

MESSENGER OF HOPE

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The event of 2020 including a pandemic, racial tensions, joblessness and political battles created an unprecedented time of unrest and anxiety. Praying at the start of the New Year does not always bring immediate change at the stroke of midnight, but it begins the opening of our hearts to God's words of hope and peace.

Dear Lord, thank You for helping me to make it through this difficult year. Thank You that You carried me through the uncertainty of deep waters, and through the pain of losses. I am constantly aware of how much I need You, Your grace, Your strength, Your power working through even the toughest days. Help me to remember that the gift of Christ Immanuel, is my greatest treasure, not just at Christmas, but the whole year through. Fill me with Your joy and the peace of Your Spirit. Direct my heart and mind towards You. I chose to press in close to You today and keep you first in heart and life. Without You I would surely fail, but with You, there is hope. Thank You for Your healing power, thank You for bringing me into the new year.

I look forward to all that You still have in store.

In Jesus' name. Amen

TURNING THE PAGE

"Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end." - (Ecclesiastes 3:11)



Abnormal. Anxious. Chaotic. Disconcerting. Troubling. Uncertain. Unsettling. Those are just a few of the words to describe 2020. This is the year which we will recall as being the year of chaos and uncertainty, and so we wait, waiting, waiting and Waiting for change to come, for things to get back to normal, for direction. Waiting for clarification. Waiting for what's next. We're ready to see 2020 behind us.

Psalms 139:16 tells us that the days of David's life were written in God's book, affirming God's prior knowledge and plan for everything in David's life. If God would write out the story of David's life then it's safe for us to say that God being our creator, and our Heavenly Father has all of our life's stories written in His book. If He would do that for David then He would no less do it for every one of His children. I'm glad that it's God who writes our story. And as He is the one who has written out our story, I want Him to guide and lead. I also want Him to move at my pace, down my chosen path, at my chosen time but the problem is He moves at His own pace and does what He wants to when He wants to and in the end as we trust Him He says, His purpose is going to work out for our good. And we would be alright if we could just see what was coming next, or would we? But I still want to know, and then I end up wondering why I'm out of sync with Him... but the truth is that I know.

It's because I'm trying to turn the page... and maybe He's not ready yet.

It reminds me of the child, when bedtime rolls around each night, she chooses a story and climbs up in bed beside her mother excitedly. She examines the pictures and listens intently as the story begins... for about two or three pages. But then, when the words get to be too many and she tires of looking at the picture on that page she grabs the page from her mother's hand trying to turn it before it's time. She's so excited to see what happens next, that she fails to *listen* to how the story unfolds. She misses the important details that got her to the next page and then she becomes confused by the pictures, and decides she would rather make up her own story.

But that's not what the author intended. He wrote each word carefully, with purpose, to share a story that only he could write. And that's the same way it is with the Lord?

Y'all, He has a special plan for *each* of us, but in *His* time, not our own.

This year 2020 has had us in that place of uncertainty, that difficult space of waiting, anxiously wanting things to get back to normal. And I'm glad that I've lived long enough to know that I'm not the only one feeling like this but some of you yourselves are feeling like I do, and here are three quick things to help turn our feelings of being unsettled, restless, and discontent around until it's time to turn the page:

1. Make the Move from Being Unsettled to Purposeful:

Unsettled means "lacking stability or not yet resolved." On the contrary, purposeful means "showing determination; intentional." But how do we move from one to the other? Usually when our hearts are not settled it is because we have so many ideas and plans in our head that we can't decide where to land. We weigh the pros and cons and seek out the opinions of family and friends, brothers and sisters, book authors, talk show host,

bloggers and podcasters and the like. But we need to remember with earthly council alone, we end up with more questions than answers a lot of the time, and our hearts and minds are left unsettled.

Solomon tells us “You can make many plans, but the Lord’s purpose will prevail.” (Proverbs 19:21)

Y’all we can make all the plans in the world, but if we don’t seek God’s direction first, we are just spinning our wheels for nothing. When glorifying Him, serving Him and loving like Him is at the forefront of our minds, it helps us move with determination and a spirit that is not afraid. It helps us plan with intention and move ahead boldly because He has given us a plan with purpose...*His purpose*.

2. Make the Move from Being *Restless* to *Peaceful*:

Restless means “unable to relax as a result of anxiety.” I think we’ve all been there? That tense feeling in your jaw, neck, and back. Not being able to sleep through the night a whole night because your mind won’t quit racing. I have too many times to count. Truth be told our hearts long to be peaceful (“free from disturbance; free from trouble, free from Covid-19, free from racial tension, free from political unrest”) Just Turn the Page. But is that the answer? No, not really.

Jesus said, “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid” (John 14:27 NLT).

