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# JOYFUL CONDITION

What joy have you been putting off waiting for the right moment?

How might you live differently if your choice to please God is a reason to celebrate?

What would it take for you to choose to rejoice today in the face of present struggles?

**Nehemiah 8:10** – Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

## 1) I'm Happy...

Most people's emotions depend on their circumstances most of the time. Not always. Some events pause real life for a celebration. Weddings are that sort of event. Those closest to the bride ignore whatever drama might be in their lives and cede their opinions. The mantra is *If the bride is happy, I'm happy*. In a way this is the same as any other day. Only on these days, the circumstances that dictate our emotions are not centered on us. We are participants in another's grand event. This means that we can rise above our own circumstances for the sake of honoring another. We are free to choose our perspective on life in the moment. We are free to rejoice.

**JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2025**

♦**Throw a party:** God's people are partiers. He established festivals and told His people to throw feasts. He created many such occasions to be celebrated every year. We are not an irresponsible people, but we are a people who mark our achievements and those of our God. We are a bold people who celebrate in the face of adversity and animosity. Bold when we are obedient to God, who assures our protection in those moments. In a moment of weariness and peril, God instructed His people to "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine... (Nehemiah 8:10)." It is time to throw a party.

♦**Invite your friends:** Many of us reserve the good stuff for special occasions. Special food and drink, dining ware, clothes. It sits and sits, waiting for a time special enough. When the day finally arrives, we break it out for everyone. God promotes our joy by telling us to have the good stuff and "send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared... (v10)." This is no ordinary day. The father of the bride will do anything to make sure all the guests are happy for the sake of his daughter. So it is with our heavenly Father, who is eager to please His Son.

## II) Whatever the Case...

Picking the date for an event can be terrifying. What if someone important is busy? What if it rains? What if... We must face the fact that the things outside of our control are, well, outside of our control. Some will prioritize special moments regardless. Part of the joy of the event is the expression of how precious the attendees find the subject of the event. What they give up so they can celebrate says more than any gift they could offer.

♦**It's a good day:** When the day of the event arrives, all the invitees have a choice to make. They may have conflicts, turmoil, not feel great, but today is the day. Some will decide that it's a bad day. Others, it's a good day. We know this should be our response because "this day is holy... (v10)." Holy, dedicated in advance to another, to joy because of that other. The circumstances that tempt us to skip the event, deny the feast, resist the joy, those are vying for our heart against our loved one.

♦**It's a God Day:** Anniversaries, birthdays, weddings, funerals, all occasions to rejoice over another. Not what they do—who they are. Their very existence. These days do not need to be special—unless the subject has it as part of their love language. Don't neglect each other's love language. God's love language includes many parties. The day of His party is not just a good day; it's a God Day. A day in which we show our love by celebrating Him no matter what, "for this day is holy to our Lord (v10)." What a blessing that obeying His will that we rejoice is covered by His provision for whatever else we might neglect.

## III) If You're Happy...

If you're happy, I'm happy. A sentiment many of us have held, even if we have not spoken it. The idea that some are special enough to us that we will be happy regardless of cost, discomfort, exhaustion, so long as that one is happy. This is the desire of God's heart. That we decide He is so special that we are happy if He is. Imagine, if we took that seriously, how we might think, speak, and act differently. We would be happy only when we speak His love language of obedience.

♦**Like it's 1999:** A freedom comes over us when our everyday concerns become irrelevant. Clocking out before a vacation, turning in our final exam, the imminent birth of a child. We are free from our prior worries, at least for a moment. "Do not be grieved... (v10)," for on this day God has done something remarkable. We can party like it's 1999 because tomorrow everything will be different. We trust that as we honor Him, He will bless us with whatever tomorrow requires.

♦**House money:** We are living life on house money when we show God our love. God promises to build us up as it is written, "the joy of the Lord is your strength (10)." His joy is the basis of the promise of our victory over tomorrow. This is our joyful condition. We please Him, and He gives us whatever we need for tomorrow. We rejoice over our ability to please Him, and He does it again. It's the life-giving cycle of joy. It's no fun watching—get out on the floor and dance.