

**“He Must Increase, I Must Decrease”**  
**By Associate General Pastor Hubert Ulysse**  
**Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

I bring greetings from Norfolk, of course. Before I left, I met with Debbie, and Debbie wanted me to greet you, especially, in her name. Obviously, you have heard, we need to pray for Sister Davis. It's not anything serious, but we need to keep her in prayer. Pastor Paine wasn't in Norfolk when I left, but I bring greetings from all of them. I also bring greetings from Haiti and the Dominican Republic. I was in Haiti, and they all know my agenda, and they asked me to greet you. You don't know them, but you have many, many brothers and sisters that you have not met. Amen? And they're all praying for us.

I know you're going over Second Thessalonians so I read it over and over and over. And the greeting was very interesting: How Paul greeted the church. And knowing that Paul was only there for about three weeks. He was there for three weeks, and he saw a group of people saved, but he was forced out; he had to leave. He was forced out, but, now, he heard about the good news. He heard about the good news so he wrote them the first letter. And, then, shortly after that, obviously, somebody else wrote another letter as if it was from Paul that troubled them, saying that Jesus, the last days are here, and Paul had to quickly write another letter. This is the second one. And let me read for you. I know you went over this already, but let me read it for you, verses one to three:

**2 Thessalonians 1:1** *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:*

And it said in verse 2.

**2 Thessalonians 1:2** *Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

That's his typical way of introducing himself to the churches. But in verse 3, he said.

**2 Thessalonians 1:3** *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren [That is strong], as it is meet [as it is proper, as it makes sense, as it's an obligation to us. That's a good thing to do], because that your faith groweth exceedingly [because your faith groweth exceedingly. That's a young church. That's a very young church], and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;*

So that's a very young church and I thought about you as I was coming and I said, “Wow. You are not a young church here, are you?” In some ways. You've been in the faith for at least thirty-plus years, some of you here, right? Yeah, that's not young. That's not young in the faith. Some people have less time. Jesus only lived for thirty-three years, right? Some of you have been saved longer than Jesus was alive. When I read this, I was so encouraged to say, “Wow. I'm coming to a church that is way older than me. Some of you I have known since the first day I was baptized. I met you, and you're still here. What would Paul say then? You've been weak so many times, you've fallen short so many times, but, no, you're here; you've got the victory. This is what the Bible says about the victory that overcomes the world is our faith. We hold on, we hold on, and keep holding on. You know, like I shared this a different time, but, I see people, and they tell me, they think I'm encouraging them; they tell me I am an encouragement, whatever, but I am encouraged by you. Just seeing you encouraged; I am encouraged. That's where I draw my strength. When I see Rebecca and Malcolm bringing a new baby to multiply, I

am encouraged, because I see the future, right? I see another generation coming up, I am encouraged; amen, amen, amen.

Now he says that because it's their faith growing exceedingly. And the law of charity in every one of them all, toward each other aboundeth. When I read this verse, like this, I said, "Wow. Some people. The way he said it, somehow he knew every one of them love each other. And not only they love each other, but their love was growing. So I said to myself, can I come here and say the same thing to you? Can I go to Norfolk and Haiti and say I feel good for you? Because your love every one of you toward each other, aboundeth. So, if this was a letter written to the church, everybody will be listening to that. And the letter was addressed to them, and today it is for you and for me. So, you can imagine that you're reading this letter, and Paul is telling that you, you personally, your love toward each other aboundeth. And, you know for certain, "Eh, I don't think my love for everyone is abounding." You see what I'm saying. You feel like, "That's a credit I don't think I deserve." But you can take this to say, "Thank you, but I'm going to strive harder to see, when I read this, see if I can put myself there. It is important. And obviously, you know, he continued to encourage them in tribulation, that they're facing their enemies. And he talks about how the Lord will punish their enemies. And in chapter three, in chapter three, verses one and two:

**2 Thessalonians 3:1** *Finally, brethren, pray for us...*

I want to go back to verse three of chapter one to see why he thanked God for. He prayed for them, and he gives thanks for two positive traits and characteristics: it was for their faith growing exceedingly, and for the love, their love aboundeth. And in chapter three verses one and two, he says:

**2 Thessalonians 3:1** *Finally, brethren, pray for us [for what? Pray], that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:*

You know, the Bible says, we pray and we don't get, we ask, and we don't get. Why? because we ask amiss. How do we ask amiss? For ourselves, to satisfy our own selves. But, see, he gave thanks for their love and charity and faith. And, then, he asked them to pray for them that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you. So it was a blessing to see them growing. He would love to see everybody else grow like this. And in verse two, he says:

**2 Thessalonians 3:2** *And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.*

Obviously, we know that. But in verse thirteen, he continues to say:

**2 Thessalonians 3:13** *But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.*

Consider the good work. Consider the good work, so I use these two verses as grounds to talk to you about John said, that he would decrease but the Lord must increase.

