

## The Power of Joy

n/a

### **Ready:**

*At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sent for the Levites wherever they lived and brought them to Jerusalem to celebrate the joyous dedication with thanksgiving and singing accompanied by cymbals, harps, and lyres.*

Nehemiah 12:27

### **Set**

A large crowd gathered for the memorial service of Coach Whitson, a much-loved junior high coach who had been at the same school for 17 years. Several former players spoke of his impact on their lives, describing him as happy and joyful. Those close to him knew what they were talking about, because Coach Whitson understood what it meant to offer thanksgiving and praise to God regardless of the circumstances. He walked in worship, even when the circumstances were not happy. Though he had had his share of pain, his focus on thanksgiving gave him a joy that touched many lives.

Under the leadership of Nehemiah and others, the Jews returned to Jerusalem. They rebuilt the city wall and set up a secure government. They celebrated all that had occurred with gladness and joy. Why? Because their eyes were on the Lord and what He had done for them. How do we know? Because they celebrated with hymns of thanksgiving. Nehemiah 12:43 says that all the people joined in and that their rejoicing was “heard from afar”—not their *singing*, but their *rejoicing*.

Focusing on God’s goodness throughout the day is what I call “walking in worship,” or “walking in joy.” When we do this, people notice! Noah Webster, a committed Christian, offered this definition of “joy” in his 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*: “The passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good.”

All we have acquired from God through Jesus Christ’s life and death is good. Joy is ours when we look to Him in thanksgiving or in expectation of what He has in store for us. That’s why I call it walking in worship. Few things are more powerful than Christian joy!

### **Go**

1. On what occasions have you experienced joy?
2. Does the world see joy in you? Are they drawn to Christ because of your joy?
3. Do you bring joy to those you lead?

### **Workout**

Nehemiah 12:27-43

Job 8:19-22

John 15:1-11

### **Overtime**

Gracious God, I have much to be thankful for today. As I reflect on Your many gifts in my life, may others see Your joy! Amen.

### **Bible Reference:**

John 15



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