

29 September 2019

**Who We Are: A House of Prayer, A House of Faith & A House of Praise
Ps Garth Bendixen (JHB)**

**Scripture Reference: 1 Thessalonians 2:13 (AMPC); John 1:14 (AMPC);
Ephesians 1:17-23 (AMPC); Isaiah 60:1-2 (APMC)**

Praise You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise Your holy Name forever. Praise Your holy Name forever. Praise Your holy Name forever. Praise Your holy Name forever. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Glory to Your Name. Glory to Your Name. Glory to Your Name. Glory to Your Name. Praise the Name of Jesus. Praise the Name of Jesus. Praise the Name of Jesus. Praise the Name of Jesus. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Glory, glory, glory, glory, glory. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

You know, Brother Hagin prophesied before he went Home to be with the Lord that for us to be spiritual and to activate spiritual things in our lives is going to be as easy for us as like a fish swimming in water. We are going to be able to activate ourselves and do spiritual things and activate the power of the Holy Spirit in us as easy as if we were swimming in water. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. So how many of you know how to pray and sing in the spirit? If you can't sing in the spirit and you can pray in the spirit then just pray in the spirit. I want to just do this by the unction of the Holy Spirit. I don't know where He's going with this or what He's wanting to do with it, but let's sing in the spirit together. [Singing and praying in the spirit].

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Oh, our hearts belong to You, Jesus. Our hearts belong to You, Jesus. We as a people, our hearts belong to You, Jesus. We are Yours, we are Yours and You are our God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. We give you all the glory, Jesus. We give You all the glory, Heavenly Father. We give You all the glory, precious Holy Spirit. You are wonderful to us. You are wonderful to us, precious Holy Spirit. You are wonderful, You are glorious, You are holy, You are precious to us, Holy Spirit. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Glory to God. Okay, you can be seated.

Praise the Lord. So who of you have listened already to the message on YouTube? Shame on you, you can leave. Only joking. Praise the Lord. I was saying to Marcelle this afternoon when I got home, I feel like I should be doing some more preparation because I have to go preach the same message in Jo'burg. You know, just adding a little bit or whatever. So Marcelle said to me, "You know Garth, Brother Jerry travels the whole world and preaches the same message in every church, you can do it twice." Praise the Lord. So the title of my message is; *Who we are: A House of Prayer, a House of Faith and a House of Praise*, that is who we are. Praise the Lord.

So for those of you who are listening to this for the first time, I wanted to share by the leading of the Holy Spirit a little bit about my history. So most of you know a little bit of the negative choices that I've made, that I ended up in a drug rehabilitation in 2010 and since then the Lord has been restoring my life, but before that I would like to share with you, obviously growing up for the most part of my young years and my teen years my mom and dad were not pastors. Pastor John, most of you know this,

worked in the corporate world. But I grew up in the church and I grew up listening to Brother Hagin who was the founder of the church we attended. I think all of you know that we attended Rhema. And so I grew up listening to Brother Hagin, you know. I grew up listening and watching him on VCR, watching him in camp meetings, you know people going wild, you know jumping over chairs and laughing hysterically, you know. I grew up on Brother Hagin teach us on *Plans, Purposes and Pursuits* and *How to develop mountain moving faith* and *How to develop your spirit man; Knowing the Father*, you know, those are just some; *The Art of Prayer*. Those are just few of the things that I grew up in my younger years and my teenage years listening to, reading. And then of course Brother Copeland; listening to him minister on *How to be financially free; How to be free from debt; The blessing of God; How to walk in the blessing*. And then I was sharing this morning as well, I had a good chuckle with Pastor Justin when he told his story about how they would smoke joints. They would smoke blunts; does everyone remember the story? And he would take a pull on it and pass it to the next person and say, "I'm going to be a preacher." Everyone remember that? And I would smoke joints or blunts as he called them and then I would go and lie on my bed and listen to ministry or I would watch ministry. And I will never forget listening to Brother Copeland on *How to receive revelation knowledge* and him talking to Peter and say, "On this rock I will build my Church." And I am as high as a kite and I'm learning how to receive revelation knowledge. That's not the way to receive revelation knowledge but the Lord will talk to you any time. It just so happens that when you are that way inclined, you see things and experience things a lot more creatively. So when Jesus said, "I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven." The Kingdom of Heaven; I saw visually all of these closed gates in my face and whenever there was a closed door or a closed gate, all I needed was the key and so where would I get the key? I would get it from the Word, I would get revelation. Revelation would be there for me to open that gate. You know? Praise the Lord. I'm not saying that you should be smoking marijuana and listening to ministry, I'm definitely not advocating that. Especially all the young people in here, I'm watching you.

