



The Living God Ministries, Inc.

Montgomery & Spanish Fort, Alabama

June 12, 2020

Father's Day and the Family Structure

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

Over the years due to the nature of my calling and job, my wife and I have found many times on "Father's Day" we are away from home, often out of the country. Several years ago, we had left a few days early, prior to our international summer youth camp, to stay in Cartagena, Colombia to discuss some details of the Feast of Tabernacles with the hotel manager and staff. While there, what we celebrate in the U.S. as "Father's Day" took place.

What I noticed, was many there celebrated the day, many families were together, and the atmosphere was festive! It was an encouraging day and I still reflect back with good memories, especially now as I see our nation terribly divided.

It is also such a blessing that we can be part of a *spiritual family* that cares for one another and can share the wonderful truths and way of life our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us. Family and positive family structure is emphasized throughout God's Word and of course in the basic Ten Commandments. When marriage and family structure fall apart and become undermined, there are severe consequences. The Creator has set in motion living laws. When these laws and principles are obeyed and implemented, there will be blessings. When they are ignored, attacked and rejected, there will be curses and negative consequences. This is expounded in the "Blessings and Cursing" chapters of Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28, and many other Bible passages.

A week from this Sunday is Father's Day – it celebrates the role of fathers in the family. There are so many families where the father is absent because of out of wedlock births or abandonment of the family by the father.

There are many "families" where a father is not even desired, or recognized. The ramifications affect us still today and are quite evident in the current unrest in our nation.

Some might reason or argue, "This has nothing to do with our current mess in this nation". In fact friends, it does.

I applaud mothers who make sincere effort to raise their children and teach them values and being responsible in spite of the lack of a father figure. Our large inner cities have many problems including broken families, lawlessness and violence. There are killings basically every night in the city of Chicago and other large cities here in the U.S. How many teens and pre-teens roam the streets with no parental supervision and with no accountability? *"The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother."* (Proverbs 29:15) I would add that shame is brought to the father as well, (if he is around).

The prophet Ezekiel spotlights the problems in the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. "Look, the princes of Israel: each one has used his power to shed blood in you. In you they have made light of father and mother . . ." (Ezekiel 22:6-7) Wrong examples by the leaders and abuse of power and disrespect of parental authority probably had a connection. However, when a child treats his parents with contempt, there is a consequence. *"Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt."* (Deuteronomy 27:16) Our loving heavenly Father wants human fathers to follow His example and invest their time and attention and love in their children.

The apostle Paul instructs husbands to love, build up, and value his wife. (Ephesians 5:28)

Paul goes on to quote the fifth commandment in the next chapter and instruct children to honor parents. He also gives further instruction and a caution to fathers. *"And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."* (Ephesians 6:4)

Does any of this sound familiar to us anymore? It should.

Paul goes on to instruct bondservants to respect and be obedient to those over them. This could apply to all sorts of relationships in the workplace and community. Paul is saying that there needs to be respect for authority and also proper use of authority. When that breaks down - watch out! Something bad is going to happen.

Recently again here in the U.S. in the last few weeks, we've witnessed senseless killings. Details of the truth will eventually emerge. What has been documented already reveals troubled people of every race. Many have been previously arrested several times. I remember years ago during one arrest, police recovered several strips of Suboxone, (Suboxone contains a combination of buprenorphine and naloxone. Buprenorphine is an opioid medication, sometimes called a narcotic. Naloxone blocks the effects of opioid medication, including pain relief or feelings of well-being that can lead to opioid abuse. Suboxone is used to treat narcotic

(opiate) addiction) It's a powerful medication used to treat addiction to heroin and those painkillers, in a person's possession. There is often a connection to individuals doing mass killings using certain pharmaceutical drugs often linked to aggression. The aggressive behavior we see rampant these days is directly related to past or current history of one's family structure.

I again have to ask, what sort of family life did he or she have? What influenced him or her? I will assume that also will come out. In one instance, something "snapped" inside a man's head for him to enter a church, sit there for an hour, and then gun down 9 innocent people. What a tragedy! But influences that led to this behavior were there for some time.

Has anyone asked "where was this person's father, living and "fathering" as God intended, when this person grew up?"

We as members of the body of Christ need to take our responsibility to build a healthy family structure seriously.

If there are hurts and conflicts in our families, we need to do what we can to be peacemakers and heal those hurts. *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."* (Matthew 5:9)

Hurts take place, but we need to not react by hurting back. The apostle Paul instructs us, *"Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."* (Romans 12:17-18)

You and I individually and collectively can promote forgiveness, healthy communication, and show love and mercy. We as parents (both mothers and fathers) have all fallen short and have made mistakes in raising our children. By acknowledging our mistakes and learning from them we can set an example of humbly promoting growth and unity and building up our families. We as fathers and mothers need to do our part. We and our families will be blessed for it.

As time marches on, we'll see society and the family structure as we know it break down further. That being said, you and I don't need to follow the crowd, current thought or perspective, but yield to the Spirit of God and do our best to stabilize the family. He is about the family you know, and has been since well before the foundation of this world!

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:

June 12th / Friday: Evening Praise Sacrifice to welcome God's Sabbath - 6:30 pm (via Teleconference live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

June 13^h / 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 both **Montgomery** and **Spanish Fort** shortly after worship services.

June 13th / Saturday: Malachi 3:16 Sabbath Fellowship (Interactive Bible Discussion) - **3:30 pm** from Montgomery. (Connecting live with all via telephone conference).

June 13th / Saturday: Monthly "Family Meeting" with our Congregations **5:00 p.m.** (Connecting live with Spanish Fort and others via telephone conference).

June 13th / Saturday: Quarterly Board of Director's Meeting of the LGM - 8:00 p.m. from Spanish Fort to Montgomery (via web 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]

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