 38: (Corporate Financing of the Arts)

We continue with the theme of financing the prophet artists, this time, the Corporate Financing of the Arts. 1 Chronicles 25:1-8. David and the army commanders then appointed men from the family of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun to proclaim God's messages to the accompaniment of lyres, harps and cymbals... All these men were under the direction of their fathers as they made music at the house of the Lord. Their responsibilities, including the playing of cymbals, harps, and lyres at the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman reported directly to the king. They and their families were all trained in making music before the Lord. And each of them - 288 in all — was an accomplished musician. The musicians who were appointed to their term of service by means of sacred lots, without regard to whether they were young or old teacher or student.

Wow, there were 288 musicians on the payroll of the government, called to make music and worship God. Public support is often needed to support the prophet artists. And this is a remarkable example of that in the scriptures.

Number 39: Repetitive Events Platforming the Arts.

This is from Nahum 1:15, Celebrate your festivals O people of Judah, and fulfill all your vows for your wicked enemies who will never invade your land again. They will be completely destroyed.

Regular seasonal annual festivities need to be a part of the role of the contribution of the prophet artist. We need them helping us do the things that God's called us to do in a regular ongoing basis.

Number 40: (Unique Events Platforming the Arts)

There are also Unique Events Platforming the Arts. **Revelation 7:9-12.** After this, I saw a vast crowd, too great to count from every nation and tribe and people and language standing in front into the throne before the lamb, they were clothed in white robes and held Palm branches in their hands, and they were shouting with a great war. Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne in front, the lamb, and all the angels were standing around the throne around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their face, the brown and worship God. They say amen, blessing and glory, wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and honor our power and strength along to our God forever ever. Amen.

That's gonna be a really unique festival. I'm looking forward to it. I hope you are too. And when we come together at unique moments, and this is gonna be a historic moment, it's gonna be one of those unique moments that goes on for a very, very long time. that, um, The arts come forth. You sing, you shout. There's coordinated language. And we, we worship. This is one of the most beautiful expressions of art. We need the gift of the prophet artist in those settings as well.

SECTION INTRODUCTION: JESUS AND THE ARTS

In this section, we're looking at Jesus and the Arts. We'll consider four passages and there could be many more how Jesus employed the arts in order to get his message across in ways that impacted and transformed lives.

Number 41: Jesus Employed Humor.

Luke 14:18-21. Now, before I read this passage, I want to say that if you give the punchline away before the end of the joke, it ruins the joke. And sometimes we've read these passages so many times we know the final line and we don't get the punchline feel. So I'm gonna read this, this part of the scriptures, and I'm gonna try to help you recreate how the original audience would've heard the punchline and certainly they would've laughed.

But they all began making excuses [Jesus said in this parable about the wedding Feast]. One said, I have just bought a field and I must inspect it. Please. Excuse me. Another said, I've just bought five pairs of oxen and I want to try them out, please. Excuse me. Another said, I just got married. So I can't come. The servant returned and told his master of what they had said. His master was furious and said go quickly into the streets and allies of the town and bite the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.

Did you laugh? Did you get the punchlines? There are three of them. Who buys a field without first checking it out, without first inspecting it? That's silly. I just bought a field. I'm gonna go and take a look and see what I bought. No one does that. Like people like that's a stupid excuse. That's a lame excuse. That's so silly that ridiculous. The next one was like, I just bought five pairs of oxen, ten oxen. And I'm going to go and see if they're any good. No one does that! This is such a lame excuse. So I bought, I

bought the field. I gotta check it out. I've bought these oxen. I gotta check it out. Then I just got married and you can kind thinking, I gotta check her out. You know, he doesn't say that, but it just, just the pause that the guy go, oh yeah, we get, we, we know what, what needs happened. So I can't come. And that, that was, and chuckles would've been all around it. Would've elicited laughter from the crowd, because these were ridiculous excuses.

But Jesus used humor many times. In [Matthew seven](#) and [Luke six](#) we have him telling the story of the man who has a sees a friend with a speck in his eye and wants to take the speck out of his eye. But he's got a trunk in his eye. You can see that when Jesus said, I'm sure he didn't just say it. And, And there was a man who had a speck in his eye and another man with a trunk in his eye. He probably had inflection in voice. Maybe he would dramatized it, try look at the speck doing maybe, maybe he had picked up along and stuck it in his eye. And people would've laughed at what a ridiculous proposition this was. This incredible, delightful exaggeration must have been an hilarious crowd pleaser. And it stuck. When we laugh, things stay with us. It impacts our memories and our emotions are engaged. And then the truth lands a little more deeply. Jesus was a great teacher. So he employed humor wisely.