And then of course listening to Brother Jerry on *Satan can't steal your joy. If he can't steal your joy, he can't keep your goods*. And even from very little I knew that if I was low on joy then Satan was stealing my goods. You know, from a teenager I was aware of that. And then the last twenty years listening to Pastor John and Sharon. And so what is the message that they bring to the church? Order, Church Governance, how to be spiritual. Hallelujah. So Pastor John has been asking the question; what is the purpose of being a Christian? And what is the answer to that? To be spiritual. And what is the purpose of being spiritual? To bring heaven to earth. Thank you, you all get very good marks.

So I want to add to this that the purpose of being spiritual is so that God can fill us and clothe us once again with His glory. So if you remember the last time I ministered to you I, the Lord has been dealing with me a lot, and I'm not going to get too much into that about being self-conscious and how that is such an enemy to developing faith and intimacy and closeness with the Lord. But if you remember what happened with Adam and Eve when they were disobedient and they partook of a thing that they were not supposed to, their eyes were opened and they looked at each other and they looked at themselves and they got a bit of a fright. Because suddenly they saw self. They saw themselves without the glory of God, so they saw

their nakedness. Does everyone remember that? And so for the first time Adam and Eve were conscious of need and God never created us to be conscious of need. And having to provide for ourselves. So what did they do? They realised they were naked and they wanted to cover their naked parts. So they went and found some fig leaves and sewed them together and covered their naked parts. And so if you remember the Lord was saying to us; at best us providing for ourselves is fig leaves, it's nothing more than that. Because He desires to provide for us; that has always been the case. And so the only thing that we ever need, because now they became needy, and they were needy of what they had lost, which was the spirit of glory. So that is what God is all about with us. So we were never designed to be self-conscious.

So what came into Adam and Eve? Shame. Fear. Insecurity. So for the first time Adam and Eve were afraid. They hid themselves. They withdrew from the Lord. So now there was a sense of distance between them and the Lord and there wasn't that before. Is everyone with me? So their language changed, if you remember Adam's interaction with God; "I was afraid and so I hid myself." And so God asked, "How did you know that you were afraid?" So now there was language between him and God that was never meant to exist. Okay so, we were never meant to be withdrawn from God. Isn't that powerful? So throughout history God has been reassuring man of His presence with them and restoring what was lost; which was the blessing and it was the Spirit of glory. He's been busy with man throughout the ages restoring the blessing and reassuring man; I'm with you, I'm with you. From Noah to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the Tribes of Israel, Moses, the children of Israel in their exodus. He had to tell them all the time; I'm with you. I'm with you. I'm with you. I'm with you. Joshua and then all the way through to the New Testament where Jesus was sent for one purpose; so that we could have closeness and have fellowship with the Father again and to restore the Spirit of glory to man. Hallelujah.

So here we find ourselves with Pastor John and Pastor Sharon; an apostle and a prophet. Laying down the foundations of the Church. Hallelujah. We are privileged. Building the most powerful and most attractive force in the universe.

Pastor Sharon: It was in my heart to do this this morning for the sake of the people, not for your sake, what I want, what I want them to declare. Because there needs to be a very free flow here in the hearts of the people to receive from you this afternoon. This is what I had the Witbank people say this morning, will you say this with me? I woke up with this in my heart; Pastor Garth, thank you for seeking the Lord for about two weeks now of what he would want to say to us today through you. Thank you for receiving this message from Jesus Himself. And Pastor Garth, we completely listen to every word as if Jesus Himself were standing here this afternoon speaking to us. Thank you Pastor Garth, for listening to God and bringing us this message today.

