

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## The Joy of the Lord

(Jerry Fite)

What causes God to rejoice? He is joyous when we do His will. Paul tells us so: “...for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13). When we from within do what He directs us to do, we bring joy to the heart of God, for we are glorifying Him.

Glorifying God begins in our life as a Christian when we “confess” Jesus as Lord at our baptism “to the glory of God” (Philippians 2:11, Acts 8:35-38). Then, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Glorifying God by respecting the conscience of others, keeping the body sexually pure, and manifesting the image of the glorious Lord through a transformed mind are just a few areas in which the Christians in Corinth could glorify God, and cause God to rejoice (1 Corinthians 10:23-30, 6:18-20, 2 Corinthians 3:18).

The joy of our Lord is also our strength. Ezra lifts up the sobering gathering by saying, “...neither be ye grieved; for the joy of Jehovah is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). When Ezra led the Jews, who were returning from Babylonian captivity, they had not celebrated the joyous feast of tabernacles for decades. Now hearing the law read; carrying out the commands for the feast; and meditating on its meaning of God providing for His people, they are able to rejoice again.

More importantly, remembering the feast which manifests God’s glory, they bring Joy to God. This combination of doing God’s will and bringing joy to God was the Jews’ strength.

The feast of Tabernacles is not part of the new covenant of Christ. However, we are strong today when we are doing God’s will, thus glorifying Him, and causing Him to rejoice. Today, we should desire the joy God receives when we serve Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. Along with the Apostles, we can have Jesus’ joy in us so our joy

may be made full (John 15:11). Full joy is having Jesus’ joy in us.

A faithful life leads to “entering the joy of the Lord” for eternity. Jesus speaks of a master distributing to his servants various amounts of his money according to their ability to manage and increase. One with the ability to handle five talents gains five more talents. Another, with the ability to manage money weighing two talents, gained two more. On the day of reckoning, they both hear respectively. “Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord” (Matthew 25:21, 23).

Faithful in the opportunities God has giving us to glorify Him should be our constant focus. For example, when we use our abilities and time to bring a sinner to repentance, we know God rejoices in Heaven with all the angels (Luke 15:7, 10). Heaven is not only a place to enter, but an emotion of God to enter into, ushering faithful servants into the eternal glorification of God.