Number 42: Jesus Sang and Quoted Songs.

[Mark 15:34](#) These are words that Jesus speaks of the cross. And let me back up before I read these words. When he finished the last supper and left with his disciples to the garden of Gethsemane and began the process those last final hours of being arrested and this mock trial, and then taken to Golgotha to be crucified. He left that last supper singing songs. Probably from the book of Psalms. And so we know he sang with his disciples. He's at the Cross. It's three o'clock in the afternoon. And he says [at 3:00 Jesus called out with a loud voice El Elani, which means my God and my God, why have you abandoned me?](#)

And we can often misunderstand what's going on. Like, was God really mean to you, Jesus, at that moment, did he turn his back on him and walk away? No, no. What is Jesus doing? He's giving the first line of a psalm, just like when we are in a worship service. And we sing, let's sing Amazing Grace. Those are the first words of a song. That's [how often the, the titles](#) of songs are. And when you hear Amazing Grace, we know how to, what to start singing. So when he said, [my God, my God, why you abandoned me? Why have you forsaken me](#), this is the opening line of [Psalm 22](#), which is a Messianic song. And what he's saying to all those present, if you want to know what what's going on here, think about this song, go back and check out this song. And he's calling, he's like a worship leader saying this will give meaning to what is going on.

It begins with [my God, my God. Why have you forsaken me?](#) But then go on. Let's just read some portion of that Psalm and see how pertinent it is. In [verse seven it says everyone who sees me, mocks me. They sneer and shake their heads saying, is this the one who relies on the Lord? Then let the Lord say to him. If the Lord loves him so much, let the Lord rescue him.](#) You know, in [Matthew 27:43](#), it says the, the crowd, he

trusted God, now Let God rescue him now if he wants him. He said, I am the son. God, The crowd is saying exactly what the psalmist said would happen.

And verse nine says you brought me safely from my mother's womb and led me to trust you at my mother's breast. This is a declaration of his confidence in God, not a sense of abandonment. I was thrust into your arms at my birth. You have been my God from the moment I was born. There's intimacy of relationship. Verse 12 [and 14]. But my enemy enemies surround me like a herd of bulls; fierce bulls of Bashan have hemmed me in! ... My life is poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint.

You know, this is a description of, of crucifixion. When you're hanging on the cross, the, the weight of your body as is such that eventually your, your joints start popping- your elbows and your knees and your hips and your shoulders. They can't sustain the weight of the body for days on end, which is the normal time of crucifixion. My heart is like wax melting within me. We know that later on when they Jesus, the, and they pierced his sides, both, um, blood and water came out. When you do an autopsy, there's usually, the body is filled, the cavities either with blood or with water, but you don't have both of them occur except in only one occasion - when there's a massive cardiac arrest, the heart literally explodes. And it just, it disintegrates. This is what he's talking about.

My strength has dried up like sun-baked clay. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You have laid you - Remember Jesus said, I'm thirsty? You laid me in the dust and left me for dead. My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs; an evil gang closes in on me. They have pierced my hands and feet. How accurate of a crucifixion.

Verse 18 of Psalm 22 says, "they divide my garments among themselves and throw dice for my clothing, which is exactly what was happening. And then verse 19 says you are my strength Lord, come quickly to my aid! ... Snatch me from the lion's jaws and from the horns of these wild oxen. I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters. I will praise to you among the assembled people. Verse 23, praise the Lord. All you who fear him, honor him all you descendants of Jacob, show him, reverence all your descendants of Israel for he has not ignored or belittled the suffering of the needy. He has not turned his back on them, but he has listened to their cries for help. God had not abandoned him. He doesn't abandon anyone. He's not a God who turns his back on people in needy. Okay?