Pastor Garth: Thank you, Pastor Sharon. So what are Pastor John and Sharon doing as an apostle and a prophet? They are laying the foundations for the most powerful and most attractive force in the universe. You know, I didn't say this this morning, and I wanted to but Pastor Sharon ministered a message a while ago where she was talking about making the House of God your main attraction. And out of the blue the Lord said to me; if your wife and your family are not your main attraction, the church will never be. And He was saying this to me, because for the same reasons that your family, your wife in particular, is not your main attraction, will be the same reasons

why the church will never be. So the same distractions, the same things that are in your soul, the same things that you desire to do for yourself, other than love your wife completely, will be the same reasons why you do not love the church and the church will not be your main attraction. That's powerful hey? So my wife gets told regularly that she's my main attraction.

So what are Pastor Sharon and Pastor John all about? We said it just now; God's order. Why are they about this, Church? And it's for this simple truth and that's that they want more of God for you and for me. Everything in them is bringing them, bringing us back into that closeness, into that relationship with God. That fellowship where we are not withdrawn, where we are not hiding ourselves, where we are not ashamed of our condition. Where we come to the Father, where we come running to the Father. So they want Him, which means they want Him for us. Amen.

So they want Him so that we can all experience Him individually and together. So who is He to us and how are we going to experience Him together? So I said to the church this morning; I don't have the answer to that question, I don't know what it's going to look like yet. But I know this; it will be glorious. It will be full of freedom, it will be full of joy, it will be full of power, it will be full of splendour, it will be full of marvels, it will be full of wonder, it will be full of greatness. I don't yet know what that looks like to my natural eye. My spirit man can witness with that and say; it's going to be magnificent. But I don't know what that looks like with our natural eye. I mean, I know in way what it will look like in its demonstration as a church. The church will be operating at its full capacity and authority, you know, but as a people us enjoying the presence of the Holy Spirit and the Father together, I don't yet know what that looks like. Hallelujah. I look forward to that.

So here we find ourselves with Pastor John and Pastor Sharon and we want Him. And He is ecstatic that we want Him. So what is it that we're doing here? We're here to listen to Pastor John and Sharon show us how to have more of Him. So Holy Spirit just reminded me that He wanted me to say this, that on behalf of Pastor John and Sharon I am advocating for what they are doing for you and I. So I am laying a case before you to convince you. A lot of you are more convinced than others about what's going on here, but I'm to lay a case before you like an advocate would do in presenting the truth to you so you can decide what's actually going on in this church. Hallelujah. Because I know, it's very clear to me as a natural son and as a spiritual son what's going on because I know my mom and dad are genuinely spiritual people. I've watched them over my life time being tested and tried and being spiritual in every possible situation and where they're not and where they've missed it, they've apologised personally to me and Brynn and to whoever else was part of it, but they've endeavoured to live spiritually my whole life. And so that's what I want. And you know, I don't want to be part of a church where we think we're doing church. You know, where we're just coming for whatever foolish reason we come to, you know. I want to be part of a church where we truly want God, we want more of Him.

So Pastor John and Sharon are His messengers and they're showing us how to create an environment where He can come to. So Pastor Sharon ministered two weeks ago on *We Want, We Prepare And He Comes*. So are you ready, Church? Are you ready because this process is inevitable? We want, we prepare, and He comes. We want, we prepare, and He comes. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

How many of you are ready? Well, He's getting us ready. If we were ready, He would come. You know the children of Israel thought they were ready until they heard His voice come from the mountain and then they said, "No, no, no, Moses, we're not ready. You go and talk to Him, please." So you've got to think carefully if you say you're ready. Hallelujah. But He's getting us ready and we're preparing.

