

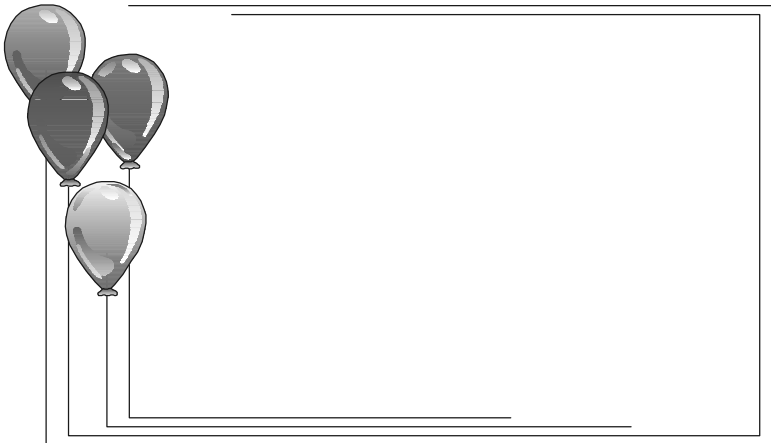
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Learning From Our Mistakes

Pastor Herman Tang

We can learn from our mistakes

About two years ago in Rochester, an orthopedic surgeon cut into the wrong knee during arthroscopic surgery. The patient was supposed to have surgery on her right knee but the surgeon made two small incisions in her left knee instead. The mistake occurred despite the fact that the orthopedic surgeon had “signed” the women’s right knee to make sure he operated on the injured one. The error occurred during the fifth arthroscopy he had performed that day. The number is not unusual but the first four surgeries were on left knees, and the equipment was still set up for left-knee surgery. Since the incident, the hospital has begun requiring that every member of the surgical team - surgeon, nurses and anesthesiologist - verbally confirms that they have the correct limb or body part before the operation begins. Our past mistakes can help us avoid future problems if we can learn from them.

There are different kinds of mistakes. Some are less serious and some are more serious. King David wrote a poem to express his knowledge of God’s words and his inner struggles.

David said in Psalm 19:11-14:

- ¹¹ *By them (God’s words) is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*
- ¹² *Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.*
- ¹³ *Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me.*
Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression.
- ¹⁴ *May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight,
O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

Our goal in life is to please God. David realized the danger of offending God. He mentioned the various kinds of his personal mistakes including errors, hidden faults, willful sins and great

transgressions. We all need to be warned of the danger of sinning against God. We do not want our lives to be ruled by sins. The ultimate purpose of life is to please God.

We all make mistakes

No human being, except Jesus Christ, can be free from making mistakes. *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.”* (Hebrews 4:15) Only Jesus is the perfect one. He has never made any mistake. He has never committed any sin. That is why we can come to Jesus to ask Him for help. *“Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”* (Hebrews 4:16)

It is easy for us to make mistakes everyday if we are not careful. For example:

- We say hurtful things to people
- We live in such a hurry that we become anxious
- We have unclean thoughts
- We neglect our health because of our bad habit of eating or drinking
- We cannot forgive those who have offended us
- We are not considerate to people the way we should
- We do not give thanks to God although we know about God

King David made terrible mistakes. He committed adultery with another man's wife. In order to cover up his sin, he planned to have the man killed. He was going down morally like a sinking ship. But God is merciful. God sent His servant Nathan to warn David. David was awakened from his pitiful situation and he wrote another poem.

Psalm 51 (*A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.*)

- ¹ *Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.*
- ² *Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.*

³ *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.*

⁴ *Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.*

(vv. 5-9 omitted)

¹⁰ *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

¹¹ *Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.*

¹² *Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*

¹³ *Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.*

(vv. 14-15 omitted)

¹⁶ *You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.*

¹⁷ *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

(vv. 18-19 omitted)

This poem truly reflects David's sorrow for sin and his awareness of God's forgiveness.

There is hope in God

We do not need to feel hopeless when we have made a mistake. The Bible tells us how God will not condemn us if we can learn from our mistakes. Here are a few things we can learn from David:

1. We need to be aware of our imperfection
2. We need to admit our wrong doings
3. We need to confess our sins before God
4. We need to be aware of God's forgiveness
5. We need to trust in God's promise

Christians are not perfect

Some people think Christians are perfect. Wrong. Christians do not make mistakes. Wrong again. Christians are people who understand that they are not perfect and they can make mistakes. Christians believe they are sinners. Christians are forgiven by God because they believe that Jesus died on the cross for them.

