



The Living God Ministries, Inc.

Montgomery & Spanish Fort, Alabama

May 08, 2020

...and of love...

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.

Last Friday evening in my weekly letter we began to discuss several of qualities of the Holy Spirit found in God's Word, specifically "of power" where the apostle Paul writes *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."* (2 Timothy 1:7)

I'd like to examine the next quality, of a "spirit of love", mentioned in that verse. This is a fascinating chapter as Paul admonishes Timothy to "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." (v.13)

It's important that we understand the need to discern who is a true servant of God and have faith in God using that person to bring to us sound words out of love. A true servant of God will love God, God's message, and will love the members whom God has called him to serve.

My experience has been over the decades is there have been too many "ministers" who frankly administrated over others instead of caring for and loving the children who belong to God. Many became "administrators" instead of "ministers" or servants of all.

None of us are perfect. But Paul's example was of one who cared about and loved the members he was privileged to serve and instruct in God's Word. He tried his best to bring to them sound words, direct them to put their trust in God and Christ, and to both examine and know the Holy Scriptures. I'm constantly reminded that we're to help our spiritual family to own the instruction to be a laborer, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15) You and I must all must act on these instructions. They must never be taken lightly.

We must recognize the wonderful truths we have been given through the understanding of God's Word. That deepened understanding is accomplished through the indwelling and working of God in us through His Spirit. We must develop a love and deep appreciation of the truth we have been given by humbly recognizing the miracle of understanding brought about through the working of God's Spirit. We can't simply take credit for that and claim that only our efforts

have brought us this understanding. And, if we don't have a humble and thankful love and don't act on it, we will be subject to deception. (2 Thessalonians 2:10)

The apostle Peter links the owning of and obeying the truth with the working of God's Holy Spirit, and then the response of loving one another. "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart" (1 Peter 1:22).

Remember the story where Peter was challenged by Jesus concerning his love for his Master? The familiar setting was on the shore of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus had prepared a delicious breakfast for His disciples. Peter and several other disciples had been fishing most of the night catching nothing. (I can relate to that, having experienced many times where we were "skunked" and didn't catch a single fish.) Jesus instructed them to put in their nets on the right side of the boat and then they hauled in a huge catch of fish! The disciples then came to shore and ate the breakfast prepared by Jesus which most likely included some of the fish they had just caught. A memorable experience for many reasons.

After they had eaten, Jesus specifically asked Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these fish?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He then said to him, "Feed My lambs." (John 21:15) Jesus repeated this two more times and Peter again affirmed his love for Jesus.

The Greek text uses the word *agapao* twice (translated love) when Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him. The third time Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him, the Greek text uses the word *phileo* (translated love).

In each instance, Peter says "he loves Jesus" and the Greek text has the word *phileo*. Some have taught regarding the distinctions between *agapao* and *phileo* in claiming Peter was not able to acknowledge some higher form of love; but I'm not sure that's what Christ is asking. The *Easton's Bible Dictionary* presents an interesting analysis of the above event and the two words for love. It states, "philein has more of attachment and peculiar *personal affection*." Peter is passionately affirming his affectionate and heartfelt love for Jesus! He's powerfully proclaiming that he loves his Lord. Three times Jesus directs Peter to feed and take care of the sheep that Christ would entrust to him. One's love for His master would include showing love also to those whom the Master called and entrusted to the apostles and other elders.

This "spirit of love" that God gives us reflects His mind (Phil 2:5) and is crucially important in living our lives as Christians. Just knowing God's Word, reciting it, or gathering in fellowship is

not complete without understanding what each of us must do in loving one another...and then living it. We'll examine more closely if Peter understood this and also Paul's comments about love next time...

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:

May 8th / Friday: Evening Praise Sacrifice to welcome God's Sabbath - 6:30 pm (via Teleconference live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

May 9th / 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 *telephone conference* from Montgomery). There will be a pot-luck fellowship noon meal in **Montgomery** shortly after Worship Services are finished.

May 9th / Saturday: Malachi 3:16 Sabbath Fellowship (Interactive Bible Discussion) - **3:30 pm** from Montgomery. (Connecting live with all via telephone conference).

May 9th / Saturday: Monthly Family Meeting with our Congregations **5:00 p.m.** (Connecting live with Spanish Fort and others 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.tlministriesgc.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]

Scott Hoefker, Pastor
The Living God Ministries Gulf Coast
(*Ministerio del Dios Viviente Costa del Golfo de México*)
tshoefker@tlgministriesgc.org
www.tlgministriesgc.org
251-930-1797 Office /402-250-2389 Cell

Stephen Glover, Pastor
The Living God Ministries Alabama
faith_book.net@reagan.com
<http://haggai114.net/>
334-467-2677 Cell