The whole earth verse 27 will acknowledge the Lord and return to him. All the families of the nations will bow down before him. For all power belongs to the Lord. He rules all the nations... Future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord. His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born. They will hear about everything has done. That's how this song that begins with my God, my God, how are you forsaking me this incredible declaration of God's victory and the confidence that the good news of his victory will go through all the earth for all the generations to come. This is a song of triumph and Jesus, who is aware of the power of the arts quotes this song and expects you to look at him on the cross and read through and sing along with him and make sense of what is going on. Because the Psalmist, the artist, the prophet has described

exactly what God was doing through our wonderful savior Jesus at that moment in history.

Number 43: Jesus Attended Celebratory Events.

Perhaps the most famous is found in John 2:1-11. The next day, there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. The wine supply ran out during the festivities... So Jesus' mother told the servants, do whatever he tells you... Jesus told the servants, fill the jars with water. Now, dip some out and take it to the master of ceremonies. So the servants followed his instructions. When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, ...he said, you have kept it best until now! This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory and his disciples believed in him.

Jesus was not only present at the celebration, He helped. He contributed to this celebration, made sure it would be a success. It would've been shameful for the family that was hosting the event if they had run out of the requisite beverages at the, at the festivities. And so when there was a beverage crisis, he pulled out all the stops to pull off the event. And he, they did it successfully. He participated in the artistry in the celebration of that event. And we should too. Jesus loved the stuff of life. He loved the joys and the celebrations and invites us to enter into his joy, because he is absolutely extraordinary. I think that the thing that was key about what made his artistry so excellent is that he involves people, others to do work with him. And the key was though he had this magnificent plan of furthering the celebration. They needed to simply follow his instructions. That's what we're called to do as prophet artists.

Number 44: Jesus Created Celebratory Events.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26. I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broken in pieces and said, this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, He took the cup of wine after supper, saying, this cup is a new covenant between God and his people - an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it. For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again.

Jesus not only attended celebratory events, he created one. He hosted one and he set it up as a paradigm, an example, something to be repeated and millions and millions of millions of Christians over scores of generations in every part of the earth have participated in this celebration. Remembering his remarkable new covenant. It's a, he created a repeatable memory and it involves all of our five senses that we've talked about. It was very tactile, the very relational and absolutely redemptive.

SECTION

In this next section, we only have two passages. It's about biblical principles for sports. Now the Bible doesn't have stories of many of the sports that are popular amongst us today. It doesn't speak about soccer or football or rugby or cricket or hockey or basketball or the Olympics. But it does talk about sports that were known in those days and often uses inspiring examples about how we should live our life.

Number 45: Target Practice.

I'm gonna read selections from 1 Samuel 20:18-42. In this passage we're gonna be looking at a story in which Jonathan and David are having a conversation. Jonathan is the son of the king, the heir apparent and his friend, David is the one who would actually be the king. And so Jonathan's father is angry at David and wanting to kill him. That's the context of this story.

So then Jonathan said to David, tomorrow, we celebrate the New Moon festival. You'll be missed when your place at the table is empty. The day after tomorrow wait there by the stone pile, I will come out and shoot three arrows to the side of the stone pile. As though I was shooting at a target, then I will send a boy to bring the arrows back. If you hear me, tell him, then you will know. So David hid himself in the field. The next morning as agreed Jonathan went out as the field and took a young boy with him to gather his arrows. So the boy ran and Jonathan shot an arrow beyond him. He of course suspected nothing only Jonathan and David understood the signal. As soon as the boy was gone, they embraced each other and said goodbye. Then David left and Jonathan returned to the town.

They were able to pull off this subterfuge, have the little boy there. And the code was, if I shoot there, I say, arrows are beyond you, it means dad's mad and he is going to kill you, get out of town as fast as you can. And the little boy didn't suspect anything at all. And, um, probably an armor bearer in training. So the extraordinary thing about this passage is that it wasn't extraordinary. The young lad caught the arrows, brought him back and left without any suspicion because target practice is something Jonathan regularly did. That's what sports is. It's about regular disciplines of athletic feats that are done over and over and over again. It was an ordinary activity in Jonathan's life in David's life. And therefore nothing unusual in the eyes of the young man. Sport training should be an expected part of life. It is talked about it in that way in the Bible.

Number 46: Disciplined Training.

We read from 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. Don't you realize that in a race, everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize. So run to win. All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for the eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I'm not just shadow boxing. I discipline my body like an athlete training and to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others, I might myself be disqualified.