Come to Jesus

Are you troubled by the mistakes you have made? Do you feel like there is no hope? God is inviting you to come to Him. Listen to this:

This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why; so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted. (John 3:16-18a. *The Message*.)



The RCCC-West Story

Georgina Ho

Today our Lord's mission is accomplished! It is certainly a happy and exciting day when we witness the birth of a new church. This has been a long awaited day. It is a testimony of God's goodness and faithfulness to us.

Five years ago at the spring retreat of our Church Deacon Board, planting a church on the west side of town was the vision of our church for the next five years. The Spirit was really moving among us and the plan for the Westside Prayer Group started. This group has been meeting weekly for nearly five years and is still active and well today. This is another witness of God's unfailing and abundant provisions.

It has always been in the heart of our former deacon brother King-Fai Choi to have a church in the west side of town. Our church commissioned a Church Planting Committee for this task. The group included Alan Chon, Patrick Ho, David Hung, Shirley Lynn, Tiantang Peng and myself, with Pastor Tang as our advisor. We recruited prayer warriors and plan several outreach events, all the while seeking God's guidance.

Two years ago, part of God's answer to our prayers came through in providing us with brother Wei Feng. His enthusiasm and dedication in planting a new church has given us a boost. The demographics from the 2000 census also help to confirm the need of a Chinese church on the west side of town. More bible study groups were started at homes and on campus. We continue to look for a suitable location. A new committee was formed last January as our task became more focused. The group included Sherman Chen, Patrick Ho, Mitchell Lin, Min Tang, Li Xie, Sam Yuan and myself, with brother Wei Feng and Pastor Tang as advisors. We continue to do outreach work, pray and study. God has raised over 100 adult brothers and sisters from our church to be prayer warriors and I sincerely thank each one of you for your faithfulness in this spiritual warfare. Thanks also to those brothers and sisters who worked so hard in our outreach events, preparing food, designing posters, fliers and mailings. Some of you have selflessly opened your homes for bible studies and BBQ outreaches. All this local mission work is pleasing in our Father's eyes, but above all, we thank Him for choosing us to be His coworkers.

God has blessed us far more than what we have asked for. Through the exercise of planting a new church, God has helped our group to grow closer to Him and to each other. We learn to compliment one another to serve together effectively. God has also provided us with a really friendly church that welcomes us with open arms. The congregation of the Henrietta Wesleyan Church and their Pastor Matt are also eager to partner with us to reach out to the community. God's timing is always perfect. We couldn't ask for more.

Today also marks the beginning of nurturing our 'newborn' to maturity. As all parents know, this is a lengthy process but we have our Father to help and guide us. I encourage each one of you to continue to pray for this ministry, to serve sacrificially to nourish our 'newborn', and to praise God for letting us be part of this exciting work.

Thanks to God

Zachary Leung

It was only during my last days in Rochester that I started to look back on my time there—there, and not here, because I'm now in Singapore. Looking back, I see how God had showered many blessings upon me in my time in Rochester.

When I arrived in Rochester, I was planning to attend an American church. Actually, someone from my church—Peter Leung, for those who know him—had studied in Rochester around 10 years ago. He told me about RCCC and suggested that I go there. He also mentioned aunty Shirley. However, I wanted to experience life in an American church, since I had been in a Chinese culture all my life, so I was not sure if I wanted to attend RCCC.

At this point, perhaps you might ask: how then did you end up in RCCC?

Actually, it's Sam and Wendy Ng's fault. I mean this in a nice way. On the first Saturday that I was here, my father called me and my mother. She flew with me to Rochester to help me out with some stuff. He said that even though I was thinking of finding an American church, I should still go to church on Sunday while I was in the process of looking for a church. So, he suggested that we go to RCCC that Sunday. If I wanted, I could continue looking for another church later. Thus, we went to RCCC that Sunday. There, we got to know Sam and Wendy, and a few other brothers and sisters who talked to us after service ended.

The next Friday, Sam and Wendy invited me to their home for dinner. Quite coincidentally (I think it wasn't coincidental) the college fellowship had Bible study at their house after dinner. So I joined them for Bible study, and got to know the other people in the college fellowship. That is how I began going regularly to RCCC and the college fellowship.