I'm going to ask you to stand with me; let us have a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your glorious name. And, thank you Lord for saving us. You didn't have to die for us but you did, Lord. And, after that, You kept on being with us, every step of the way. And, we ask You, right now, Lord, that You be with us as we go into Your Word. Let your servant speak only what you would have him to, Lord, and let your people be edified. It's all for Your glory. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Thank you, you may be seated. In John three, in verses twenty-five to thirty, we find the account of. John the Baptist. But this is a report that his disciples came and brought to him. They came to him and, verse twenty-five:

**John 3:25-26** *Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. [Verse 26] And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan [Obviously talking about Christ], to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.*

That's what they put to John. If we would stop right here, do you see any negativity or do you feel they came to say, John we have good news for you? How would you see between those lines if you didn't have the next verse? Is it a good thing? They're happy? They're happy? They're excited? Or is there some other thing hidden behind this? But do you see jealousy behind that? Do you see that? Do you see division? Do you also see ungodly ambition? You know? Do you see a desire for attention? "Hey, John, come on. The other guy has been doing this, but he's being seen by more than you. Actually, he's making more disciples; that's not good. Your selfish team, John, is decreasing. We come to you. It's a call for action, do something, do something." And Christ's disciples debated over who should be the greatest, right? And you know every time our Christ heard this, He said, "You have one master. And we are all what brethren; one master. And we are all brethren; if any one will be first among you, let him be the servant." Remember King Saul? He was unhappy over the increase of David, the way the women were singing, right? Saul has killed his thousands and David has killed his ten-thousands. That didn't go well. It did not go well. But John didn't get into this trap. Verse twenty-seven:

**John 3:27-28** *John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. [Nothing.] Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ...*

"Why do you come to me with this attitude? I told you already this guy so much higher than I, I'm not even not even worthy to bend down to tie his shoes. And now you come to me with an attitude because I don't have a problem that he is increasing." Paul definitely told us clearly about being content in whatsoever state we are in, right? Being content in whatsoever state. John knew who he was, and he knew exactly what his calling was. It's important. You have to know who you are and what your calling is, that's what it is. He knew he wasn't the Christ. And, he knew he was sent; he was the voice in the wilderness.

The Lord calls us in all sorts of different capacities, different capacities. He called some of us to be healthy, yeah. He called some of us to be healthy; He called some of us to be crippled. And it doesn't make any difference, that just the way He feels. He called some of us to be poor, and some of us to be rich. Are there any rich here? I do not think so. But that's just the way it is. If you desire to be rich and you are not called to be rich, the Bible says you are going for trouble. That's the love of money. If you think, like... This book I love, I'm reading America, you know, I'm not an American by birth so I don't know the whole story, so, when I came, I had to read. I came over as a textbook, it's a textbook. It's not easy to read, but I'm reading America. And they're telling me about all the myths. And one of the myths is America is a class-less nation, there is no class. Whatever you want to be, you want to live the dream, you can live it, but that's a myth, not reality. The reality is, it's the hardest country to move up. And they're telling you compared to Canada, compared to Mexico, compared to... How fast you can move up from one class to another class. But America is the hardest. And, they explained, if you were born, and you were born, and you wake up, you open your eyes to the world in America, if you find yourself in the poor class, there is a ninety-three percent chance you will die in it. And if you shake yourself too