Sporting Motifs inspire motivation. Dedication. Discipline. Hard work. Day in, day out. It's like such a perfect example for discipleship. If we want to be a follower of Jesus,

we must have the commitment to be trained in righteousness the same way an athlete is trained in his sport.

CROSSOVER PASSAGES

Our final section, as in all of the spheres are the crossover passages between celebration and each of the other spheres. So we'll look at these six passages now.

Number 47: Celebration and Family.

We read Genesis 21:8. When Isaac grew up and was about to be weaned, Abraham prepared a huge feast to celebrate the occasion.

Family celebrations are important. Take time to celebrate important milestones, birthdays, anniversaries. (husbands, that's really important). In our family, we practice what we call Fiesta math. It's based on Psalm 90:12, he says, Teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. So I count every day and we not only celebrate birthdays like one year, two years, three years, but 500 days, a thousand days, 1,500 days. And so you average three parties in a two year period. More Fiesta without any additional aging. That's really a good way to increase celebration in your life. And it's important to apply Psalm 90. The idea is to make every day count, don't waste any single day in foolishness or things that draw you away from the things of God. Number our days that we might apply our heart to wisdom. Let's celebrate family to life together.

Number 48: Celebration and Economics.

Proverbs 17:22, a cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person strength. The sphere of economics along with the spheres of family, religion and government are all concerned about healthcare. If an individual is ill or dies, everyone suffers. So all are preoccupied with the health of each and every individual. But here the sphere of celebration is a key contributor as well because a cheerful heart does good like a medicine. And a regular dose of celebration is good for one's health. So go to your doctor and have him write out a prescription: Celebrate more.

Number 49: Celebration and Government.

We're reading from 1 Kings 1 selections from verses 32 to 40. Then king David ordered call Zadok the priest, Nathan, the prophet and B_____. When they came into the King's presence, the king said to them take Solomon. And my officials down to the Gahon spring Solomon is to ride on my own mule, Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet are to anoint him king over Israel. So Zadok the priest, took the Flask of olive oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon with the oil. Then they sounded the Rams horn and all the people shouted long, lived king Solomon and all the people followed Solomon into Jerusalem, playing flutes and shouting for joy. The celebration was so joyous and noisy that the earth shook with the sound.

While that's a powerful celebration when it provokes an earthquake. Coronations or perhaps better today, inaugurations and other national holidays that commemorate important historical milestones, independence days, battles of various points in the nation's history are so important. These are ways in which governments join with the people in the acts of celebration.

Number 50: Celebration and Religion.

We're gonna read selections from Acts 16:25- 34 Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly there was a massive earthquake... The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He ran to the dungeon ...and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he, he brought them out. Sirs! What must I do to be saved? They replied believe in the Lord, Jesus, and you'll be saved Along with everyone in your household. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. He brought them into his house and set a meal before them and he and his entire household rejoiced because they've all believed in God.

Celebratory worship triggered an earthquake, which led to the redemptive purposes of God, responding from heaven, Touching that jail and touching the household of the jailer. It ended up with universal rejoicing as people experience redemption of God and they celebrated around a meal, enjoying the culinary arts and the goodness of God who had intervened so miraculously in that night.

Number 51: Celebration and Education

This is taken from Deuteronomy 31:19-22. God instructs Moses saying, so write down the words of this song and teach it to the people of Israel, help them learn it. So it may serve as a witness for me against them for, I will bring them into the land I swore to give their ancestors a land flowing with milk and honey. There they shall become prosperous, eat all the food they want and become fat, but they will begin to worship other gods. They will despise me and break my covenant. And when great disasters come down on them, this song will stand as evidence against them for it will never be forgotten by their descendants. I know the intentions of these people, even now, before they have entered the land I swore to give them. So that very day Moses wrote down the words of the song and taught it to the Israelites.

Moses was commanded by God to teach the song that he had composed to the next generation and the next generation and the next generation so that people would always remember the acts of God. Music, literature, the arts live on. And if they're infused with the truth of the story of God, it's redemptive message will carry on for generations to come.

Number 52: Celebration and Media/Communication.

Matthew 13:34, Jesus always used stories in illustrations like these when he spoke to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables.

Jesus was a master storyteller. He communicated with great artistry. He was so skillful. The vividness of his examples enabled his spirit to envision the kingdom of God in a very practical and applicable way. This is masterful art. This is great communication. This is Jesus' model for us.