Thinking about it now, I realize how God led me into RCCC. If my father had not called me on Saturday, I might not have gone to church that Sunday. If Sam and Wendy had not invited me to dinner, I might have decided to join another college group at school. Although it was just a dinner invitation, this act, motivated by their love for others, really helped to change my mind about looking for an American church. I am not saying that they were the main

reason that I went to RCCC; what I am saying is that I feel that God used them to bring me into RCCC.

I thank God that He really helped me to grow through church and Bible study—these sessions were a spiritual anchor in my life. I was really taught, reminded and encouraged in God's Word through those times. I also learned a lot from the brothers and sisters here, through their care and concern for one another and for me. I especially thank God for the weekly prayer meetings—that was a time when we could share our experiences, and a time to bring our needs, as well as the needs of the church and the needs of others to our Father! Those times really impressed on me the importance and power of prayer.

In school, (at the University of Rochester) I was also able to interact with many unbelievers. I especially thank God that He gave me the chance to talk to a few of them about God. It was quite miraculous, for instance, how God led the conversations I had with my roommate (who is Jewish) so that I was able to talk to him about the New Testament. My roommate felt that the New Testament was not trustworthy, and it was merely invented by Jesus' disciples or other people. I was able to tell him about how the historical evidence that supported the New Testament. Historical evidence cannot prove that God exists or that the events recorded in the Bible happened. However, it can show how the Bible is trustworthy as a historical record, and hence trustworthy in its spiritual account. God also brought me to know a friend I met at the dining center. One day, we were having lunch together, and he seemed a little depressed so I asked him about what it was. Though we had only known each other for three months, and only met around 10 occasions during that time, he was willing to talk to me about his problems. I thank God that I was able to give him advice from a worldly point of view as well as advice based upon what God tells us in the Bible; quite miraculously, he was willing to listen to the Christian principles I told him about. At the end of the conversation, I suggested that he go to his friend's church, or to our church, but though he was interested in God (he said he prayed to God, and went to church until he was 7) he didn't really want to go to church. I feel a little disappointed that he wasn't willing to seek God, and that I wasn't able to change my roommate's point of view. However, God can help people to see His truth and love, and how they need Him!

God has also continued to train me up in something I've always found hard to do: telling people they're wrong. When people

tell me I should download MP3s from CDs I don't own (which is illegal, it's stealing) or when people just smuggle food out of the all-you-can-eat dining center, it's hard for me to tell them to their face that what they're doing is wrong. I used to think that the reason for this was that I was afraid that they would be offended. What I realized was that I was more afraid that if I told them they were wrong, they wouldn't accept me. But as God's servant, which was more important? What God thought, or what other people thought? God also put the question in my head: what would Jesus do? (also known as WWJD) Jesus criticized the Pharisees in their self-righteousness and hypocrisy, he reacted in righteous fury to those who desecrated the temple by setting up stalls in the temple.. John the Baptist's message to the people was "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 3:2) and I think that's the message God wants us to carry to the world too.

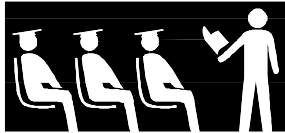
After I realized this, it still took some time to learn to submit to God. And it's still something I need to continue to learn. During some of the times when I did meet someone who was in sin, instead of telling him about it; I would begin to question whether God would want me to tell him about it, even though it was quite obvious that God would want me to do so. During other times, I would want to tell the person about it, but it was always so hard to open my mouth to tell him! It's not always easy and pleasing to us to submit to God, to suffer shame (for sometimes they'll disagree and say they're right) for correcting them. But God is our Lord, Savior, and Father, and He calls us (very rightfully) to complete obedience, so we should obey Him in everything. In those trials, oftentimes my prayer will be "God, help me to obey you." And I think in those situations God does help us, He's more than willing to help us.

Just to share with you a song I learned in Rochester, one I really like.

He is able, more than able,
 To accomplish what concerns me today.
 He is able, more than able,
 To handle anything that comes my way.
 He is able, more than able,
 To do much more than I could ever dream.
 He is able, more than able,
 To make me what he wants me to be.

