



Each of my boys are involved in the orchestra. A couple weeks ago, I heard one of my sons playing his instrument, and I was genuinely impressed. When talking to someone else about me hearing him, I said that he had progressed a long way since elementary school! I remember those concerts. The instruments, while tuned, revealed that the students still needed to learn more. While I'm sure my children were always perfect in their playing, other kids needed to learn the feel of the music. Have you ever experienced listening to something like that?

Now, there can be a few different things that can be painful to our ears when listening to music. Of course, if the notes are off, that can be painful to listen to. But have you ever listened to something where the timing was off between instruments? The cellos might be playing correctly, but if the violins or violas aren't getting the rhythm just right, my insides literally feel pain. Why? Because it's all supposed to work together. There's rhythm to musical pieces – and every instrument is to play a part in unifying around those rhythms. When the instruments and voices are together in the beats and rhythms, there can be beauty! They're working together for the larger musical piece.

What does this have to do with this series on food and feasting? Well, the title of the sermon today is "Rhythms of Feasting," and the Bible reveals to us that God has composed a grand storyline for this creation. Everything plays a part in God's creation; however, since humans have rebelled against God, they're living out of the rhythm of his story. Yet, God hasn't given up. Creation still points to the Composer. And many of us here have responded to God. We've seen through the Bible that God's grand story points to his plan to save, rescue, and restore rebellious sinners. And, someday, in his real-life story, he will restore creation itself! The rhythm of creation will finally be restored!

Now, you may still say, "What does this have to do with feasting?" Well, for those of us here who have entrusted ourselves to Jesus, we have been set free to live in this current world to beat in tandem with God's storyline. Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are to live for God's majesty and fame! We are to reveal him and his plans in *everything* we do. Did you know that our eating and drinking can reveal God's grander story? I hope you've seen that already in this series. But today, I want to correct a potential misunderstanding. You may be going through the weeks thinking, "Feasting is biblical! Woohoo! So, you stuff your face at every meal (and in between) and say, 'Praise the Lord!'" I would say that doesn't fit the current part of God's composition.

My point in saying all of this is God's story has a rhythm to it. At different points in time, the rhythm changes, but we specifically live in a time period that needs to match God's rhythm. Therefore, feasting should fit that rhythm. Now, what do I mean by that? You see the subtitle of the sermon, and it says: living in the already-not-yet Kingdom. You may recall a previous sermon where I mentioned this concept of "already-not-yet." When we read the New Testament, we quickly see that the time period between

Jesus' ascension into Heaven and his return is a time period where we *already* experienced the blessings that Jesus has purchased through his life, death, and resurrection. Those who turn from their sins and trust Jesus for forgiveness of their sins and the One who is their identity – these people are forgiven and reconciled to God right now. That's the already. But, they not yet see God. Jesus also ascended and reigns today. However, the fulness of his reign isn't seen. Sin still exists. We live in the already-not-yet – which means that God's composition currently has a specific rhythm of "already-not-yet." And, we have to fit that rhythm in all we do. So, with regards to food and feasting, in particular, feasting (for the Christian), is an act of faith. We believe Jesus reigns; so, we can feast in this broken world. It's also an act of gratitude to God. We are reconciled to him even though we can't see him! Feasting communicates these types of things in the midst of this still broken world, that we believe Jesus reigns! But a continual feasting should not happen now because that doesn't fit God's composition at this point in time. Yes, Jesus already reigns (feast), but he not yet reigns (fast). We'll get to the idea of fasting next week. But this week, we're focused on feasting. And so, the main idea of this sermon today is simply this: **Feasting ought to communicate Jesus' victorious, already-not-yet rule.**

Now, if at this point you are still confused, that's ok. I hope that as we move forward, things will all start coming together. I'm going to take this main idea and ask three questions: Where do we see this? When does feasting communicate this? How can we ensure feasting communicates this? So, let's start with the first point.