Y’all, the peace that Jesus gives us is nothing we can find on our own in this world. When you are seeking peace, seek *Him* y’all. Read His word, go to Him in prayer, and lay all of your burdens at His feet. The third thing we have to do is

3. Make the Move from Being *Discontent* to *Content*:

Y’all, this one is tough. Discontent means “dissatisfaction with one’s circumstances.” And y’all, we’re dissatisfied with the way things are, pandemic, violence, racism, chaos, yes we should be. That’s not the way things are supposed to be, that’s not the way God intended things to be. But if we’re not careful, dissatisfaction can turn to discontentment and then to bitterness and then unthankful-ness and ingratitude. If we’re not careful in our dissatisfaction we can become glass half empty children of God instead of glass half full children of God. So what do we do when we are ready for the page to turn to a better part of the story and God is still reading from the story He’s written for that page of your life. Before dissatisfaction sets in and goes too far we got to turn to thankfulness.

We turn it into thankfulness. Because there is always *something* to be thankful for (Ex: we’ve got to keep on social distancing and wearing masks, washing our hands, stay out of the movies, clubs and stores...At least we can still enjoy all the other blessings of God, a roof over our heads, clothes on our backs, food on the table. He keeps on giving us still more than we deserve. Salvation, Heaven, eternal fellowship, full redemption...) If we want to be content (“happy and satisfied with our circumstances”), we have to choose to be thankful... in all circumstances, let God read through the page at His own pace.

“Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.” - 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Pastor Fredd Hinson



STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY COMMENTARY

The Grace of Giving

MIKE MAZZALONGO

Tithing, Offering: THE AWARENESS OF GRACE GIVING

Most Christians know that giving of material and financial resources as an offering to God and to support the work of ministry comes with the territory of being a believer. Like you, I have been taught that tithing (giving 10% of one's income) is the accepted way to give. The key point in this Stewardship Ministry Commentary is that Grace Giving is the forefront of this article.

So, the question is, what is "Grace Giving"? Grace is the Motivation for Giving. Giving is a response to the grace of God. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Grace is favor that is not merited, It is the favor of God shown to us through His Son's incarnation humiliation and crucifixion that made available to lost sinners all the treasures of Heaven. God did this for your sakes, literally

"because of You." People who have experienced the grace of God will want to show appreciation for it. The natural response is to want to do something in return. You and I who have experienced the Grace of God will want to show appreciation for it. We will also want to emulate it. The greater your grasp for what grace really means, the more fervently you and I will desire to express and demonstrate thankfulness for it. Giving freely and generously is one way to do this.

Giving flows freely from a willing heart. The Macedonian Christians were not capitulating in a manipulative hard-sell dutifully fulfilling an obligation. They were "free willing" (2 Corinthians 8:3). Paul tells the Corinthians the basis for their offering being acceptable was "a willing mind" (8:2). He calls their participation, not the fulfillment of duty, but a "proof of your love" (8:24). He commends them for their "willingness" (9:2). He exhorts every individual to make a personal choice, "each one as he purposes in his heart" (9:7). The motivation for grace giving is not pressure, guilt, or even a sense of being dutifully faithful. It is not the hope of getting back as much

or more than one has given. It is an overwhelming sense of being the recipient of abundant grace and the desire to respond by giving in like manner.

Grace is the Measure of Giving – It is marked by generosity. People who practice grace giving do not calculate and "pay" the minimum amount supposedly required. Grace giving is calculated by considering the measure God uses in lavishing grace on us. Again, we see God's generosity as the model for our grace giving described in 8:9, "that you might become rich." The Macedonians gave generously, but it was according to their ability (8:3). Paul emphasizes that the standard for giving is not what someone else has but "according to what one has" (8:12). Some people will be so moved by God's grace and the pressing need that they will give more than they should, humanly speaking. They will give sacrificially, until it truly hurts, "yes, even beyond their ability." (8:3)

Patricia Swinney, Ministry Leader
Stewardship Ministry

NHMBBC Community Outreach Priorities

DURING THE COVID-19 VIRUS

Church Outreach is a way to introduce people in the community to the church by making them aware of God's love for them. Outreach is only a starting point for many people on their path to a relationship with Jesus Christ. Churches must pick up where outreach ends, providing the worship, fellowship and discipleship opportunities along with ministry and evangelism.

Beside leading people to Christ and drawing people into New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, bringing healing and help to our communities, outreach encourages New Hope volunteers as well. This is important part of the process for growing disciples and fostering fellowship among believers. Outreach involves the New Hope entire congregation in the common goal of ministry. Meeting the need can help New Hope accomplish this by making all members aware of specific needs they can meet in their community and empowering New Hope volunteers to meet those needs directly. New Hope's goal of reaching out to the community in love and service, with the ultimate purpose of witnessing to the saving grace of Jesus Christ, will absolutely unify our congregation.