So Pastor John and Sharon's mandate is to make ready for the Lord a people, which is what the message is doing. So by default, myself, Pastor Christi, Pastor Melusi and any other Pastor to come, this is what our mandate is; to make ready for the Lord a people. A people perfectly prepared in spirit. I don't have a different mandate to them; otherwise I would be out of order and Pastor Christ and Pastor Melusi. So if he's saying funny stuff you must tell Pastor John, hey. (Laughing)

This is who we are; we are being made ready for the Lord. So 1 Thessalonians 2:13; you can all turn there with me on your iPads and your iPhones. 1 Thessalonians 2:13, **¹³And we also**, and by we I'm talking about Pastor John, Pastor Sharon, Pastor Christi, Pastor Melusi, and myself. You can imagine all of us saying this to you as well as the Apostle Paul, okay. **¹³And we also [especially] thank God continually for this, that when you received the message of God [which you heard] from us, you welcomed it not as the word of [mere] men, but as it truly is, the Word of God, which is effectually at work in you who believe [exercising its superhuman power in those who adhere to and trust in and rely on it] (1 Thessalonians 2:13 AMPC).**

So what is the superhuman power of the Word actually doing in you and me when we adhere to it? And you know I have a very visual relationship with the Lord and when I think of something being adhered to, I think of like the strongest glue you can get and you know, putting your; putting glue on something and sticking your hand to it, you know. I'm adhering my hand to whatever it is, to this substance. That's adhering; there's nothing that can take this Word from me. And then I rely and I trust in it. That's very relational. God is reliable and trustworthy. But I adhere to the Word.

So we all have our heart, which is soil. So we all receive which is what the scripture is saying. We all receive. But what the Lord is in the process of doing with us is helping us believe. So I was saying this this morning; the Lord desires for us to believe like children. You know and I use the example of my own children. If I say something to Keira-Leigh or Daina-Mae, Gabriel's a little bit too little but he'll be the same when he's a little bit older but if they ask me for something or I say I'm going to get them something, they don't say, "Hmm Dad, I don't believe you." You know. "Keira-Leigh, I'm going to get you this." "No, I don't believe you, Dad. When I see it, I'll believe it". No, if I tell them I'm going to get them something, "Thank you, Dad. You're amazing. You're wonderful." Okay, maybe not that part but they do say, thank you. They will when they are older.

So what happens when you believe? What is the superhuman power doing in us? What is it exercising in us? Well, it changes you. It begins to fill you with God's glory. It draws you closer to Jesus and to the Father. It changes our image. We begin to look more and more like Jesus. So there are many of you that over the years that I've known you become more and more like Jesus. That when I talk to you, you desire sincerely to talk spiritually and not to talk about, you know, foolish things, but

to activate spiritual conversation as much as you can; to talk about good things, productive things, fruitful things, holy things.

So it changes our image. We begin to look more and more like Jesus. So who is Jesus? You can turn with me please to John 1:14. So you should all know this; at least heard it some way – in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, and I'm jumping down to verse 14. **¹⁴And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us, and here's what I want you to note, and we [actually] saw His glory.** So the Word was made flesh and we saw His glory. Okay. **Such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favour, loving-kindness) and truth (John 1:14 AMPC).**

So Jesus is the Word made flesh. So can we all agree that Jesus is the Message; the Message of God? So if you go back with me to 1 Thessalonians 2:13 and I'm going to re-read it now with that in mind: **¹³And we also, all of the pastors and the Apostle Paul, thank God continually for this, that when you received the message of God, which is Christ; He is the Word. So when you received Christ from us, you welcomed it not as the word of [mere] men, but as it truly is, Christ, which is effectually at work in you who believe [exercising its superhuman power in those who adhere to and trust in and rely on it] 91 Thessalonians 2:13 AMPC).** So can we agree that Jesus is the Message that Pastor John and Sharon bring to us? So the Message, which is Christ, the Word, is what is filling us with God's glory.

So the same process takes place in us; we receive the Word, we believe the Word, and the Word becomes flesh in us, it becomes, it forms part of the fabric of who we are; it becomes flesh in us. So the process of faith; receiving, believing - the ultimate process is that it becomes who we are. So when it becomes who we are, like it said in first Thessalonians, we see the glory. Sorry, in John 1; we actually see His glory.

So have we not been asking God to show us His glory? He wants to, Church. He is desiring most sincerely to show us His glory. You know when Brother Jerry brought this message and then we started praying about it almost immediately; "Father, show us your glory. Lord, show us your glory." In one of the prayer meetings the Lord said to me, "Well, I'm not withholding My glory. I'm not keeping it from you. My glory is all around you. My glory is in you. My glory is in everything. I'm not withholding My glory from you. I desire more than anything to show you my glory." So what's the issue? The issue is how we see; through which eyes we see. So He is changing how we see, through the Message, and the Message is Christ. The Word is Christ. So He is changing the way we see.