1. Where do we see that feasting communicates Jesus' victorious, already-not-yet rule?

Where in Scripture do we see this reality. I'll give a few examples:

In Jesus' first miracle. In John 2, we read of Jesus' first miracle. Don't forget the purpose of miracles. Throughout the Bible, miracles reveal what the reversal of God's curse on this world looks like. Meaning, what will God's future Kingdom be like? You might want to minimize this miracle, but again, it's Jesus' first one – which seems to mean it's important. And secondly, towards the end of John's account of this, the master of the feast speaks to the bridegroom and says, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him."¹

Jesus manifested his glory through this miracle of turning water into wine. I don't know about you, but I've been intrigued by that in the past. I mean, I get that it's impossible naturally to turn water to wine. So, that's a miracle. But how does this miracle reveal Christ's glory in such a way that we're told his disciples then believed in him as the Messiah?

There are multiple points Jesus is making through this miracle, but I think we can condense it to see that Jesus is calling people to his Kingdom meal. We need to drink from his feast to come. The nourishment and fellowship he provides is greater than what this world can offer. Earthly wine diminishes the senses. Jesus' is superior! Will we believe on him? Will we come to him? Jesus clearly reveals by this miracle that he's the Messiah (the Anointed One of God) who is bringing a Kingdom to come, where we will feast with eternal pleasure and delight in our King.

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 2:10–11.

So, in the reality of Jesus already being the Messiah, the disciples believe on him! People drink of what Jesus provides. Yet, the fullness of the Kingdom hadn't come yet. So, feasting now communicates the already-not-yet. Another example is found,

In Acts 2. We've looked at Acts 2 in previous weeks; but let's look to see how feasting reveals Jesus' reign. When the apostle Peter comes to the end of his sermon to the people in Jerusalem, revealing that Jesus is the One who came to bring forgiveness and to restore this broken creation, Peter quote from Psalm 110, which says, ""The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.""² Peter then adds, "Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."³

Can you imagine realizing that you were part of the crowd that yelled "Crucify Him." Or, maybe you weren't there, but you've heard about it, and you rejected Jesus up to this point. Then all of what Peter says sinks in. Jesus literally walked all these Israelite regions and you rejected him, ignored him, spurned him. Jesus is Lord (which means Master). Jesus is the Christ – the Ruler to bring about salvation and restoration. And he rose from the dead! He's not in the grave. Now what? How are you going to respond to Jesus, Israel? And, by the way, if you haven't trusted in Jesus, how do you respond to him? In Acts 2, we're told that people were cut to the heart and 3,000 people turn from their sins and trust in Jesus alone as the One who can forgive them. He's their King! He's their Ruler. He's their Savior!

And, what's the result of their turning to Jesus? ⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.⁴ They were devoted to faithful doctrine that preaches Jesus. They were devoted to prayer. And they were devoted to eating food together and fellowshiping. Jesus' rule and reign is communicated through eating and fellowshiping! There was a regular rhythm to this.

This easily takes us into another point:

In Communion. Every month, we remember Christ's sacrifice by partaking in communion together. But do we *only* remember what Jesus did in the past? No. We're actually supposed to be reminded of his past, present, and future merciful reign. In communion, we know that Jesus drank the cup of wrath that we deserve so that we now will drink from the cup of grace that he has given to us. When we eat the bread, we're reminded of Jesus' body being broken so that we can be whole by Christ. And, each time we partake of communion, we are to be reminded that what Jesus did in the past matters for right now – in the present! We are currently forgiven of sins. We are currently reconciled to God. We are currently nourished by our Lord. We currently have fellowship with God and one another. And, communion reminds us of what's to come. Someday, the feast will come and Jesus will again drink from the fruit of the vine! In anticipation of that day, we commune together now! Eating in communion reminds us of the already-not-yet of Jesus' reign!

Communion speaks of Jesus' victory on the cross, and that victory resounds for all eternity future! By the way, Ventura, let me just add another practical note for us. When I read of how Corinth celebrated communion and also how Jude talks of the Christian's love feasts, I again want to affirm the idea of our

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ac 2:34–35.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ac 2:36.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ac 2:42.

church family having more family feasts together that celebrate Jesus' victory. In faith, we believe he is at the right hand of God and that we are his!

