



The Living God Ministries, Inc.

Montgomery & Spanish Fort, Alabama

February 14, 2020

Accentuate the Positive

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

Like so many these days we have family that lives several states away. Travel is often a necessity. I remember a few years ago flying a lot during the winter months, it was part of my pastoral work. One particular day we arrived safely back to Charlotte, just barely missing a large snow storm that began after we arrived at the airport in Omaha, Nebraska and had watched it from inside the terminal. Our flight was delayed in taking off due to having to de-ice the plane with a chemical a couple of times prior to take off.

We finally arrived in Charlotte and it was snowing there as well, although we were able to get to our home without too much difficulty. It was a winter to remember for a good part of the United States. I was glad when spring arrived in the Northern hemisphere that year. In a few short weeks we'll have the same for a good part of the U.S. Here in lower Alabama on the Gulf Coast signs of spring are already here!

So, why mention this, because we need a weather report? No, but for many the winter is long. With the world conditions, and weather as well, it is very easy for any of us to become negative, and only see the bad in the world we live. This is not good for emotional health.

We live in a world that bombards us with many negative messages. So much of the world news is negative and depressing. It is heart-rending to witness the violence that has been unleashed on many in the wake of terrorists. Even sermon messages and missives from some written to brethren are often focused on how bad things are in this world we live in.

It seems that more and more of the people we know are dealing with health problems from cancer, heart disease, and other health crises. I could go on. We can't ignore the bad news. It should impel us to pray for those in need and pray for and anticipate God's Kingdom to come.

Recently a young adult asked me "Why does God's church focus so much on doom and gloom and all the bad stuff in prophecy, and somehow that's supposed to make us yearn for His Kingdom?"

It's a good question. It deserves a balanced answer. My experience is the older we get, if not

careful, the more we can dwell on the awful and negative... Ah, yes, things will be bad prior to His return, but if we focus on that it will jade our mindset.

We have to balance the impact of all this negative information with positive input so we can have a more positive frame of mind to better cope with life and also maintain better health. I remain connected to several colleagues in the mental and physical health sector and receive various e-mail newsletters that address issues we all face. Diet, exercise, medications, supplements and other factors can help maintain good health. But we must not ever forget the Holy Spirit and the importance of what it does in our overall health and perspective.

One of the recent e-mails received addressed happiness and motivation. It encouraged "developing a routine that incorporates feelings and focus of gratefulness". By focusing on being grateful one can better control of one's attitude and dispel negative moods and emotions such as anger, depression and self-centeredness.

The article suggested beginning the day by thinking about and visualizing 5 things for which you are grateful while making yourself smile and doing deep diaphragmatic breathing. End the day by thinking about and reliving at least one thing that was positive about the day. Of course this won't erase all the negative events and even worries, but it can help to more positively cope with them. I remember the line in the song, "Count your blessings instead of sheep!"

When asked the question above mentioning "doom and gloom" a song immediately came to mind from the late Johnny Mercer. I remember these words, *"You've got to accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on to the affirmative, and don't mess with Mister In-Between"*

Prayer is critical at times of negative outlook. Meditation and reflection on what God promises is also needed for our wellbeing. **2 Timothy 1:7** clearly teaches us, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind". Our connection to God minimizes negativity, and His Holy Spirit does not focus on such.

I've searched the scriptures for the word "grateful." Only one came up in the New King James Version pertaining to the prophet Jonah. I'm puzzled at times over why Jonah was so opposed to warn Nineveh, and became so angry when they repented and were not punished.

Maybe he was acquainted with some of the horrible things the Assyrians did to their captives including the Israelites? Jonah at first refused to warn the Ninevites and then escaped on a ship. We know the story. He was thrown overboard and subsequently swallowed by a great fish. He was vomited up on shore, finally relented and then went to Nineveh and warned them. They humbled themselves and expressed a measure of repentance. *"And the LORD God prepared a*

plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant." **Jonah 4:6** The KJV translates the last part of the verse as: "So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd." This took place after Jonah became angry when the people of Nineveh repented after he had warned them. Jonah's anger then blossomed into depression. He made some kind of small hut and sulked in it while he waited for what would happen next.

Sound familiar? Have any of us ever become like this when things have not gone our way? We may be facing a difficult time in life, and frustrated with things not moving fast enough or in the way we think they should.

Jonah was grateful and glad that the gourd gave him shade from the searing sun. But then the Lord sent a worm to damage the plant which then withered causing the shade to be removed from Jonah. Jonah returned to being angry once again.

What we then see recorded is that God used this to teach Jonah about appreciating and being grateful for God's mercy. "*...You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left-and much livestock?"* **Jonah 4:10-11**

This is a clear object lesson for you and me. If we are not prayerfully careful, we can focus on the past, even the littlest of things and allow these to control how we feel, thus neglecting the bigger issues in life. God does not want us to dwell on the past.

As believers, we have hope even in the face of illness, trouble and death. We can be glad that God has a plan for all of humanity. He has called us by His grace to know Him and to prepare for His coming kingdom.

We'll be observing the Passover in a few short weeks. He has extended forgiveness and cleaning of sin to us by the sacrificial gift of His son, Jesus Christ. We are grateful and glad for ourselves but we must also be positive and happy for all humans who will be given that opportunity in the future.

I encourage you to do a search of verses that contain the phrase "be glad." There are almost 40 of them. Most direct us to be glad for blessings and mercy God extends to us.

Being grateful and being thankful are similar actions or states of mind. Here's a scripture that links being thankful with peace of mind. "*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful."* **Colossians 3:15**

Similarly, the apostle Paul encourages us to avoid giving in to worry and anxiety. "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" **Philippians 4:6-7**

Being grateful and giving thanks are good habits that will bring blessing to us and even help in some way to have better health spiritually, emotionally, and physically...

May you be encouraged this Sabbath by reviewing God's precious truths, promises, and plan for you and me, focusing on the positive, good and holding on to that vision of Christ's return! Stay positive, let God's Spirit stir in our hearts to see the good. Arms up friends!

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 **Sabbath** is:

February 14th / Friday: Evening Praise Sacrifice to welcome God's Sabbath - 6:30 pm (via Teleconference live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

February 15th / 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.

February 15th / Saturday: Malachi 3:16 Fellowship (Interactive Bible Discussion) - **3:30 pm** from Spanish Fort. (Connecting live with all via telephone conference).

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 / **The Minor Prophets** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Whit, Logan & 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. [Scott & Friends]

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