hard, you will cause trouble, because, you don't want to stay in your class. You want to be where the Jones's are? You are going to work hard to just to be in trouble all your life, all you have to do is just recognize that's the class I am in, take it easy, live in that class, and, hopefully, you will have a peaceful life. You will pay your bills, right? But you know, according to your class, you have to be in a trailer, get yourself a trailer. And then, according to your job, you live according to your class, then you will be able to save, you will be able to have vacation, you can do everything else but in your class. Now you may be asking me, how do I know? How do I know if I'm in a rich class, or a poor class? They'll tell you that, too. We go over all the school system, to know, if you were in a school system where they just want you to pass the test, okay. You must know that one plus one is two; to remember that two. As long as you remember that two, you're good, you pass, that's the poor class. Then, there's another higher class. They give you the one plus one and you determine what it is. There's another class; in that higher class they'll give you that two, and you determine how they come up with that. That's another class. They pay you more. That's a high executive class, they already have their jobs, because, this class, the other class will come work for them. So, if you are born in one class and you feel like you're not happy, and you're shaking yourself too much, you're just gonna be trouble all your life because you were called in that class. Okay, some are called to be women. What? The other day I had women's Bible study. And I told them if reincarnation is real, I would like to come back as a woman. I wish I was a woman because I feel like they are fortunate. You know, I really do, but some of you are women, and you don't like it. Some of us, some of them want to change. And some are called to be men, right? They don't like it. They want to switch over. It's just not the same. And some are called to be single, and some are called to be married. Some are called to be barren and some are called to be fruitful. Some are called to be pastors, teachers, evangelists, profits, et cetera. Some just are not. That's just the way it is. It's coming from God. It's like a... It's a funny thing. There's advertising. There's this guy. It's a show, a black American show. Somebody, one of them, are just upset because the police arrested them and they are in jail. And comparing to the white and they get abused and he was complaining, and the other black brother was saying, "Hey, man, you should be happy, at least you are in America. Think about our brothers back in Africa. Is that where you want to be? At least you are in America, you are an American. Make good use of it." So that's what happens. We didn't choose where we wanted to be born. We didn't choose our parents, right? We didn't choose to be black, to be white, to be Scottish, to be whatever. We didn't choose that, it's from God directly. And if you have a problem with this, you have a problem with your Creator. You abide in your calling, you know? And you know what happens? then you become jealous. You become jealous, and then you neglect your talent, you neglect what God has given you. Okay, the story of Jonathan, how he was unselfish. Jonathan was the son of the king. And he was supposed to be the next in line. But when David came into his life the Bible says that Jonathan and David made a covenant before the Lord, because he loved him as his own soul. He didn't get jealous like his dad. Our place in life is given by the Lord. And doesn't even seek man's approval. It's the Lord.

Now I have one Scripture in First Corinthians, four, six and seven.

**1 Corinthians 4:6-7** *And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. [Remember, everything that was written was written for our edification] For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*

You know some of us may not look handsome, and some of the ladies are beautiful, and compared to men, some of you are more intelligent. I don't know, whatever, stand, and you're proud of it. And if you look at somebody else and... That's like if you are called to be healthy, and you look at the crippled and say, "I don't know how you came to be this way." And it's like you are lifting yourself up.

Pretty much you're saying, "I'm glad I'm the right one." And where did you get what you got? you have received it. You have received it so he must increase.

Verse twenty-nine in John chapter three.

**John 3:29** *He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.*

When you see Christ's name is being glorified then that should be your joy. Your joy should not be, "Look who I am. Look where I am. Look what I have. Look how important I am." No, God and Jesus should be glorified, and the purpose for living should be that He might be exalted. That's all; that's all it should be, and that's why in verse thirty John continued to say:

**John 3:30** *He must increase, but I must decrease.*

It was enough for John to see Christ increase. Like Paul said, to live is Christ; to die is gain. Galatians six, fourteen:

**Galatians 6:14** *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*

Also in Galatians two twenty, he continued to say:

**Galatians 2:20** *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Meaning, if you and I are living, we should not have anything to glory, as to how good we are, or how bad someone else is. It should really be, you are dead unto yourself, and you are living for Christ. But do you know unfortunately, there are people in the church, they appear to be living in Christ, but actually they are living unto themselves. And this is sad. This is what we'll say when Jesus said, "**Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven,**" (Matthew 7:21) because deep inside, if you dig inside yourself, you should ask the question, am I really dead in Christ? Now am I living all for him, all my life, that's all I am about? I know some of us are called and greater capacity in whatever, and, like, Andy and Parrish may appear to be all their life doing this and doing that or whatever. But is it for their own glory? I've been digging inside to see. My quest, searching inside myself. Lord, is there anything in me, that when I am preaching Your Word I'm looking for glory for me, or am I looking for edifying of the Saints? And obviously, every teacher, every preacher, everyone, I mean, you do want to impress, somehow. You do want to present, somehow. Even if it's all for the Lord, use, you still need to prepare and you still need to come. For the believer, for everybody to say, "Yes, I receive it. And, you do feel good when people say it was a great message. But, you're not delivering it for that. But feeling good that you have prepared, and the Holy Spirit has used you to do it. There is pride in this, but that's not the reason why you are doing this. And I came across this little note, and it's a real note. I'll try to read it for you. It was written to employees in a Detroit business office, who found the following note on the bulletin board. And it attracted me. It says, "The management regrets that it has come to their attention, that workers dying on the job are failing to fall down. They are dead, they are not doing any work, they're still standing up. This practice must stop as it becomes impossible to distinguish between death and the natural movement of the staff." Then, when everybody's working standing up, you don't know who is dead, who was alive. So they need to make a