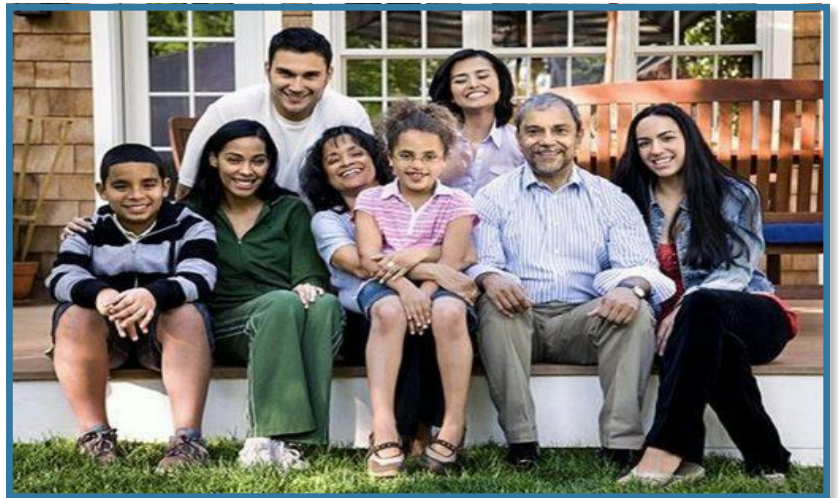
Deacon's Ministry and Men's Ministry were blessed to provide gift cards to Citrus County Women pregnancy center in Inverness, Florida. We also blessed Florida gulf Coast Women Center, Hudson, Florida. (Deacon Larry Chesteen, Chair, Deacon Ministry)

The Hopeville Food Pantry at New Hope is a vital resource to our community. On the 3rd Saturday of each month, before and since COVID-19 the food pantry distributed 75 bags of food to local families. This past Thanksgiving 85 gifts cards were distributed for the purchase of a turkey. On a monthly basis, since COVID-19 the food pantry distributed food bags and donated boxes of clothes to the farm workers (migrates) in Dade City, Florida, and also donates boxes clothes to others.

Deaconess Daisy Swackard
Hopeville Food Pantry, Ministry Leader



Who is the Next Generation Church?
They are MILLENNIALS



GENERATIONS AT A GLANCE

- ✓ Five generations co-exist in the church today. The oldest of them witnessed World War II and The Golden Age of Radio
- ✓ The youngest have never known a world without the Internet or without constant connection to people and events around the planet
- ✓ This incredible diversity elicits miscommunication and misunderstanding with devastating results not only in families, communities and culture but in the church too.

MILLENNIALS AT A GLANCE



- ✂ Born: 1981 – 1996 (Currently ages 24-39)
- ✂ 72.1 million Americans are Millennials and they surpassed Baby Boomers as the largest group in 2020. Millennials are more diverse than older generations and their influence in society, the workplace and politics is growing.
- ✂ Parents put children first and supervised them closely. As a result, a generation of young people emerge as protected, narcissistic, driven, and confident.
- ✂ They are team players, willing to serve, respectful of their parents and leaders and many millennials are craving deeper human connection
- ✂ In a world full of emails and social media that can feel disingenuous, millennials long for strong friendship and true connection. More than 9 out of 10 millennials own smartphone
- ✂ Millennials stand out for their technology, they are “tech savvy.” They grew up experiencing huge advances in technology. Flip phones are antiques to them. Millennials learned to use notebooks and tablets as those technologies became available to them.
- ✂ Cool is not what young people want. Forget the rock-band vibe and the flashing lights. Warm is the new cool. What they want is authenticity and connection. Millennials are now the second largest generation in the U.S. after the Baby Boomers.

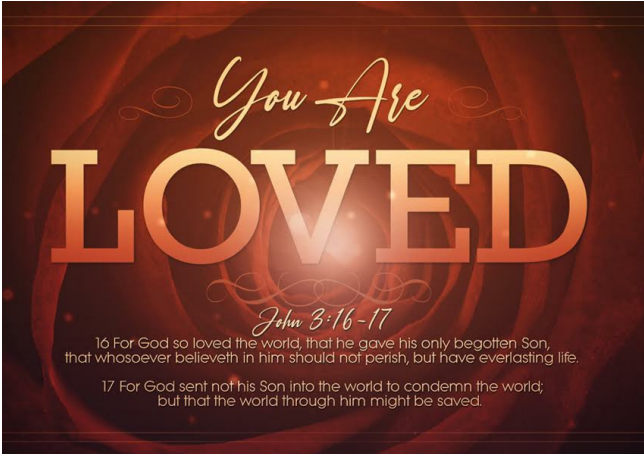
Let us Be Honest and Realistic

One of the biggest reason millennials do not come to church is due to a lack of understanding between generations. Groups who are not of the same mind cannot see eye to eye. And if the church is unable to think like a millennial then it is unable to attract them.

