

November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022 AM- Pastor Kevin Olivier  
**Nehemiah 12:42-47, 13:10-14** – “Ways to Rejoice”

- A. The history of the people of Judah during the days of Nehemiah is one to rejoice about. Those who dwelt in & around Jerusalem went from a state of fear & reproach to one of rejoicing & thanks to God.
- B. Nehemiah also helped to restore justice by ending the practice of usury— the unlawful charging of interest for loans. In today’s text, he mentioned another matter of injustice he had to corrected. He called it the forsaking of the house of God.

God gives you ways how you are to rejoice before Him.	I. REJOICE IN PRAISING GOD II. REJOICE IN GIVING
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I. REJOICE IN PRAISING GOD → **end of v42-v43**

A. God wants you to have great joy in worshipping Him.

1. The singers sang yet helped to lead others in the congregation. We can rightly assume that when **“the women & children rejoiced,”** they **“rejoiced”** in singing praise to God.

- God doesn’t want us to be mere observers or spectators; we are to be heart-felt participants.
- During this revival under Nehemiah, joyous worship was for the entire family. Those involved included the singers, the priests, the Levites, the women & the children.

2. **v43 “the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar.”** God wants you to sing with good volume.

- There are some who are in this congregation who are gifted with beautiful voices— both men & women. To help with our congregational singing, please increase your volume.
- Singing with increased & even vigorous volume can improve your health.

B. God wants you to sing with a sincere heart of joy.

1. Jesus repeated words of warning from Isaiah in **Mat 15:8, “This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me.”**

2. It is essential that you ask God to help you sing with a sincere heart full of joy. That can only come when the Holy Spirit convinces you of the truth of Holy Scripture.

3. In **Phil 4:4**, Paul said **“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ... (v8) whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute [report], if there is any excellence & if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.”**

- Find matters for joy & praise throughout your life.
- All these matters for joy & praise are found in Jesus.

## II. REJOICE IN GIVING → **v44**

- A. Those saints in Judah “**rejoiced over the priests & Levites who served**” because they rejoiced in the ordinary means of grace— the Word of God, the sacraments,<sup>1</sup> & prayer.
- a. Because they loved the means of grace, they loved those who administered the means of grace.
  - b. For many of them, they gave with joyful hearts because they sincerely loved those who served God in the temple. When the priests & Levites offered sacrifices, they did so on behalf of all the people.
  - c. **vv45-46** tells us more about the work they appreciated. → **vv45-46**
- B. We should likewise rejoice in the modern, NT church because we delight in the Word of God, the sacraments, & prayer.
1. We ought to give tithes & offerings because God commands it;<sup>2</sup> however, today’s text gives us excellent motivations for giving to the work of God based upon having hearts filled with love & delight for God & His means of grace.
  2. In some denominations, Christians give tithes & offerings to local churches that are biblically minded for the most part; however, some of their giving goes to regional & national levels to support wicked leaders who promote gender confusion & murdering the unborn.
  3. We can be thankful that when we give to the OPC, our tithes & offerings only support that which is honorable, right, pure, lovely, & of good report (**Phil 4:8**).
    - a. That can be said on a local, regional, & national level in our denomination.
    - b. Our foreign mission works are faithful unlike the days when our founder, Dr. J. Gresham Machen, ministered in the northern Presbyterian church (PCUSA).
- C. The saints of Nehemiah’s day gave because they wanted the Levites & singers serving in the temple rather than out in the field. → **vv10-11**
1. The Levites & singers couldn’t serve in the temple because they had to feed their families.
  2. Nehemiah restored them to their posts in the temple & also appointed reliable men in charge of the storehouses.

Review, further application, & conclusion:

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<sup>1</sup> The OT sacraments included the sacrificial system including the Passover & circumcision

<sup>2</sup> Malachi 3:10f