

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

January 7, 2024

Never Fails

When we experience intense challenges, these incidents may make us feel God is silent or slow (Psalm 28) to respond. This may cause us to react instinctively based on past experiences, educational backgrounds, or logical processes. We tend to pray when our accomplishments do not produce the expected or desired results . We sometimes only lean on God as the only remaining option.

God has demonstrated throughout the years that no matter what His church experiences, He is always there (Matthew 28:20), working things out for the good of those who keep walking in His ways ('love Him;' Romans 8:28; John 14:15) no matter what. He proves that He is never silent or absent because His purposes are unshakable (Hebrews 12:29-29). His power is incomprehensible, so God has no reason to be discomposed. This is why He sometimes seems quiet. It is because there is no reason for Him to think His purposes will not be accomplished; after all, He is the Lord God Almighty. All He proves, we need to demonstrate our trust by remaining faithful in our obedience to Him no matter the circumstances we encounter (John 15:1-15). When we are committed to trusting Him (demonstrated by our faithful obedience to Him), we allow ourselves to become immersed in complete dependency on His results.

After asking Moses to go and lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, I am amazed that God allowed Moses to experience one difficult challenge after another. Returning to the land, convincing two million people to follow him at eighty years of age was enough. When Moses encountered these challenges, many answers made no sense: how does stretching out a person's hand stop thunder and lightning (Exodus 9:28-29)? How does raising a stick over the Red Sea help about two million people get through the sea into the wilderness? God did not remove the challenges or ask Moses to determine the solutions; God called Moses to obedience.

As we face a new year, let the faithfulness the Lord has vividly exposed by serving His church these thirty years remind us that our most significant challenge is to "fight THE good fight of faith.... (1 Timothy 6:12); one fight. Because of our flesh (Romans 7:14-25; Galatians 5:16-18), the struggle to keep the faith when our emotions are high or our common sense tells us we are insane makes faith seem unrealistic (things we can't see; Hebrews 11:1-2). Trusting God when He seems silent was even a struggle for David (Psalm 28)

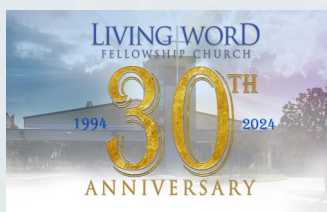
A sky driver demonstrates complete surrender when they jump. A patient demonstrates complete trust when they commit to surgery, no matter the level of anxiety they may encounter.

The Lord 'Never Fails'!! We learn this when we patiently and continuously trust Him (Isaiah 40:27-27-31).

"GREAT is His FAITHFULNESS!!!"



UPCOMING Events



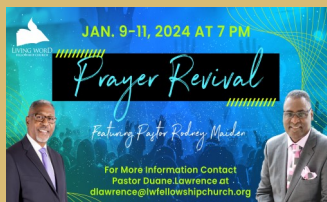
30TH ANNIVERSARY
We are celebrating 30 Years of God's Faithfulness to Living Word Fellowship Church. The 30th Anniversary Gala will be held Friday, January 12, 2024 at the The Westin Oaks Houston at the Galleria 5011 Westheimer Rd. at Post Oak Houston, TX 77056. Pre-event reception at 6:00 p.m. Gala begins at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are sold out. Celebrate with us Friday and Sunday, January 14, 2024 with two services at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.



DRAMA MINISTRY AUDITIONS TODAY
As we prepare for our annual Good Friday Drama Ministry production, auditions will be held today, Sunday, January 7, 2024 from 1:00 p.m.—2:30 in the main sanctuary. For more information contact Melita Washington at melita290@gmail.com



The Church Fast
You are invited to participate in our church fast and beginning Jan. 7th through Jan. 12th. We will fast and pray and thank God for 30 years of faithfulness.



Prayer Revival
Join us each night at 7p.m., Jan. 9th-11th, for our Annual Prayer Revival with guest speaker, Pastor Rodney Maiden. This will be 3 evenings of praise and prayer celebrating 30 years of God's faithfulness. See you there!



MARRIAGE MINISTRY PRAYER BREAKFAST
Join us for the Covenant Keepers Marriage Ministry Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, January 27, 2024 from 9:00am – 11:00am in Legacy Sanctuary. We will kick of the year covering families in prayer and filling our bellies with food for the soul. The cost: \$5 per person. Online Registration is required. Register at <https://bit.ly/MarriageBreakfast2024> For more information contact Sherri or Terry Randle at lwfcmarriagein@gmail.com



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music

"Favor"
Ezekiel 36:26-28

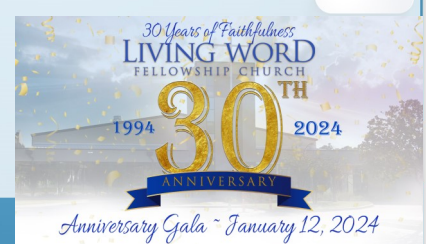
Click "Sermon Notes" on the Website

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.