And I'm lead to share this with you as well this afternoon. Pastor Sharon came into the back room this morning after having practiced with the band and you know, she was talking to me and I was just in the back praying, and when she came into the back she was visibly moved by the Holy Spirit. You could see the anointing all over her. And for those of you that have been around Pastor Sharon, it's quite evident when the Holy Spirit is on her. You can see it. It's all over her hands; her whole body, you can see it and she was talking to me and just telling me that even in these practices, while they're practicing for worship, the anointing was so strong on her she

could barely stand. And she turned to Kate and she said, “Kate, have you sensed the anointing?” and so Kate said, “Oh, is that what it is Pastor Sharon?”

But you know, I said to Pastor Sharon, and she said she’s been having that experience for the past few weeks in practice. So, just internally I was having a conversation with the Lord and I was saying, “Well, that has not been my experience”. So, I’ve been focused on a lot and the responsibility of the worship - getting the words right, getting the chords right, you know, not having an iPad – all of those practicalities, but what inevitably that means, is that I’ve been focused on something else. I’ve been using my natural eyes to focus on something else, so my spiritual eyes have not been engaged. So, I’ve not had that same experience where Pastor Sharon is saying, “I sense the anointing.” Well, I haven’t. And if I have sensed it, it’s been kind of shifted, so that I can focus on the responsibility and I’m not saying that’s a bad thing, I’m just saying you can choose. So we only see His glory through the eyes of glory. So we only have two sets of eyes - our natural eyes, and then the eyes of our spirit man. And the eyes of our spirit man are glorious. We were created, when we were reborn, spirit man came alive to God. Now spirit man’s eyes have all of the capacity to see spiritually that it once did. Amen.

So you can turn with me please to Ephesians 1:17-23. Somebody’s in agreement with my message. Ephesians 1:17-23; so I’m talking about we only see His glory through the eyes of glory. So this is a prayer and a lot of you have been coming to prayer, you know, and you’re part of the Prayer Connect Group. This is a prayer that we pray regularly for the people of Heritage of Faith. ¹⁷**[For I always pray and we always pray to] the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, that He may grant you a spirit of wisdom and revelation [of insight into mysteries and secrets] in the [deep and intimate] knowledge of Him, (Ephesians 1:17 AMPC).** So, if we just break down the Scripture, which I wanted to do for a little bit; the knowledge of Him, the deep and intimate knowledge of Him is what produces the wisdom and revelation, the insight into mysteries in knowing Him.

Okay, so the next part is how we know Him. ¹⁸**By having the eyes of your heart flooded with light (Ephesians 1:18 AMPC).** So by having the eyes of our heart flooded with light, we know Him intimately which produces wisdom and revelation, insight into mysteries. And I said this this morning as well, which I’m let to do again. You know, Pastor John has this testimony about when he worked corporately and that deal, I mean, I forget all the details now, but the deal that he was working on, was going to another big company, I think it was IBM, and he was seeking the Lord, praying in his heavenly language asking the Lord how he can turn this business deal around? And then the Lord supernaturally gave him the image of a man and said, “Now you contact him and tell him this, this, and that.” And he did that, and the Lord supernaturally turned the whole deal around and he got the business. When everything was, it was already signed, done and dusted that it was going to the other company and the Lord turned the whole thing around. And the Lord, He actually just told me about it this morning, that there are many people that question in their heart, “Well, how do I do that as a business person, because obviously it’s possible. How is it that the Lord can supernaturally do something for me like this, that He can bring business to me like this, when it seems like I’ll never get the business?” So here’s the answer; ¹⁸**By having the eyes of your heart flooded with light.** So as the eyes of your heart are flooded with light, insight into mysteries. And you know Him more

intimately. So in that case, Pastor John knew him more intimately. “Wow Father, this is something that You can do for me. You can reveal a man's face to me and turn this whole business deal around. I know Him more intimately.”

