

# The Sustaining Power of His Joy!

*"The joy of the Lord is your strength."* (Neh. 8:10)

Joy, thanksgiving, and praise belong together and our commitment to praise, and to thank God for everything does not become complete until we have committed ourselves to rejoice as well. Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit, *"rejoice and again I say rejoice."* (Phil. 4:4; I Thess. 5:16) No wonder Jesus was so concerned that His disciples would understand that He had come, not only to purchase their salvation through His sacrifice on the cross, but also to provide them with the sustaining power of His joy.

***Jesus' desire is that we might know His joy.*** (John 15:11) Jesus said, *"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."* His life was characterized by joy for He rejoiced even in the suffering of the cross. (Heb. 12:1-2) We can't make ourselves more loving for we need the power of His love. We can't give ourselves His peace for it must come from Him. And we can't give ourselves His joy, we must choose to accept and trust what Jesus has done for us and allow Him to perfect His joy in us.

***Jesus encouraged us to pray that our joy may be full.*** (John 16:24) We are encouraged to ask in the power of His Name and we will receive, and our cup of joy will overflow. The joy of the Lord is ours for the asking. The Lord desires that we would know by daily experience the *"fruit of the Spirit"* which is His joy. (Gal. 5:22-23)

***Jesus prayed for us to know His joy before He was apprehended and taken to the cross.*** (John 17:13) He desired for the disciples and desires for us, that ***His joy*** might be fulfilled in us. He purposed that ***His joy*** might be made full and complete and perfect in them (and us) that they would experience ***His delight*** fulfilled in them, that ***His enjoyment*** may be perfected in their own souls (as well as ours) that they may have ***His gladness*** within them filling their hearts.

***All we have in Christ Jesus comes to us by faith.*** Every born-again Christian knows that his salvation is a free gift. He was born again of the Holy Spirit when he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior, *by faith*. (Titus 3:5) The fulness of the Spirit is ours *by faith*. And we need to realize that the joy of the Lord is ours to be claimed *by faith*.

***We are not to rejoice because we feel joyful,*** rather we can expect to eventually feel joyful as a result of our obeying the command to rejoice. In practice, this means we deliberately set out to practice joy, regardless of how we feel, trusting God in all things, knowing He will also transform our sorrows into pure joy, just as He promised. The joy of the Lord is not something that comes last in a long line of attainments but is something the Lord desires we have from the start. Since joy is the work of the Lord in us, and since Christ's joy is to be our joy, then why do so many of us live joyless lives? Joy is certainly something we are meant to experience, but joy does not depend on feelings.

***As we accept His will in all things*** (Eph. 5:20) ***and give thanks in all things*** (I Thess. 5:18) ***then and then only will His joy become ours.*** The source of joy is not to be found in happy circumstances, but in knowing Jesus' commandments,

obeying them, and abiding in Him. (John 15:1-11) *Rejoice in the Lord* -- in uninterrupted happiness in God. *Pray without ceasing* -- which is the fruit of always rejoicing in the Lord. *In everything give thanks*-- which is the fruit of both the former things. (I Thess. 5:16-18)

**Thanksgiving, joy and peace are inseparable and are to be ours as we live a thankful life, rejoicing in all things.**