These are just three examples found in Scripture, and I'm sure we can find more! But now, let's move on to asking our next question:

2. When does feasting communicate Jesus' victorious, already-not-yet reign?

Answer: when it's done on set apart times. If you think back to the sermon Ben Jacques preached, you may recall the various festivals through the Israelite calendar year. Then you may remember that every Sabbath was special. You had New Moon feasts, too. It wasn't like the Israelites only feasted a few times a year. There was a set apart day every week that affected the meals and fellowship. Then you had other set apart feasts and festivities that then probably meant every month there was some sort of feast or festival!

In saying this, I'm not saying that God demands that we have monthly church feasts in order to follow the Old Testament demands. After all, Paul wrote in Colossians 2, **"¹⁶Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ."⁵** He goes on to say, **"If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations. . . ²³These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh."**⁶

What's Paul saying? If someone doesn't participate in the Sabbath or new moon and people are judging them for the food they eat, they've missed the point. The food and feasts have a higher goal! They are to point to Christ and his reign. So, why are you submitting to the rules of the festivals? Yes, it might look impressive to people when you are disciplined in these things, but that doesn't make you reconciled to Jesus. It doesn't change how you live. Only Jesus does. He's the nourishment!

So, with this, you might say, "Then why does food and feasting matter at all if all of it just points to Jesus?" That's a great question. I think I used to read these verses essentially saying that because Jesus is the point, these festivals don't matter at all – and you shouldn't feel compelled to participate in any of these. But that's not what Paul says here. Paul will defend Christian's consciences and whether or not they practice these things. He simply wants to ensure their mindset and their heart is in the right place. Is it wrong for a Christian to be reminded of God's reign through a certain feast? No! Is it wrong for a Christian to refrain from certain things to be reminded of Christ? No. Think of what Paul did in Acts with him shaving his head and exercising some discipline in Jewish practice.

I don't believe Paul is saying that because Jesus fulfills, we should not have any feasts any more. Instead, I think we follow the larger message of Scripture. Let's follow the idea of "already-not-yet," and look at the example of the early church in Acts 2 even. Do we seek to find out ways to show hospitality with fellow believers? Do we break bread together and fellowship together? Are we regularly, and in various ways, eating and also feasting with believers? I genuinely believe this should be happening with

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Col 2:16–17.

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Col 2:20–23.

believers as an act of faith that we know our Savior rules and reigns today, and someday he's coming again.

But real quick, I do want to add something. Some of you might be thinking, "Is this a new rule? Pastor Timothy, are you being legalistic here?" No. At least, I pray not! As Paul says in Colossians 2, we're don't have a feast and then judge those who don't show! Food and feasting isn't a obligation that all believers must keep all at the same time. But we are called to seek to show hospitality. We are called to eat together and receive one another, even around food. And, of course, communion can take place in various ways, but the early church seemed to do this around a meal and a love feast. None of this is followed as the stringent rule of law, but instead it is to be followed as the rhythm of Jesus' already-not-yet Kingdom. We should then have regular reminders of our communion with the Lord and one another. What a joy and privilege! Now, let's move to the final question.

3. How can I communicate Jesus' victorious, already-not-yet reign through feasting?

Answer: through worshipping Jesus, not food. You might see that answer and think to yourself, "I don't worship food!" I have no altars in my house. But the Hebrew word for "worship" that's used in our English Old Testament is connected to the idea of weighing the worth of something. Think of gold, silver, or platinum. The greater the weight, the more value. So, to worship something means that we treat something as weightiest. We treat it of equal or greater worth than we treat God.

I think of the many psalms that refer to enjoyment of God in terms of tasting or sensing and I find these helpful in evaluating my heart as to whether I'm worshipping food or God. Psalm 34:8 says, "**Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!**"⁷ Or, think of David's words in Psalm 63: **O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.**"⁸ Then he adds, "**My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips. . .**"⁹

Just take these three verses. When you see food. When you eat food. When you feast. Do you forget God? Does your mind, emotions, body overwhelm you and so you are overly "satisfied" in food and not in God? Seriously, we must ask ourselves these questions. Are you more pleased in God than in a fine steak or fresh lobster tail?

