

The Sound of Rejoicing

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Nehemiah 12.
- B. The building of the wall describes a wonderful event.
- C. There are many occasions for a people to celebrate and dedicate.

II. Aspects that make up true celebration.

A. The expression of joy.

- 1. Joy depends upon justification and being acceptable before God.
- 2. Happiness fades and comes from within, but joy comes from within and lasts.

B. Purification.

- 1. One cannot celebrate with a life in ruin.
- 2. One cannot praise in hypocrisy. (Psalm 24)
- 3. God does not do His work with dirty vessels—the priests had to purify the people and be purified.
- 4. We purify ourselves by confessing our failures and believing that we have been cleansed.

C. Thankfulness. The people were grateful for the move of the Persian king, the protection, the spirit of unity, the strength, the supply and the will to work.

D. The procession of the choir.

- 1. Walking around something is a way of claiming something for God.
- 2. We ought to claim things for God in prayer.

E. Through Jesus we are to offer a sacrifice of praise and sharing with others. (Hebrews 13)

F. An offering was given with pleasure—offerings mean nothing if they are not given cheerfully.

G. The people belonged to each other.

- 1. We must appreciate that there is diversity in the body of Christ.
- 2. Each person is important.

Application questions:

1. Would you say that the church in general today could be characterized by joy? Explain.

2. What are fitting occasions for celebrations in the church?

3. Which aspect of celebration do you find the most helpful to understand? Explain.