Favor
Ezekiel 36:26-28

A. Transformed to Experience His Favor (v. 26; Ps. 51:7-11):

- 1. He is going to put in each person, returning to the land generously, the ability to submit their minds and lives to serve God's will. His restoration to Jerusalem is to rebirth what was broken.
- 2. He will generously refresh our inner spiritual and moral transformation so we can be single-mindedly committed to the Lord's will (36:26; Eph. 3:16-17). His passion for us becomes our desire for Him.
- 3. The Lord so desires a relationship with us and understands the frailty of the flesh and the attacks of Satan. He constantly seeks to provide us His strength, from His Spirit to ours, so our relationship with Him is new every morning.
- 4. Many people come to church to hear the word of God, but past experiences with relationships, church, and sometimes tired of feeling like God does not listen cause them to be hearers and not doers. Once we develop into this mood, our hearts can become stoney (Luke 8:11-14; Hebrews 5:11-14). We know we have a stony heart when the Lord instructs us to obey Him, and we immediately make excuses or become angry.
- 5. The flesh with nothing good in it (Galatians 5:19-21). It must be transformed to have any possible desire to seek the Lord. The passions of the flesh drive us away from the Lord. For us to have a genuine relationship with the Lord, He must implant His Spirit in us (Titus 3:4-8) so that His Spirit influences our spirit (Romans 8:9-17), transforms our hearts by cutting out our stoney hearts so that the flesh, its passions, no longer rules our lives.

B. Remain Engaged (v. 27):

- 1. God makes a decisive decision on His initiative to continuously, generously implant His Spirit in our lives. God's passion and desire for us drive our entire experience of Him.
- 2. God does all the work by breathing into our bodies (Acts 2:1-4) His Spirit so that our spirit has 'all spiritual blessings' (Ephesians 1:3-4), and therefore has the potential of being controlled by His Spirit so that we can be enabled to live a holy life guided by His wisdom (Ephesians 5:15-18).
- 3. God is completely committed (Philippians 1:6) to create within us, by His divine energy (convict us of sin; John 16:7-11, remind us of His word; John 14:26; illuminate His Word so we can understand it; 1 Corinthians 2:10-15), the ability and desire to obey Him daily (Ephesians 3:14-21).
- 4. Because God Spirit is a powerful influence, believer's lives are expected to surrender to Him. The Spirit-driven life would then become a lifestyle that is pleasing to God.
- 5. Despite all that the Lord will do for us, we are still responsible for not allowing our anxieties, insecurities, and passions (the heart of stone in the flesh) to interfere with our obedience to the Lord's written Word or His moral laws. David said he purposefully and decisively sustained God's Word in his mind so that in his emotional ups and downs, he would not sin against God (Psalm 119:11).

C. Blessed (v. 28):

- 1. Once our relationship with the Lord is responsive to all the Lord willingly does for us, He will permanently and bestow entirely His blessings on our lives.
- 2. When their relationship with God is honored by their willingness to obey Him, nothing can take His blessings away from them.
- 3. Christ bought us with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23), our bodies are His temple (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19), He has transformed into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) so that we become His possession, His holy nation, and His royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9-10).
- 5. God, who created all things out of nothing and reigns forever will supremely be our King, or Lord and our redeemer so that no one or our flesh can conquer us (Romans 8:31, 37-39; Galatians 5:22-25; 1 John 4:4).
- 6. His blessings are forever internal and external and are so established nothing can ever destroy what He does for us.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: Joella Howard & family, the family of Eric Picket, Lorraine Tigner & family, and the family of Betty Goode.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Eric White, Pat Crawford, Birdie Williams, Tanisha Collins, Jon Heard, Rutha Patrick, Kevin Carey, Jessie Austin, Sherri Love, Elizabeth Clarke, Clara Williams, Dorothy Price, Kathryn Ford-Cheatham, Anthony Thomas, Beverly Austin, Joshua Williams, Ruby Hunter, Elizabeth Bean, Patsy Gatterson, Joyce Newsome, Arleatha Housley, and Patrina Johnson.

Favor

EZEKIEL 36: 26-28