

Joy on the Journey

Read together: Nehemiah 8:9-12; Mark 12:30

God's restoring grace gives weary leaders a reason to rejoice and a renewed strength to keep loving and serving.

Bring your discouragement into the light

There are seasons when serving feels heavy. You remember a conversation you handled poorly, a commitment you did not keep, or an area where your heart has grown distracted. Even while doing useful work, you can carry the feeling that you have let God down.

In Nehemiah 8, the people hear the Law and begin to weep. The leaders direct them toward a holy day of rejoicing and sharing with those who have nothing prepared. God's Word has reached them, and they are invited to respond together.

That scene gives us something to consider as leaders. When God brings something into the light, we can respond honestly. We can acknowledge our need, receive His grace, and take the next step. We do not have to make discouragement our permanent home.

Find strength in your relationship with God

It is easy to look to circumstances to tell us how we are doing. A strong Sunday encourages us. A difficult conversation drains us. The schedule changes, and our sense of peace moves with it.

The joy of the Lord draws us back to our relationship with Him. He remains worthy of our love and attention in seasons that feel unfinished. We can thank Him for His mercy while still working through a problem. We can rejoice in restoration while we are still learning to live differently.

Mark 12:30 calls us to love God with our whole selves. Bring Him your attention, your questions, and your tiredness. Take time to pray as a person who needs Him, not only as a leader preparing to help other people. A serving role cannot replace the relationship that sustains it.

Help your team make room for joy

Leaders influence what a team notices. If every conversation is about what went wrong, people can lose sight of the good already happening. If we only celebrate, people may feel unable to speak honestly about pain. A healthy team has room for both truth and gratitude.

Ask what God is restoring. Notice a repaired relationship, a volunteer growing in confidence, or a person taking a step of faith. Give people time to name those things. Let encouragement be specific enough that someone knows you have actually seen their effort.

The passage also includes sharing with people who lack what they need. Joy can move us toward care. Look around the team and ask who needs support, inclusion, or a practical expression of kindness. We can help one another experience the goodness we are celebrating.

Lead this week

Begin your next team conversation by naming one reason for gratitude. Then ask where somebody needs help. Keep both questions sincere. As we receive God's grace and share His care, joy becomes part of the way we travel through a difficult season together.

Talk it through

What has been draining your joy? Where can you see evidence of God's restoring work?

One next step

Thank God for one specific grace and extend one practical kindness to a weary teammate.