

Nehemiah 8:10

Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice - Bible Gateway **Nehemiah** said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

WHERE IS YOUR JOY? Nehemiah 8:10 & 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Rev. Howard Yoshida

Introduction: A. Are you listening? B. What do you hear? C. What are you doing with the messages you’re receiving?

The Message: Nehemiah 8:10 “The joy of the Lord is your strength.”

A. Our strength is found in receiving the Joy of the Lord.

1. The Biblical definitions of the word “Joy” refers to the “Goodness of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord.” It is not found in whatever we accomplish. What do we learn when we listen to what Jesus did and wants us to do?
2. Jesus suffered and died on the cross, a shameful and torturous death, because He was convicted and condemned by the leading religious, legal and political parties of His day.
3. What did He do? He accepted their judgements and died for our sake.
4. Then Jesus uses the cross, symbol of suffering and shame, as the power of salvation and life for all of us. Instead of fighting the world’s judgement, He used it as the ultimate symbol of strength for all of us to follow and accomplish God’s ultimate goodness in this world.

B. How do we receive the ultimate blessings of God in the “crazy world” in which we are living today?

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Under all circumstances” give thanks for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
2. Instead of looking at our “crazy circumstances” in this world today, what are we as individuals, families, churches and other organizations thankful for?
Focus on thanksgiving and God will create His joy in us.

C. Conclusion

3. What are you listening to and doing to receive God’s Joy?
4. Focus, not on what we think we’ve accomplished or expect but what God does when we, like Jesus, use even our weaknesses and failures to bring God’s joy to others.