I couldn't have imagined the things that God gave to me in Rochester. The things He worked in my life are much greater than

anything I could have dreamed. To live away from everything so familiar, to experience a -20°F winter, to eat salad every day—God has really brought me through a lot! Most of all though, the time in Rochester was a time when God taught me lessons and molded me more into what He wants me to be, like Christ. Surely God is able to help each one of us to grow in Christ each day. May He build you up in Him, and may you be willing to become what God wants you to be!



By His Spirit

Sam Ng

Last year at this time I knew that a year of immense challenges and difficulties was looming ahead. Unprepared for the path in front, I was like a child who, standing at the edge of the pitch-black woods, warily and reluctantly embarked on a journey that knew no definite destination. The road was so dark indeed that I not only lost any sense of direction, but also lost sight of God.

Prior to this I had always trusted in the Lord to guide my every step. Even during times of tremendous uncertainties I had constantly believed that God would lead me through all uneasy circumstances. Yet, I could not say the same this time. To be sure, intellectually I could still grasp the concept of God's protection for all his children, which ensures that they come out of turmoil and trials not only unscathed, but polished and strengthened. Emotionally, however, I felt this concept had lost its reassuring relevance in reality. I could not, and dared not imagine how I could walk through and come out of the year ahead still in one piece. Where was my light? Where was my compass? How could I find my way through this mysterious terrain?

The series of challenges began with a stressful summer in preparation for both the first of two doctorate comprehensive exams

at Eastman in October and my first ever paper presentation at the largest national music theory conference in November. Although the regular program schedule places the exams at a much later time, the fear that I would end up following the footsteps of many of my (unmarried) colleagues, who spent up to eight years to finish the degree, coerced me to tackle them early. This unfortunately implied that not only I had less time than other students to prepare for the exam in the first place, but also my study period was further cut short by the time and energy required for my conference paper. At the edge of the forest, the burden of darkness was already crushing my spirit.

While I was hoping God would intervene and provide me with some solace, He instead made the pressure even heavier. At the time that I needed every minute in the world to juggle a million things, God told me that I was to serve Him in our church summer music camp. I couldn't help feeling upset, wondering why I wasn't at least left alone, if not downright sympathized. Why when I asked for more matches to light up the way would God give me none, but even ask me to use the few that I was desperately hanging on to for purposes other than helping myself walk in the dark?

God's answer was nothing short of a miracle. He minded not my distrust, nor selfishness, but instead taught me a precious lesson of faith. Indeed, both obstacles (the exam and the paper presentation) toppled like Goliath and the Philistines did at David's fling of the stone; but what really mattered was that God Himself clearly held my hand all through the journey. He gave me loving brothers and sisters, whose prayers and words of encouragement were unfailing support and inspiration. Joanne, See-Tsai and Yan Yan, having taken the exam just six months before, were completely unselfish in sharing with me their study notes, which had crystallized from hours and months of labor. I realized that God granted me no more matches, and even commanded me to use the few I had for His work because He wanted me to rely not on the matches, but totally on His own guidance when I strolled down the unforeseeable twists and turns in the forest path.

Two major challenges have been met, and a spiritual lesson learned. I thought I would forever have a deeper faith in God. And how shortsighted I was. The next big challenge stood like a new Goliath, facing whom I was as feeble as all the Israelites other than David. I gradually slipped back to the distrustful self, always skeptical and wary about what was going to happen next.

The new challenge, definitely the biggest among all three, was the second of the two doctorate exams in the music theory program in April, which has been notoriously hard and taxing. For three days exam takers sit nine to four typing their answers like insane, and only if they pass this portion do they sit for the final oral exam, which consists of two hours of “interrogation” by four faculty members. In other words, to pass the exam in its entirety, a student would have to endure twenty-three hours of intense “grilling”, by the end of which he/she would be more well done than an already-turned-charcoal steak.

The five months building up to the exam week witnessed some of the darkest and lowest periods of my life. Every single day I was both mentally and physically exhausted because of the studying. On top of spending a lot of time reading on my own, I also had to attend and prepare handouts for study group meetings three days a week, each meeting lasting at least three hours. Even more painful was the fact that very often I’d feel completely lost in a sea of discussion, suffocated by showers of terms, concepts, jargons, names, dates, facts, etc. Every time I went home to be relieved from the torture of the study group discussions, I told Wendy in my utterly defeated spirit, “How am I going to pass this?” Soon I realized it was the pitch-black woods experience all over again. The only difference is that this one was even more gloomy.

