Let’s Party! (It’s in the Bible!)

It’s not exactly the first thing you think about when you read the Bible – but it’s there. No, it is not the adolescent college thing of wine, women and song. But it is there when “party” means “celebrate.” It is there in the seven feasts of the Old Testament, with some feasts more joyous than others but there is that call to celebrate. (There is always something to celebrate in life – if you choose to celebrate.)

Jesus grew up with the celebrations of His heritage – His annual Passover trip to Jerusalem especially noted when He stayed on in Jerusalem discussing and talking with the scholars and priests. (His mom didn’t feel particularly like celebrating when she finally found Him in the Temple.) And then He added the celebrations of His ministry.

Sadly, we seem to miss the parties that are recorded in the Gospels. It’s too bad because we also miss the celebrations in our own lives. Jesus’ first miracle happened at a wedding - a party, for sure. And Jesus kept partying throughout His ministry. He calls Levi – and has a name changing party. Mark 2:13-17. Do we forget to celebrate and then become like the Pharisees who complain that He is eating with “sinners” and tax collectors and call Him a winebibber and a glutton?

Can the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand be anything but a tremendous picnic? Or do we become like the disciples and worry about, “How are we going to feed them?”

Mary and Martha’s house seemed to be a great place to party. Why else would Martha complain about all the work involved. And can you imagine the party when Lazarus was raised from the dead? That, was some party.

Jesus had dinner at Simon the leper’s house. It was a party where a woman anointed Jesus’ feet with a jar of perfume. Some complained. They did not know how to celebrate. Jesus was anointed and even celebrated His coming death because it was the beginning of the end of His earthly ministry of why He came.

On the way to Jerusalem in the last days of His life as He passed through Jericho, He made time for another party as He told Zacchaeus, “I must stay at your house today.”

The preparations for celebrating Passover – a party of redemption was even more profound than the disciples could have imagined with the celebration of the “Lord’s Supper.” They literally had spent three years in one long glorious party, celebrating healings and transformations, seeing miracles and doing them. Being in the very presence of God. Celebrating often and often not knowing why but just being in the very presence of God’s Son. The joy of the party that went everywhere with Jesus.

And after the cross, there was the unbelievable party of His appearing to them. And then there was the final beach party and “fish fry.”

And the scriptural words that linger “Celebrate that your names are written in the lamb’s book of life.”

Of all people, we who are His, should celebrate. Our list of things to celebrate is far longer than our list of woes and difficulties. Celebration is a choice – a wise choice – because it changes everything and honors our Father in heaven by our being thankful for our daily bread and every other blessing He gives us.

It is time for a party! Let’s celebrate!