



COGOP Texas Newsletter
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The Church of God of Prophecy
Texas State Office

Bishop Daniel Felipe
dfelipe@nacogop.org
P. O. Box 1188
Missouri City, TX 77459
www.txcogop.com
(281) 689-3436

The Church of God of Prophecy

TEXAS NEWSLETTER

IN THE CHAOS CHAOS CHAOS

His Whispers in My Chaos

By Bishop Daniel Felipe

In 1 Kings 19:11-13 God ministers to Elijah in an interesting way by choosing to set His message against the backdrop of chaos. In this passage the writer first gives us a picture of a destructive strong wind, then it gives us the picture of a ground shattering earthquake, and then a consuming fire. Every single one of them instilling terror, every single one of them life-changing events of chaos and panic.

You would think that God would demonstrate His power by coming right after in an even greater, and louder form but He doesn't do that. Instead He chooses to whisper, in what the author calls a "still small voice". The simple juxtaposition of these opposing ideas gives us a glimpse into God's greatness; that He doesn't have to blow faster than the wind, shake harder than the earthquake, nor burn hotter than the fire for Him to prove that He is God.

God never tries to compete with all the chaos surrounding our lives. God has no

standing competition, He has no self-esteem issues, He has no identity conflicts, and no insecurity syndromes. He knows who He is! When Moses asked him about his identity God felt no need to elaborate further than to say, "I am who I am".

It is against the backdrop of chaos God chooses to whisper because he knows that His power is not measured by the decibels of His voice but rather by the eternal and unmeasurable content of the message it delivers. So even when He chooses His still small voice, there is power in His whisper.

Today we stand in the midst of chaos as our cities, states and nation struggle with the COVID-19 virus. So, when I speak of our backdrop of disruptive chaos I am not speaking figuratively, I am speaking about our current reality. And it is against the current loud noises of today's chaos that God is whispering with his still small voice. God is silently revealing some power-

-ful truths to his people in the midst of it all, and the power of these truths are greater than the power of the noise. Here are three power whispers God is speaking to His people today.

Power Whisper #1 - While there is power in the gathering of the church there is an even greater power in the scattering of the church. History shows that when God's people were unable to meet for public worship God used the scattering as fertile soil to produce multiplication. In the midst of the chaos God is whispering to His church, do not worry I am working this for good! There is power in being scattered.

Power Whisper #2 - There is value in being stripped from non-essentials. This current global pandemic has caused our culture to reassess and reevaluate what is important. In the midst of the chaos of today God is whispering that we must be stripped from all the non-essential clutter surrounding our

lives, ministry, family, and return to what really matters - Him!

Power Whisper #3 - Don't allow chaos to halt the mission. God whispered to Elijah, "What are you doing here?" Elijah's answer tells me that question had more to do with his heart and attitude than with his geographical location. Elijah said, "I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." Elijah felt hopeless, intimidated, and defeated by the chaos of his time to the point that he allowed fear to stop him from continuing on his prophetic mission.

The Church today has a prophetic mission and the church can't feel hopeless, intimidated, nor defeated. We must not allow chaos to halt the mission. Let's continue to hold fast to His promises knowing that His Word will hold us through. That we should "not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Cr. 20:15). The Holy Spirit is whispering to the church a simple reminder, "victory belongs to Jesus!"

NEW Regional Youth Directors - El Paso

Welcome the new Youth Directors for the El Paso region

Hello, my name is Aida Salcedo Diaz and I am passionate about working for the Lord. Because I love what I do, I have a steady source of motivation that drives me to do my best. Working in my church as a Leader with great passion led me to challenge myself daily and learn new skills that helped me to become a better leader and a better servant. This year the Lord gave me the opportunity to work with the youth as the regional youth leader of El Paso, TX and I'm so excited to see what the Lord has for us because "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Philippians 4:13



Aida & Eulices Diaz

(915) 203-3776

aida34000@yahoo.com

On April 27th, 2020 Governor Gregg Abbot shared the plan to reopen the state of Texas. The Stay-at-Home order will expire at midnight on Thursday, April 30th and starting Friday, May 1st we will start the 1st phase of the reopening plan. The plan that goes into effect on May 1st provides greater freedom for our congregations to start gathering again. I know these are great news since we have all missed the irreplaceable fellowship of worshiping together. With the new order coming into effect on May 1st our churches in Texas are at the liberty to start making plans to gather for worship as soon as this goes into effect.

