

“Celebrate What’s Right, Too!”

20 November 2005 *at B&B*,

27 November 2005 *@ OH*

Bible passage: **Psalm 104: 1, 14-15, 24**

God, my God, how great you are!

Oh yes, God brings grain from the land,
Wine to make people happy,
Their faces flowing with health,
A people well-fed and hearty.

What a wildly wonderful world, God!
You made it all with Wisdom at your side,
Made earth overflow with your wonderful creations.

Sermon nugget: The heart of the message is that we can celebrate the good things in life when we choose to shift the way we look at things. The message is primarily delivered through the video.

Message part 1:

We have always made it a practice never to repeat a service, at least not in its entirety. We have, of course, taken different slants on the same themes, and we have re-used some segments of services, but never one as a total repetition.

That was the temptation for today, because last year around this time we did a service that many of you seemed to appreciate a lot. It was based on the video narrated by DeWitt Jones entitled “Celebrate What’s Right With the World.” We used several segments of that video for the heart of the message, and we were tempted to do a rerun today.

However, after viewing the video again, we have determined that we could re-use some of the segments, but that there were a few parts of the video that we didn’t use last year, and those segments also had a lot of good things to say. So, we are doing a bit of a mixture of old and new. As we prepare for the upcoming holiday season, let’s remember that it’s important to “celebrate what’s right.”

Video segment 1: (2:49)

In cue at 2:05-Jones at cabin : “We all have teachers in our lives ...”

Out cue at 4:54: “When the vision is clear, then passion and creativity are there as well..”

Message part 2:

It is vitally important that we have a vision of what is possible, because our vision translates into perception, and perception has a way of becoming a reality. What would it be like if we took National Geographic's perception of the world and adopted it as our own? Would it be possible for us to believe that the world is filled with good things before we actually saw them?

If we could do that, I have a hunch that our lives would go much better. Just think what it would be like if we began each day by saying to ourselves, "This is going to be a great day!" If we were to begin that way, there's a much greater possibility that today really will be a great day.

As we move into the holidays, this would be a good time for us to look at our family, our work, our friends, ourselves, with new eyes, to see what's right in each and every part of our lives. Can we do it? Can we see the best in our family and friends? Can we see the best in the world?

Video segment 2: (2:37)

In cue at 5:00: "All of a sudden, I was there..."

Out cue at 6:18: "light on Half Dome..."

In at 6:21: "yet the more I celebrated the beauty of the world..."

Out at 7:40: "right down to the tiniest seed..."

(pic of seed)

Message part 3:

It can be a bit challenging to look around us and see all the things that are right. Some of us are well-practiced at thinking there's not enough to go around, or that we're not good enough, or that this job isn't right. We're pretty good at focusing on what's wrong, but let's change that. Let's focus on what's possible; let's commit to seeing with new eyes, to looking through rose-colored glasses, if you will, and see just how different our lives can be.

After all, we do have so much to be grateful for. Our Bible passage, which contains verses of Psalm 104, reminds us of the wonders that surround and fill us. It says:

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Wine to make people happy,

Their faces flowing with health,

A people well-fed and hearty.

What a wildly wonderful world, God!

You made it all with Wisdom at your side,
Made earth overflow with your wonderful creations.

God is a good and loving God, and has created the world, and you and me. There is the goodness of God within each and every particle of creation; there is the thread of God that runs through each of our lives. That is good; that is reason enough to celebrate.

Video segment part 3: (2:12)

In cue at 9:05 with Jones by tree: "The more I shot..."

Out cue at 9:52: "ordinary into extraordinary"

In cue at 11:30 with waves of ocean: "The right vision..."

Out cue at 13:05 running in waves: "That's something I could celebrate..."

Message 4:

If we look outward with our new set of eyes, we may see how truly extraordinary life is. Just take a moment had listen to the sound of our breath; listen to the sound of life all around us. That's not something to take for granted; it's a true. miracle.

To be able to see the miracle of life may require some changing, and as Jones says, that's a good thing. Otherwise, we just have the status quo, and that becomes boring and redundant. Change is a must...it's a good thing. It sharpens our senses; it makes us more alive! That means that we need to be willing to embrace change, instead of always resisting it. What would it mean for us if we began to celebrate all the changes that come our way? It's something to think about.

Video segment 4: (1:14)

In cue at 14:01 when he's on cliff: "power of vision is extraordinary..."

Out cue at 15:14: "best in the world to best for the world."

Message part 5

What would it be like for you, for me, to live our lives on the edge? My guess is that we would know what it's like to fly like an eagle, to soar with the wind, to live life to the very fullest. We could offer our best to the world.

That's exactly the way God wants us to live. You know? With God, nothing is impossible. Can we trust God to step out into a new future? Into a new day?

Video segment 5: (3:31)

In cue at 18:21 with him sitting at desk: "Could I do that?"

Out cue at 21:52 with second pic of reunion: "Do it and believe..."

Message part 6:

Earlier, DeWitt Jones talked about the light that shines from within us when we trust enough to let it out. When we live on the edge, when we envision what is possible and live into it, we are publishing our lives. When we have the courage to do that, we never know where it's going to go, but we can trust that, with God, it will be good and it will be right.

Video segment 6: (:45)

In cue at 22:02 with camera over shoulder: "Incredible things happens when..."

Out cue at 22:45 as he walks down hill...

Closing:

As we leave here today, I hope and pray that we will make a commitment to ourselves that today, tomorrow, and every day of this holiday season, we will do our very best to "celebrate what's right with the world."

Have a good Sunday, and go in peace. Amen.