As I found myself in desperate need for more time for my studies, I began to consider usurping time from anywhere possible. The very first thought that came to my mind was that I ought to cut down my church commitments. Prayer meetings on Tuesdays, Bible studies on Fridays, church choirs on Saturdays, and Sunday worships ... I was lured into thinking that all this time I spent in serving, praying, worshipping, and studying the word of the Lord was dragging me seriously behind in my preparation for the exam. I needed matches, a lot of them, to shine my way in the hidden paths of the forest. I told the Lord that I couldn’t afford to lose any of them any more, let alone using them in ways other than what I wanted myself.

Thankfully, my plans to cut down church time did not actualize. God gradually instilled back in me a willingness to continue with my usual church commitments by speaking His words to me through a God-fearing wife. Day in and day out Wendy kept reminding me of a wonderful promise God has given us in the Bible: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit.” (Zechariah 4:6). Still, it was a real test of faith. Did I want to trust in the Lord and let Him use all my

matches in whatever ways He willed and still believe that I would come out of the forest in safe hands? Indeed the decision was a difficult one, but God made it much easier by surrounding me with Wendy's love and encouragement. I will never forget the day when she said, "Even if you don't pass, I still love you". It was a better boost in my spirit than anything I would have imagined. On top of this were prayers, phone calls, and even occasional delicacies from brothers and sisters; they cheered me on all the way.

The past year makes me realize that when we are willing to invest our time and energy in God, He will honor our submission and bestow on us blessings that we do not expect. What leads us through trials and turmoil is not the matches we hang on to in our pocket, for God has already promised He would guide our steps and carry us through by His very own hands. He wants us to give up the authority over the matches, which are given by Him in the first place, to serve not ourselves but others. Only then we realize that even walking through the pitch-black woods we are always in the safe hands of the almighty Father.

In the church retreat this year Pastor Yap encouraged us to change for the better in our spiritual lives. I hope my journey through the woods is a living testimony to encourage brothers and sisters to spend more time in the Lord. We are partners in and of Christ in building up His church. Our matches are at His disposal to glorify His name and lead other people to Christ. "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33)



Remembering A Special Friend

Spoken At The Memorial Service Of Dorothy Ernst

Lucy Woo

Mrs. Ernst is no longer with us, but her spirit and influence continues to live in us.

The Ernsts were the first American Christians to greet us in Rochester, N.Y. That was in 1960 when I was attending the Eastman School of Music, and Woo, my husband, who was then a bachelor, was working at General Dynamics. Woo and I, from totally different backgrounds, speaking different Chinese dialects, were attracted to and admired Mr. & Mrs. Ernst for their ministry to international students.

It was their goal to reach out to students, lead them to Christ and help them grow spiritually. They opened their home to students only two years after their family of seven moved to Rochester. There was hardly time to feel settled. Life was difficult for them, yet they were most generous and shared what little they had with many. It was a sacrifice. Every Friday night, many students would gather in their living room for bible study. It was always followed by refreshment. And on holidays Mr. & Mrs. Ernst would always extend an invitation to students who had no place to go; even children were given the run of the house. We were all part of this extended international family --- a sight that must have brought smiles to our Lord Jesus. Their devotion to each other and to their children was reinforcement to their ministry.

Robert and Dorothy Ernst's legacy of faith, courage, love and compassion will continue into eternity in the many lives they touched while they lived here on this earth. One only has to look at the Friday night bible study fellowship, founded by them. It evolved into the Rochester Chinese Christian Church and is now a congregation of a few hundred people. Following the Ernst tradition, the congregation endeavors to study the scripture and be transformed by God's love and grace, through faith in Jesus and that same power that raised Him from the dead.

I thank God for Mrs. Ernst and her deep love for our own family. Our daughter Debbie, and our son Michael who is with us today, have many fond memories of the Ernst family. So dear was their relationship with Mr. and Mrs. Ernst that Debbie and Michael

are accustomed to calling them "Auntie Dorothy and Uncle Robert. Auntie Dorothy baby-sat and cared for them regularly while they were children.

Debbie and Michael remember spending many hours exploring every nook and cranny of that wonderful old colonial house of theirs in Rochester. They also remember with delight their many adventures in the house and neighborhood with their daughter, Susie. They remember the many spiritual lessons from Auntie Dorothy arising from "Our Daily Bread" devotionals. They also remember spending many weekends keeping any eye on that slow-cooked and wonderfully delicious turkey often served for dinner on Saturdays and Sundays! And I will never forget how the Ernst made my wedding so special! They had me stay at their home the night before my wedding so that I could awake to a special breakfast served in bed. What a privilege and honor!

