

*"Rejoice Evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 KJV*



We cannot rejoice without an attitude of prayer and thankfulness. If I study, meditate in, and believe God's Word, His Joy will sustain me as I await His Return or my departure, whichever is first. In Ezra and Nehemiah's day, Israel was in Babylonian captivity, Jerusalem's wall was torn down, and the Word of God had not been publicly read for decades. *"And Ezra the priest brought the Law before the congregation and he read...and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the Book of the Law. And Ezra...stood upon a*

*pulpit of wood...opened the Book...and when he opened it, all the people stood up: And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen,' with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. So they read in the Book in the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. Nehemiah and Ezra...said unto all the people, 'This day is Holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep.' For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. 'For this day is Holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the Joy of the LORD is your strength.'* Ever been so happy see someone you cried? If we sever the source of real Joy, God's Promises, from our life, we can never hope to rejoice! God is ever Joyous in His Person. He is in a state of constant exuberation! He is complete in Himself, and His completeness completes us when we become one with His Sufficiency through constant contact with His Word. His Holy Spirit is Omnipresent and a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of our heart, so we need reach no further than a thought to touch God! As we read and study His Holy Word, He communicates His Word to our inner-most thoughts to meet the need of the moment. Whether knowledge, comfort, or exhortation, He will "Speak" to our heart in a manner that will complete us and impart His Joy to our soul! To "rejoice" is to re-visit Joy. I can only JOY in Christmas for a day, but I can REJOICE in it again and again until the next. God is ever-present and I can re-visit His Presence by continually revisiting His Word for God is His Word. *"In the beginning was the Word...and the Word was God."* His Word in our thoughts is His Presence and thereby our joy. We do not have to wait until we get to Heaven to know the Presence of the Lord. It's like when you're almost asleep and someone comes into the room. You sense their presence, and the whole thing blends into a dream. In Heaven we will be fully awake in His Presence, forever! We'll need no command to RE-joice for we will be in an eternal Day of JOY! We now only *"see through a glass darkly, but then, face to Face."* His Voice is still and small in thought, and cannot be heard unless we are still. *"Be still, and KNOW that I am God!"* We must exclude the cacophony of other thoughts and allow God's Word to whisper Truth to our thoughts; a difficult task in the chaos that surrounds us, but we must *"pray without ceasing:"* be always listening!

The attitude of thankful heart,  
Will unto us God's Joy impart,  
Ever conscious that He is there,  
He will our broken heart repair. -CGP

Knowing Scripture enables us to hear the *"still small Voice."* Joy and Peace is hearing the Voice of God and knowing He is with me! I can only recognize those I've known before. Do you recognize God when He's Speaking to you? Do you know His Words? Creation surrounds you with His Majestic Whispers. Do you hear Him?

*"This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth (always in thought); but thou shalt MEDITATE THEREIN DAY AND NIGHT, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is Written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Joshua 1:8 KJV*