

**January 28, 2022**

The Lord wants you to experience real and abundant life:

**Gal. 5:22-23** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (NIV)*

The second fruit that we have, because of the Spirit living within us, is joy! The Greek word for joy is **chara** which means *realizing God's favor and rejoicing in it*. Have you realized what the LORD has truly done for you? If you have, then I don't have to tell you that you will be overflowing with the joy of the LORD. In fact, we get a beautiful picture of this from Nehemiah as he was bringing the people of the newly rebuilt walls of Jerusalem together. As they gathered, Ezra began by reading scripture from sunrise until noon. And all of the people were overcome with worship. We read in **Neh. 8:6**, *Ezra praised the LORD, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. (NIV)* They were full of the thankfulness for what the LORD had helped them accomplish. They were moved by the Word of God that had been spoken to them. Then Nehemiah, who had led the reconstruction of the wall and the replacing of the gates of Jerusalem, spoke to all the people and said, **v. 10** *"Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our LORD. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." (NIV)* Joy overcomes sorrow, disappointment, loss, grief, and depression. It is the assurance that the One Who made you will sustain you. And that, my friends, should fill you with the joy of the LORD. Let us then, go forth today with the joy of the LORD flowing from within us. When people see it, they will want it as well.

**Dear LORD, thank You for the joy that You give us by Your Holy Spirit. You fill us with this joy and it is infectious to those we come in contact with. Thank You for this strength. In Jesus Name, Amen**