

THINK SMALL

WEEK THREE: CELEBRATE – Study Guide

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When I think of late January several things come to mind: commercials on weight loss, brisk cold weather, and the excitement stirring with sports fans! Everywhere you look, sports enthusiasts are out and proudly showing their team colors. By this time of year the college football BCS National Championship has just been decided, basketball is in full swing with March Madness on the horizon, NASCAR is ratcheting up for Daytona, the PGA Tour has launched its season opener in Hawaii, and in the NFL, The Super Bowl is a mere two weeks away! Now, while you may or may not be the biggest sports fan in the world, having spent any time watching TV or listening to break room conversations has probably clued you in to the fact that this is the season where sports fans are in full celebration! So what is it with our desire to celebrate, or better yet, be celebrated? Could it be a God thing? This week as we wrap up our series Think Small, we're going to unpack a key and final element to our mission statement at The Cove Church, about living a life of celebration. "...We will celebrate His presence in our lives."

Where Am I Today?

- 1) Can you recall the last time you celebrated something? Not just being glad for the event, but a real joyous celebration? What was the occasion?

- 2) When you picture a celebration, what do you imagine? Describe it. Do you feel God created you with a desire to celebrate?

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Into the Bible

- 3) A celebration, no matter how large, is only a reflection of each individual member's personal decision to rejoice. This is where we think small. What is it that gives us reason to rejoice? **Read Psalm 25:4-5** for insight. What did the psalmist not ask for, but state that he possessed, as a result of God being his Savior? Do you have it? If yes, in what area?

- 4) The way that God led Moses and the children of Israel out of Egypt was nothing short of amazing! If you are not familiar with this history, it can be found in the book of Exodus in chapter 3 through chapter 14. As God finally led Israel to safety by parting the Red Sea and having it collapse onto the Egyptian soldiers, read what happens next in **Exodus 15:1; 20-21**. What were they doing? Was this a form of celebration? Are the lengths of time, degree of hardship, and/or level of appreciation relative to the passion in which we celebrate? Explain.

- 5) Could it be that we are created to give resounding praise and glory to Christ? King David was considered to be a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) and is considered the author of many Psalms. Check out **Psalm 71:18-24** for more insight.

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How Does This Apply?

- 6) Jesus said in John 8:56 that Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and that he was glad. Would you classify yourself as a person who is glad about life? If you would like to truly live a life of joy, peace, and celebration, being fully content and fully in love with Christ, what would you be willing to do? When we celebrate, many of our fears, stress, and selfish motives simply fade into the background.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18. What is God's will for you?

- 7)
- a) Have you experienced a Baptism Celebration at The Cove? If so, describe what it was like.
 - b) Have you experienced a celebration in your Life Group? Maybe someone found a job, received Christ, had a baby, etc.
 - c) Have you experienced a celebration at a Cove weekend service? Describe.
 - d) Have you experienced a personal celebration on your serving team? Maybe you prayed with your first person on the prayer team, or ushered during Christmas services for the first time, or helped a newcomer at the information desk. Describe.
 - e) Finally, how can you take a life of celebration home? To your neighborhood? To work? Beyond?

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Current Prayer Focus

What we're praying for together as a church:

- Neighborhood Campuses
- Building for the Statesville Campus
- 100 New Leaders at The Cove

Digging Deeper: Going Further On Your Own

8) **Read Exodus 12:14.** What does God have Israel celebrate?

Read Exodus 12:1-30. Can you pick out the foreshadowing of Jesus?

Read 1 Peter 1:18-25. Why do you think God had them celebrate?