So, what can the Church change? Well A lot. Nothing will happen if the church is not willing to change. The traditional church wants to attract the millennial generation but is the willingness to act lacking? So how can the church solve this problem. The answer lies within the millennial generation itself. Instead of the church meeting amongst themselves, they must look to the youth for help. They must include the millennials in the conversation.

If the church wants to attract a younger audience several questions need to be addressed and addressed appropriately. Like how badly does the church want to attract a younger audience? What measures is the church willing to take to capture the millennials generation? What is the church willing to give up bringing more souls to Christ? **(Millennial Ministry & Youth Ministry)**

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Thanks to all for your support in making our Women Helping Women ministry opportunity such a success.

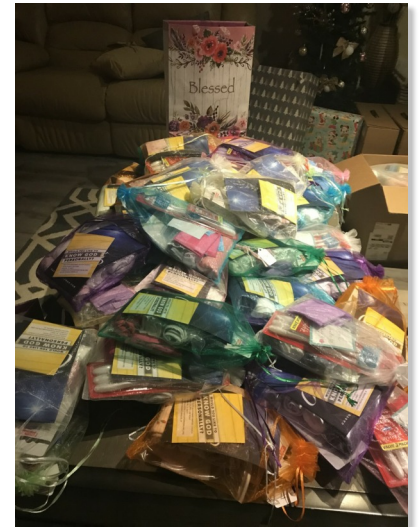
Because of your prayers, donations, love and generosity to others we were able to fill 51 bags for the domestic violence shelter. We exceeded last year's donations. We collected a variety of sizes and styles of ladies undies, all beautiful. The bags were delivered to Minister Regina Ailes of Pristine Spring Hill Baptist Church on December 31st, New Year's Eve and contained 3 pair each of ladies undies, toothbrushes, panty liners, words of encouragement and a tract sharing the plan of salvation.

Minister Ailes is a volunteer and a domestic violence advocate. She also provided a Zoom informational session during November that gave us valuable tips and guidance on how to help those we may encounter that are in some way impacted by domestic violence.

Give God a hand clap for what HE has done through us.

Another hand clap of praise to God

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10



New Hope also provided during Thanksgiving a "made with love" meal for those at the domestic violence shelter. Thanks to all. Chaley B's Southern Soul Delights, for cooking the scrumptious food. Minister Regina Ailes for adding side dishes, delivery and setup. Our Pastor and New Hope family for your financial support, prayers and anything done to assist.

*A Note of Thanks to the New Hope Family - Matthew 5:16 tells us "Let your light shine among men that they may see your good works and glorify God..." Your fruitful labor has shone bright among those in need. Know that your labor has not been in vain. They are appreciative and I thank you for being a partner in sharing the love of Christ. Praying for a year full of opportunities to be a light.
Blessings, Minister Regina Ailes*

(Pictures from our Thanksgiving dinner setup for the domestic violence shelter)



Eating Healthy 2021 – Path to Improved Health Bouncing Back After Overeating During the Holidays

From Thanksgiving to Christmas holidays can really weigh you down, particularly for those trying to lose weight and stick to a diet. You likely fought a good fight, but gave in and ate not one, but multiple servings of the casserole, the basket of biscuits, a bucket of candy, or a dozen of cookies.

Post holidays, the worst thing you can do right now is cut calories, skip meals, or go on a low calorie fast or detox plan in an attempt to undo damage. Extreme diet “fixes” only set you up again. If you need help bouncing back from too much self-indulged eating, check out the holiday bounce back plan, guaranteed to have you back on track and losing again.

Shop Smart: Grocery stores can be traps, intentionally and unintentionally. Try shopping during off hours. Instead of rushing around and grabbing the first things you see to get out of the crowd, you can take your time to read labels and choose healthier foods. Always pick items from the outside perimeter of the store. This is where the whole, more nutritious foods are located.

Focus on produce: Amp up the fruits and veggies in your meals. Cook them in ways that celebrate their natural flavors instead of hiding them under heavy sauces or glazes.



Lighten up your recipes: Reduce fat and calories without missing out on taste by making some of these substitutions. Replace 1 egg with 2 egg whites to cut cholesterol. Instead of oil, margarine, or butter in baked items, substitute applesauce to reduce fat. Always use fat-free versions of creamy ingredients such as yogurt, sour cream, or whipped topping. Use reduced-fat cheeses in casseroles and salads.

It can be easy to fall into the trap of overeating healthy foods. You might think that because the food is good for you. You can eat more of it. But be aware of portion sizes. Getting too much of a good thing can be just as bad as eating something unhealthy. **(Health & Whole Ministry)**