I can't imagine what our family would be like today without the presence of Dorothy Ernst in our lives. Her faith, love, compassion, honesty, wisdom and mercy made a mark on our lives that help set us on the right course for life. No doubt, all of you here have stories to tell about Dorothy and how she made an important impact on your lives.

All of us will miss her, but can be comforted in knowing that she is in a much better place with our Father in heaven, seated with the many saints before us.



Trading My Sorrows For Joy

Aileen Chow

All of us had experienced sadness in our lives. When we live through those feelings we wish it would not happen to us. We hope the pain and sorrow would not last long. How long are we to endure the suffering inflicted on us? Jesus endured the ultimate suffering for us when he was on earth.

In the book of James, it is written, “whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy.” (*James 1:2, New Living Translation*) How are we to feel joyful when in pain or sorrow? It may be strange but the Bible says, “no matter what happens, always be thankful...” (*1 Thess. 5:18, NLT*). We need to give thanks to God for His ‘Word’ – because His Word is the truth. Moreover, we need to believe in His Word, and believe His Word will deliver and rescue you from your sorrows.

There is a verse in Psalms that describes God’s joy, it says in Psalm 30:5a, “Weeping may go on all night, but joy comes with morning.” Where does this joy come from? This joy comes from God. What is God’s joy? God’s joy is *deliverance*. His joy liberates or redeems us from state of sorrow. God’s joy is *provision*. He provides us with what we need. God’s joy is *Thanksgiving*. In Philippians 4:8, “Don’t worry about anything, instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace...” (*Philippians 4:8, NLT*) And lastly, God’s joy is *laughter*. It is a gift to you to laugh at sorrow and the impossible situation. We need to face toughness with God’s joy always.

Once we understand God’s joy, how will it relieve our pain and sorrow?

1) *Let God’s joy be your strength.* A great leader named Nehemiah said to his people, “Don’t be dejected and sad, for the joy of the Lord is your strength!” (*Nehemiah 8:10, NLT*) These encouraging words were spoken to the Israelites when Ezra read from the law. When the people heard the words from the Book of the Law found in the Lord’s Temple, they started to weep. Although the words were ancient, the law was something new to them. Nehemiah comforted and encouraged them to go and celebrate rather than be sad. He announced that this was a sacred day and

there should be joy because the Lord will now become their power to relieve them of all sorrows and troubles.

2) *Let God's joy be the music.* Music is wonderful therapy that helps us relax and forget our troubles. Consider King David who had to deal with many enemies. They were people who were liars and very ungodly. Under all the pressure and troubles he had to face, he turned to God "my only safe haven." In Psalms 43:4, (NLT) he says, "There I will go to the altar of God, to God – the source of all my joy. I will praise you with my harp, O God, my God!" A long time ago, David played the harp when he was a shepherd. He yearned for the harp so that he can praise God.

3) *Let God's joy overflow you.* In order to feel joyful we need to have his joy be made complete in us. John 15:11 (NLT) says, "I have told you this so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow."

Would you trade your sorrow for God's joy? If so, all you need to do is to say "Yes, Lord", and he will take it away from you. Many people don't realize this: When they are hurting they can find relief from God. They can receive God's joy. This is a gift to us from God. God loves us so much and he is always willing to help; "Why am I discouraged? Why so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again – my Savior and my God!" (*Psalms 42:11, NLT*).

There is a song that my husband Barry and I would like to share with you.

Trading My Sorrow

*I'm trading my sorrows. I'm trading my shame.
I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord.
I'm trading my sickness. I'm trading my pain.
I'm laying it down for the joy of the Lord.*

*We say yes Lord, yes Lord, yes, yes Lord.
Yes Lord, yes Lord, yes, yes Lord.
Yes Lord, yes Lord, yes, yes Lord Amen.*

*I'm pressed but not crushed, persecuted not abandoned.
Struck down but not destroyed.
I am blessed beyond the curse for His promise will endure that
His joy gonna be my strength.
Though the sorrow may last for night, His joy comes with the morning."*

(Words and music by Darryl Evans, ©1998 Integrity's Hosanna Music)