



# The Living God Ministries, Inc.

Montgomery & Spanish Fort, Alabama

January 03, 2020

## **The Blessing of Assembling and Worshipping Together in Spirit**

Warm hellos to you dear brethren, co-workers, and spiritual family here on the Coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and scattered children of God from our offices here in Spanish Fort.

I've been reflecting on my wife's and my recent inspiring pastoral visit with several scattered members of the body of Christ. It's so encouraging to share how the many parts of the body are connected to Christ, the head of His church, through the indwelling of His Spirit and each other. This same Spirit unites us with God the Father.

We've been blessed to have house guests with us here for much of this week. We've talked about the winter some have experienced so far to the north of us. It's been mentioned to me that another round of very frigid weather has hit a good part of the U.S. Many of our scattered brethren are becoming ill due to being indoors more, and not getting the much needed sunshine out of doors.

I've talked over the past weeks with many of the brethren my wife and I serve, and it has already been a difficult winter for them, with providing fuel for keeping warm etc. in some of their homes.

I have asked many brethren here in the Northern Hemisphere, "Have any of you come down with a fever or become ill this cold winter?" There are the usual cases of the flu and colds that make their rounds. We've seen viruses hit some parts of Canada and the U.S. But I am talking more specifically about "cabin fever!"

"Cabin Fever" is an idiomatic term, first recorded in 1918, for a claustrophobic reaction that takes place when a person or group is isolated and/or shut in a small space, with nothing to do for an extended period. Cabin fever describes the extreme irritability and restlessness a person may feel in these situations.

A person may experience cabin fever in a situation such as being in a simple country vacation cottage. When experiencing cabin fever, a person may tend to sleep, have distrust of anyone they are with, and an urge to go outside even in the rain, snow, or dark. The phrase is also used humorously to indicate "simple boredom from being home alone".

With cold temperatures and sometimes dangerously cold weather, we may need to remain inside for several days and stay home on the Sabbath if traveling conditions are dangerous or even questionable.

I remember a Sabbath back while living in Nebraska, where we left very early one Sabbath morning to cover worship services in Des Moines, IA. It had just snowed about 10" and a little more snow was falling when we left to head across Interstate 80 where it was very windy, cold, and still snowing. Along our way we saw numerous cars in the ditch, hazard blinkers still on, and in some cases people inside. Many semi-trucks were upside down or jackknifed in the median and on bridges. That should have been a message that we should not have been out there travelling with the questionable driving conditions. But we continued on and made it to the Sabbath service and back home to the second church service of the day, happy that we did not get stranded or stuck somewhere. It was nerve wracking, and very stressful. I do not plan to duplicate a trip like that again.

When you do miss attending services, and then return to be with everyone the following week, it can seem like such a long time that you are away. It is so good to see your friends and spiritual family again. I hope that is how we all feel. We should make the effort to respond to God's instruction to appear before Him on his holy convocations. God is merciful and allows for circumstances such as weather, health, finances and other things when we can't make it.

With gasoline prices it can be a financial challenge to attend services every week when one lives a distance from the meeting place. We encourage our spiritual family to attend Worship services as often as they can, but we also need to be understanding of each person's circumstances. If someone has not been there in a while, it's helpful to give them a call and simply say, "I miss you and I hope everything is OK."

In addition to being with your spiritual family in person, we also have the opportunity to fellowship via telephone conference and/or view a webcast. This too is fellowshipping in the Spirit. Unfortunately at times too much emphasis has been placed on only being at worship services in person, and has caused many to be turned away when it was not necessary.

Why do we make effort to assemble together either in person physically or via a connection? We know that our Creator proclaims His "Holy convocations!". . .The Feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." (Leviticus 23:2)

The first Feast on the list is "the seventh day . . . Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation."

(v.3) The Hebrew word translated "convocation" is 'miqra' and the Online Bible Hebrew Lexicon associates this word with: convocation, convoking, reading, a calling together. We are not only "the called out ones" but also called to assemble together. It's like a messenger has come to our door and read our name and the directives to appear before the One issuing the command. It is a great privilege to come before the Great God and be instructed by Him through the reading, sharing and expounding of His Word.

