

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

January 2, 2022

One day while I was waiting for a traffic light to change, I noticed how everyone seemed to be rushing in so many different directions. We were all so busy that it seems like we are living on our last nerve. The same thing occurred while I was sitting at an airport. I noticed how most of us were rushing; one lady was just pulling her son along while he was screaming to the top of his lungs. There were planes all going in different directions with their engines ready to go. It seems like time was giving us a whipping and we were all dying to please it.



How do we plan to use the time the Lord provides us this year (James 4:13-15; Ecclesiastes 3:1-2)? Will we allow time to control us or our purpose in life to determine how we manage ourselves in time? I know it is hard sometimes with all the demands on us. Are our demands being created by our giftedness, purpose or ambitions? What is keeping us so busy and stressed? I am not saying we should relax and do our best to do nothing because the Bible states that would lead to poverty (Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4) and with the church of Laodicea, Christ was not happy (Revelation 3:14-18). The focus we should have is what do we need to do to manage ourselves in God's time zone? After all, Christ says; "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matthew 6:34; NASU)

The Lord has graciously provided us families, whether single parent homes, extended families or nuclear families. God provided us with talents in order to successfully apply ourselves to a job so that we are able to take care of our physical needs (Ecclesiastes 4:12-13). The Lord has blessed us with a spiritual gift so that His church can effectively execute His agenda (1 Peter 4:7-11). This is probably why Christ says in Hebrews the race to run is not the rat race; it is a race that He sets before us (Hebrews 12:1-3; remember chapter 11). He is also saying to us that He "has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3-4). So, we have a race to run with a script (the Word) that is a light unto our path (1 John 1:5-7; Psalm 119:105). Light meaning a clear direction that preserves us from mistakes and makes us productive (2 Peter 1:3-11; John 16:1).

When we plan going to work, we know exactly what it would take to be on time. We realize what can make us late, so we take precautions. As a result, we manage ourselves to achieve our objective. Covid hopefully taught us that the time God provides is precious. So, this year let's allow our purpose to direct how we use the time God provides.

UPCOMING Events



Prayer Revival 2022
January 4th-6th | 7:00pm

Join Living Word Fellowship Church as we bring in the new year at our annual Prayer Revival! Our special guest will be Pastor Rodney Maiden from Providence Baptist Church of Cleveland.

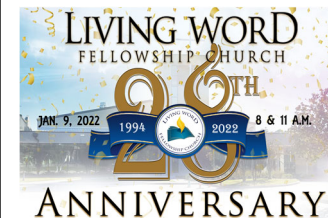


Parents! Revival at Living Word includes our kids as well. Tues: special guest Ricardo Miller. Wed: Cooking with Monica C. Thurs: Movie Night & Popcorn. Mark your calendar!



Church Wide Fast

Our annual fast begins **Sunday, January 2nd** and ends on **Saturday, January 8th**. See your deacon family for more information.



Church Anniversary

Living Word Fellowship Church is proud to celebrate it's 28th Year Anniversary of ministry. God has brought us from a mighty long way and has greatly displayed His favor, glory and grace to us during these 28 years of ministry. We would love for you to celebrate this joyous occasion with us by attending our worship service with special guest speaker, Pastor Rodney Maiden.

January 9th | 8am & 11am



Impact's Men Gathering

Attention all men! Join us on **Friday, January 7th @ 7:00 pm** at Light of the World Christian Fellowship. 16161 Old Humble Rd., Humble, Texas 77396 For more information, contact Jeff Allen at jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music

Blessed

Ezra 1:1-4

Full sermon notes available online at www.lwfellowshipchurch.org

Click on the "Resources" tab and click "Sermon Notes"

Call to Discipleship

Please remain seated at this time

Benediction

Children are now required to check-in upon arrival. Please report to the registration desk located in the children's wing.

