Sunday, November 23, 2014 AM Service Pastor Wayne Hartsgrove

**How Strong Are You?**

**Nehemiah 8:10 New King James Version (NKJV)**

10Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day *is* holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

**2 Corinthians 1:24 New King James Version (NKJV)**

24Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

1. You and I must choose Joy.
2. You and I pursue Joy.

**How can we experience the Joy of the Lord?**

1. The Joy of the Lord comes from making God’s Word personal.
	* **Jeremiah 15:16 (NKJV)**
		+ 16Your words were found, and I ate them,
		And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart;
		For I am called by Your name,
		O Lord God of hosts.
2. The Joy of whole hearted service.
	* **1 Chronicles 29:9 (NKJV)**
		+ 9Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the Lord; and King David also rejoiced greatly.
3. The Joy of faithful service.
	* **Matthew 25:23 (NKJV)**
		+ 23His lord said to him, ‘Well *done,* good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’
4. The Joy of the Lord knowing our heart is right with the Lord.
	* **Psalm 32:11 (NKJV)**
		+ 11Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous;
		And shout for joy, all *you* upright in heart!
5. The Joy of winning souls.
	* **Psalm 126:5-6 (NKJV)**
		+ 5Those who sow in tears
		Shall reap in joy.
		6He who continually goes forth weeping,
		Bearing seed for sowing,
		Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,
		Bringing his sheaves *with him.*
6. The Joy of answered prayer.
	* **John 16:24 (NKJV)**
		+ 24Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.
7. The Joy of the Presence of the Lord.
	* **Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)**
		+ 11You will show me the path of life;
		In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
		At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.
8. The Joy of knowing that your spiritual children are walking in Truth.
	* **3 John 1:4 (NKJV)**
		+ 4I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.[
	* **Romans 14:17 (NKJV)**
		+ 17for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
	* **Galatians 5:22 (NKJV)**
		+ 22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

**If you and I are not experiencing the Joy of the Lord the first things we need to ask ourselves is:**

1. Are we spending time daily in the Presence of the Lord?
2. Do we recognize and appreciate and cultivate our relationship with the Holy Spirit?
	* **Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV)**
* 6So he answered and said to me:

“This *is* the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel:
‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’
Says the Lord of hosts.

1. Have we allowed some sin to take root in our hearts?