One of the important parts of the worship service is the singing of Hymns as we worship God. The opening line of one of the common hymns sung is: "Come before His presence with singing." This line is taken from Psalm 100:2. This Psalm emphasizes coming before God with joy, gladness and thanksgiving as well as celebrating His enduring truth. We can all have a part in creating this praiseful and worshipful attitude, mood, and atmosphere. I really enjoy hearing the voices of the congregation as we sing together. It is a joyful experience!

Having fellowship and greeting one another by name, including the younger members of the congregation, and connecting with others helps to bind us together. We can share what is happening in our lives and encourage one another. We all know the instructions in Hebrews 10:24 about the need "to stir up love and good works" when we assemble together.

The apostle John relates having fellowship with one another and walking in then light to also having fellowship "with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3)

Would you join me in prayer for your brethren that they will have safe traveling conditions, and/or good connections, and that they will be able to be part of God's weekly convocation?

May God bless and encourage you on His special day, and I wish you good health even if you too may have had some of that "cabin fever" partly due to not being able to attend in person with others of the body of Christ.

Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

**-Scott Hoefker**

(Pastor, *The Living God Ministries Gulf Coast*)

The schedule for this week's Sabbath is:

**January 3<sup>rd</sup> / Friday: Evening Praise Sacrifice to welcome God's Sabbath - 6:30 pm** (via Teleconference live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

**January 4<sup>th</sup> / Saturday: Spirit and Truth Worship Services - 10:15 am**, with services held in **Montgomery and Spanish Fort** at our normal **10:15 a.m.** (with *phone conference connection* available from Montgomery and *Live Webcast* from Spanish Fort). A noon “potluck” meal will be enjoyed and shared in in Spanish Fort shortly after worship services.

**January 4<sup>th</sup> / Saturday: Sabbath Fellowship** (Interactive Bible Discussion) - **3:30 pm** from Spanish Fort. (Connecting live with all via telephone conference).

Next Sabbath’s Schedule:

**January 10<sup>th</sup> / Friday: Evening Praise Sacrifice to welcome God’s Sabbath - 6:30 pm** (via Teleconference live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

**January 11<sup>th</sup> / Saturday: Spirit and Truth Worship Services - 10:15 am**, with services held in **Montgomery** (those in our Spanish Fort congregation and all others are welcomed and encouraged to connect *live* to Worship Services via our normal phone conference from Montgomery). There will be a pot-luck fellowship noon meal in **Montgomery** shortly after Worship Services are finished.

**January 11<sup>th</sup> / Saturday: Sabbath Fellowship** (Interactive Bible Discussion) - **3:30 pm** from Montgomery. (Connecting live with all via telephone conference).

**January 11<sup>th</sup> / Saturday: Monthly Family Meeting** with our Congregation **5:00 p.m.**

Telephone Ministry (English): Call **1-712-770-4700**; then, when asked, enter Code **112165 #** to join.

(Note: All callers are muted and must press **\*6** to comment and **\*6** to resume mute.)

All times are listed in Central Standard Time zone.

Our Daily Bread Recordings

Sunday through Saturday / Our Daily Bread [listen anytime 24/7 to a recorded 15 minute message] Call 1-712-770-4709 (note this call in number is different and ends in “9”), then when asked, enter code 112165# [reference code numbers are on “Spiritual Fellowship Opportunities” on this website <http://www.tlgministriesgc.org> or at “Resources/Archives” on <http://www.haggai114.net>]

Daily Fellowship Opportunities

Sunday – Friday / **Morning Sacrifice** (Prayers & Scripture Reading) at 6:00 a.m.

Sundays / **History & Background of the Gospels** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Scott & Friends]

Mondays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Stephen & Moses]

**Almond Branch Fellowship** at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) (Stephen & Friends)

Tuesdays / **Haggai Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) [Stephen & Friends]

Wednesdays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Stephen & Moses]  
1st & 3rd Wednesday / **Sons of God Fellowship** (Young men training) at 6:30 p.m. [Stephen & Friends]  
2nd & 4th Wednesday / **Lydian's Fellowship** (Ladies) at 6:30 p.m. [Esther/Gayle/Laura & Friends]  
Thursdays / **Mt. Carmel Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Hoefkers & Friends]

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