Ages 2—6th grade

MIDDLE SCHOOL - HIGH SCHOOL

2:30 4:00 & TUESDAY NIGHTS

SUNDAY

7:30 PM

LEGACY EFFECTING TODAY FOR TOMMORROW youth ministry of LIVING WORD FELLOWSHIP

Blessed!

Luke 2:25-38

A. God is Providential (vs. 1-2):

1. In the first year of King Cyrus God's Word preached through Isaiah and Jeremiah had come to its time to be completed.
2. The Word of God has once again proven itself to be true so that even though King Cyrus did not know God, he is still moved by God to fulfill what God had stated He will do for His people.
3. The Lord who is all powerful and is always in control, no matter how powerful the person may be, is the One who completely aroused Cyrus to release His people. Cyrus did not complete this action on his own initiative.
4. The Lord in all His power (Cyrus was the most powerful empire of his day) aroused the inner immaterial consciousness of Cyrus so that his decision would come from a deep conviction to release God's people back to their Jerusalem.
5. Cyrus in his very first year, continuously made it his mission to send out a written document (this plays a key role when trouble arises; Ezra 6:1-5) stating what the Lord had moved his heart to accomplish.
6. Even though the document was developed it was also loudly sounded out throughout all his Kingdom, which was most of the known world.
7. Cyrus is completely committed not just to his written word but also to his spoken word. He is not going to stop saying these words across his kingdom, until everyone hears it.
8. Cyrus who is not a believer has been so influenced by the movement of God in him that he announces that the Lord of Israel who has all power and authority and is supreme over all gods (there were many in his empire) and rules all of the heavens (that which is visible and not visible) is the One who has empowered him to be king over his empire.
9. The Lord God can move anyone at any time no matter how powerful they may be (Nebuchadnezzar) to do whatever He needs them to do for His people.
10. Unlike Nebuchadnezzar, Cyprus praises God for generously, powerfully putting him in charge of all the kingdoms of the known world.
11. The Lord God who empowered Cyrus has instructed him to construct and to firmly establish the rebuilding work of the temple.
12. Even though Cyrus is the leader of the known world, the Lord God of the heavens determines how he is established and what he does.

B. Committed and Desires Our Commitment (v. 3):

1. The same God that Cyrus knows, from experience, is powerful; he wishes that this same Lord God would endlessly be with Israel in the manner the Lord has been with him.
2. The people of Israel are to continuously make it their mission to leave Babylon and never stop putting in the time and effort to return to Jerusalem with a purpose in mind.
3. The main purpose for going back to Jerusalem is to construct the dwelling place of God. God sends two prophets to continually inspire His people, and in the midst of much resistance, to accomplish this goal. They are Haggai and Zechariah.
4. The One who gave Cyrus his kingship does not dwell in Babylon. He dwells in Jerusalem so the people must establish His dwelling place.
5. The word for God used here refers to the One who sovereignly rules and judges the entire earth and is the subject of all divine activity, creator of all and supreme over all gods.
6. Even though Cyrus is not a believer, he had the right view of God.

C. Together Let's Be a Blessing (v. 4):

1. Cyrus calls upon all who lived the seventy years after the devastating invasion of Babylon as prophesied by Jeremiah to return to Jerusalem.
2. It did not matter what part of Cyrus's empire they had completely established their families in, they needed to return to Jerusalem.
3. Each man in all the places where these families have made a home for themselves must continuously make sure they are fully supplied for the journey and to re-establish themselves back into Jerusalem.
4. Cyrus is so focused on the rebuilding of the house of God that he orders his citizens that reside, where each Israel family lives, to provide them resources so that they have the ability to spontaneously, on their own freewill, willingly dedicate an offering to God when they return to Jerusalem.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: Lula Walker & family, Carlton Lopes & family, and Carolyn Hadnot & family.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Octavia Scott, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Brittany Bullock, Barbara Gordon, Eric White, Ella James, Pat Crawford, Lisa Roberts, Birdie Williams, Jon Heard, Lakessia Davis, and Rutha Patrick.

DOWN

EZRA 1:1-4