Reason For Celebration

*In Everything give thanks [1 Thessalonians 5:18]*

**Reading - Mark 2:15-23**

**CRITICISM AND FAULT-FINDING:**

At the dinner, Jesus chose to eat with a suspicious crowd. There was a great number of tax collectors present. ***Luke 5:29 Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.***

Also others, generally described as “sinners.” ***Mark 2:15 Now it happened, as He was dining in [Levi's] house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him.***

However, others knew about the dinner party - Scribes and Pharisees & the disciples of John.

1. They and the Pharisees made a regular practice of fasting.

2. Some believe that the text suggests they might have been fasting on the very day that Jesus was enjoying the dinner party.

3. To them, religion was composed of rigorous rules and traditions, and there was little to enjoy about it.

4. They could not understand Jesus or His disciples.

**THE Point of the pARABLE OF THE FRIENDS OF THE BRIDEGROOM.**

This little story was intended to communicate a single point—the presence of Jesus is reason to celebrate, not mourn.

***John 1:5 - And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.***

***John 1:10-11 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.***

The real question is not, “Why isn’t Jesus and His disciples fasting?”—It’s really, “Why isn’t everyone else celebrating the fact that God’s Son is among them?”

***John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."*** (NKJV)

When one realizes just who Jesus is and what He came to do, how can one not celebrate?

Jesus came to bring joy. ***John 3:29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.*** (NKJV)