distinction. So at the end, they say, "Any employee found dead in the upright position will be dropped from the payroll." Isn't that interesting? When I read this, I said, "My goodness. You may see people, active in church, doing things, but they are dead." And it makes it difficult. Because they're standing up, they're active, they're in church, they pray, too. And it's difficult to pick which one is dead and which one is alive? But do you know, God knows. This is why at the end, the Bible says, it is difficult to choose, to know the tare from the wheat. The angel will have to make that pick. That's how difficult it is, and, you know what? It may be hard, even for you except you examine yourself. To even know whether you are dead or alive, whether you're living for you or living for God. Because living for God is not a theory, it's actually practice. It's real. When the Bible, says Paul is talking about the love one towards another. This love that he's talking about is not loving your friends, and people who are lovable. It's actually people you cannot stand. And, if you come to love them, then you can take pride in this. Jesus said your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. If you just love those who love you, what benefit is this? If you just feel good and you'll talk to those people who will listen to you, some people who will not hurt you, you don't do anything great, okay. Now, how can one decrease? Decreasing in humility is a by-product of being focused on Christ. If your eyes, your attention, everything you do is focused on Christ, you don't have to work hard on decreasing yourself. And there is also a difference between just decrease. Oh, yes, some people have a false humility. Yeah, they humbled themselves whatever but it again, it's for their own glory, to show—it's like the Pharisees that say Lord I'm so happy I'm not like that man. That's obvious, that's obvious, right? He was lifting up himself. But you actually find people who bend down, too, so that people can see how low they are. You see what I'm saying. But before the Lord, in their heart, they are not all of that. That's not the decrease that he's talking about. It's the decrease that Christ can increase. It's like the balance, you know the balance? When you put the weight on one side, one side goes down, the other side goes up. It cannot be both together. It has to be one or another, okay. So, increase and decrease are on opposite sides of the balance. As we are more and more occupied, as we are more and more occupied with Christ., we are less and less occupied with ourselves. The more occupied we are with Christ the less occupied with ourselves, and as we are more and more amazed in Him, the more and more we are amazed in Christ. You say, "Wow, you are awesome." Like, after He performed the miracle and Peter had to drop down and say, "I'm not worthy." Even after catching so many fishes in the—Peter and the other apostles, they dropped everything and followed Him. They said, "No, we are not, we got the fishes, that's great. We are fishermen. That's our business, but now we can have You, Who can give us the fishes." They were amazed. The more and more you are amazed in Him, we see ourselves less and less. And less and less we see anything in us to be impressed with. Because you see the greatness of God and you say, "Well, who am I? Who am I?" There is that word where Paul says examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith, examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith. That's something that we cannot forget to examine ourselves constantly. Don't look at your position in ministry, don't look at how long you've been in ministry. Examine yourself, examine yourself, daily, actually, to see whether you are in the faith, because we have to make it, we have to make it. In the state that you're in, only the Lord can bring you up and only He can bring you down. And, if you don't accept it He will not be able to cooperate with you. There is that story—it's not a real story. It talks about death who came and knocked at somebody's door. And the person was shaking, and he said, "Man, I am not ready to die." But, Death was knocking, and the person opened the door and Death came down. So, that person was so nice to death. And then He offered coffee, and tea, and all kinds of things, you know, and in the midst of all that Death said, "Can I use your restroom?" He said, "Okay," you know? He went to Death's folder, to look at the list of people, and his name was at the top of the list. So, Death came to make the announcement that his time was come, and he looked at that and he quickly erased his name, and he went to the very last part of it, and he wrote his name down, and then he closed the folder. And Death came back and he had coffee, and they had a good talk, and Death said, "You know what? Actually, I

came to tell you you were next in line, but you're so nice to me, I really feel I have to do something about it. Instead of starting from the top, I'm going to start from the bottom.”

I said this to tell you, abide in your calling. If you don't abide in your calling, whatever you do, it will just come against you. Because, God will be glorified in you. However, you want it, you can make it easy for Him—for you, actually, or you can make it harder for you. Abide in your calling. God has everything under control. He has everything under control.

I also want to tell you from this point on: My next visit will be at the very beginning of next year. I will be with you for a longer time. We have talked to Andy and Parrish about so many issues, and I think the time has come that we solve them. The time has come, the time to grow. There is growth; you have held on, held on tight. It's the time to explode. Amen.

Thank you very much and I will see you for a couple more days. God bless you.