This brings conviction to me, and I have to confess where I've worshipped food. Food that's going to deteriorate through my body. Why would I give something so temporal such high acclaim? Is food necessary? Yes. Without it, we will die. But is food worthy of worship? No! Even though we eat every day, we will still die. It cannot give us eternal life. Therefore, God is more satisfying. God is eternal. We were made for him. And, as Jesus said in the midst of his temptations, ""Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.""¹⁰

So, first and foremost, we communicate Jesus' victorious, already-not-yet reign through feasting when the food and the fellowship point ultimately to Jesus! Now I'm going to give an illustration that I hope works.... Last week was the Super Bowl, and I found out that it was the most watched Super Bowl yet.

⁷ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 34:8.

⁸ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 63:1.

⁹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 63:5.

¹⁰ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Mt 4:4.

Over 150 million people tuned in to watch the Super Bowl. When I told Tracy this, she said, “That many people had the Super Bowl on!” And, that’s true. Up until 2018, I didn’t care about any sports whatsoever. I would have never known when Super Bowl was. Then, through a couple circumstances, I got into watching Football. If you had invited me to a Super Bowl party before 2018, I’d be there for the food only. If you invite me now, I want to make sure that I can watch the Super Bowl, and the people aren’t just there for the food!

Now, don’t get me wrong. I love the food. And last week, Devon Scott said to me, “Why is it that for Super Bowl, I can’t imagine the party without food? Food has to be there!” I said to him that I think the culmination of joy was to embrace all the senses that God has given to us. We want our eyes, ears, emotions, tastebuds, hands, to join together completely! Food plays an integral part in this. To celebrate, food has to be around. But, food isn’t center stage. So, whether it’s the Super Bowl, a wedding, or a birthday, if you say you’re just there for the food, you’ve missed the point. Food points to a greater celebration.

And, when we as Christians feast together, we do this to celebrate Jesus and revel in the communion he has given to us with fellow believers! In saying all of this, some might then begin to think, “Well, I want to be careful to not worship food, so I need to refrain from feasting now!” No, that’s not the answer. We are commanded to receive food with thanksgiving. The way we fight our sinful inclination is by genuinely addressing what we worship? Who do we worship? And, I would recommend going back to the Psalms as a way of encouragement in our worship of God. Instead of saying, “I’m only eating bland foods now,” think about how food does excite you and say, “Lord, give me greater love and appreciation for you. Steak is delicious. You say you’re greater. Grow my satisfaction in you! Let the common grace of food teach you how to grow in your joy in the Lord! When you live this way, I think your gratitude will increase.

One final thing, I want us to think a little more about the verses where Paul says that food is to be received with thanksgiving. It’s found in 1 Timothy 4. Paul writes, **“⁴ For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.** Ok, let’s be thankful for the food. But in many of our Bibles, we probably have some sort of break and a subtitle for the next section, and we don’t connect these words with what follows. Are you interested in knowing what comes next? Here it is: **⁶ If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.**¹¹

Paul is probably referring to much of what he’s spoken of up to this point in the letter, but food is included here. If you put this into practice, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus. Paul’s emphasis is on Jesus himself and how we are servants of our King Jesus! How we approach food matters. How we approach reveals we believe Jesus is the King. And, when we gratefully receive from him, we can enjoy his gracious gift as it is. I can enjoy the burgers I made on the grill. You can fellowship around the appetizers you worked hard on. We can gather together for feasts, and even though many in this world might think we’re crazy for celebrating a man who claimed to rise from the dead, we know that we are worshipping the God-Man who reigns! When we receive with thanksgiving, we confess that Jesus is our Lord and Master.

¹¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Ti 4:4–6.

Ventura, **Feasting ought to communicate Jesus' victorious, already-not-yet rule.** Do you know Jesus? If you do not, please talk to someone today and we'd love to tell you how Jesus can be the nourishment your soul needs. If you are a believer, **rejoice in the privilege that in everything, you can glorify him. In eating and drinking, you can reveal the already-not-rule of Christ. Do you hear the rhythm of God's storyline and composition?**