As we make plans to congregate again it is very important to point out that while there will no longer be a restriction on how many individuals can gather in a group meeting, there are still restrictions that we must comply with. We must still comply with social distancing, protecting the at-risk-population (e.g. 65+, those with underlying conditions, etc.), the recommended use of

masks, the proper cleaning and disinfecting of our facilities, etc. The document “*Open Texas - Checklist for Churches and Places of Worship*” has been provided to all pastors listing the safety guidelines and restrictions we must observe. The document can also be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/opentexas>.

GUIDELINES:

REOPENING OUR CHURCHES

While we will be at the liberty to congregate again it is the decision of each pastor and congregation to consider the wisdom of congregating at this time. Such decision must consider your ability to comply with the safety procedures mandated by the state of Texas. If your congregation is not ready, do not rush to have services again. Keep in mind that just because another church decided to open it does not mean that you should open. Each congregation is different, with unique demographics, worshiping in different facilities, located in different communities. Each church must assess their unique situation to make a wise decision regarding when to have services again. Such decision must consider their ability to comply with the safety procedures mandated by the state of Texas. Take the time to do things right.

CANCELLATION OF 2020 SUMMER CAMPS

It is with a heavy heart that our state leadership has decided to **CANCEL** the upcoming Summer Camp due to **COVID-19**. This was not an easy decision, but we feel that at this time it is the most appropriate course of action.

Our Camp Directors are working to provide alternative forms of ministry engagements during the summer. You will be receiving more information in the upcoming weeks.

CAMPING MINISTRY

YOUTH (12-17) - June 11th - 15th
TC & April Villalobos

CHILDREN'S (7-11) - June 25th - 29th
Amy Vanterpool



Youth Leadership CORNER

While I was having devotion earlier this month, the devotion talked about how we need to be sure to guard our minds, but I that also feel it is important to guard our hearts. The devotion was talking about how if we don't take our thoughts captive it can determine our destination. We have to; we need to, renew our minds daily. We have to take power over our thoughts, because if we don't those thoughts will take power over you. Then once that happens there is no telling how things could spiral.

If we do not take power over our thoughts then it could get to your heart - which is why I say be sure to guard your hearts as well. We need to be transformed to the greater power and not allow the craziness of this world to take hold of you and because it could change who God has/is calling you to be/are. Proverbs 23:7 - a man think it, so he is. Philippians 4:8 - whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely - think such things. Romans 12:2 - be transformed by renewing of your mind, 2 Cor 10:5 - take EVERY thought captive.

A quote by Frank Outlaw -

Watch your thoughts; they become words.

Watch your words, they become actions.

Watch your actions, they become habits.

Watch your habits, they become character.

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

That quote couldn't be more true.

With that being said; be careful with what you watch, read, listen to, post, repost, and whatever else. Because those things become who you are and feel. Strive to be better. Strive to do better. Get up and don't stop. Keep moving forward in all the things the Lord is calling of you to do and guard your heart and mind daily.

- Love, April Villalobos

Regional Youth Director: North Gulf Coast English

May Pastor's Birthdays

Pastors

7th - Jose Baquedano

14th - Cerving McKinnon

20th - John George

26th - Walter Barillas

Pastor's Wives

1st - Janet Vara

3rd - Elizabeth Contreras

13th - Leona Varlack

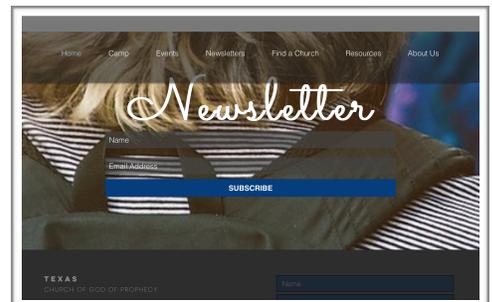
21st - Becky Cook

24th - Faye Pittman

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Editor in Chief: Lidia Merari Barillas
Youth Director: North Gulf Coast Spanish
lidiam.barillas@gmail.com | (832) 692-4625
705 Bradley St. Cleveland, TX 77327