So by having the eyes of your heart flooded with light, and then I wanted you to see the process of how the Lord deals with us; ¹⁸**so that you can know and understand the hope to which He has called you**, so that you can know and understand the hope to which He has called you. Next part of the process, now we're all involved; ¹⁸**and how rich is His glorious inheritance in the saints**, which is all of us, but this is how He works – privately, personally, powerfully – and then He works with us corporately. ¹⁹**And [so that you can know and understand] what is the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power in and for us who believe, adhere to, rely on and trust Him, the message, as demonstrated in the working of His mighty strength,** ²⁰**Which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His [own] right hand in the heavenly [places], which is where we are seated as well.** ²¹**Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named [above every title that can be conferred], not only in this age and in this world, but also in the age and in the world which are to come.** ²²**And He has put all things under His feet and has appointed Him the universal and supreme Head of the Church**, and then here comes the brackets, which is Amplified, **[a headship exercised throughout the Church]**. So how is His authority, His rule, His reign exercised throughout the Church? So, who's the Church? We are. I am. I am first the Church, then we are the Church. ²³**Which is His body, the fullness of Him Who fills all in all [for in that body lives the full measure of Him Who makes everything complete, and Who fills everything everywhere with Himself] (Ephesians 1:18-23 AMPC).**

And the Lord's actually saying to me in preparation for this, which I didn't say this morning, but you know, in times past the Lord has used individuals, and He's put a lot of gifting, anointing and responsibility on individuals. And the time, this is my perspective anyway spiritually, for the time for that has come to an end. And now the responsibility, the gifting and the anointing is on the Church, not on individuals. Hallelujah, hallelujah.

So we can see it's vital that we have the eyes of our heart flooded with light. So there is a flood of light in this place and if you remember last time, I shared with you how Pastor Sharon was saying to me, “There's so much light here, there's so much light here. There's so much light here.” And I was mentally acknowledging and agreeing with her, “Yes, yes, mom, yeah. There's lots of light here, you know. Lots of light, you know.” Until the Lord started to deal with me and was saying to me, “Yeah, but you're not seeing, Garth. You're not seeing.” So there is a flood of light in this place and there are many churches that have very little light. Many leaders who walk in very little light.

So Pastor John, I just want to see where he said this. In his *Praying with faith produces results (Part 1)* message, he said this, and it went off in me like a nuclear bomb and he painted the whole picture of when, you know, people came from all over, all over the country for Passover, and they were selling doves in the temple, they were selling lambs, they were selling all kinds of things, and they were

exchanging money. And he said this about what they were doing, because it was the religious order of the day that were making money off of them doing that, and he said this; that they were profiting off people's desire to worship God. And there are many churches where this is the case. Their leaders are profiting off of men and women's desire to worship God. This is not who we are. This is not who we are, and if you haven't settled that about Pastor John and Sharon, I'll give you a moment. You can settle it right now. Is anyone still having questions about that? Come up to the front, we'll pray for you.

So if you remember, last time I shared with you that in prayer the Lord was showing me that Pastor John was walking on the water and He was holding hands with Jesus. And we, I was in the boat, I didn't know in what the Lord is showing me, how big the boat was or who was in the boat, but when the Lord, the Holy Spirit was ministering to me about it, He was saying, "This is what Pastor John is doing with all of us right now. He is walking on the water, holding the hand of the Lord Jesus, calling all of us out of the boat, to walk on the water with them." So God is crying out to all of us, every one of us, to step up and step out. And He wants us to do it together. So every one of you has had a choice to be here this afternoon. Hopefully no one had to break limbs or anything to get you here, but even if you here because somebody broke your limb, you still have a choice. So I want to tell you that if you're here today, this is who we are. We are a House of Prayer, a House of Faith and a House of Praise.

You are a House of Prayer, a House of Faith and a House of Praise. That is who you are. This is your identity. And if you keep coming to this church, whether you recognize this or not, you want what we are. Otherwise you wouldn't keep coming. But you have identified what it is that Pastor John and Sharon are all about and you want what we are about. Amen. So I want you to say this with me, "I am a House of Prayer. I am a House of Faith. I am a House of Praise." Hallelujah.

So, I don't think this is the case with too many people here, but I'm going to say it anyway. If you're not attending prayer, it's just a matter of time before you will, because you are a House of Prayer. And you've just said it out of your own mouth. So it's just a matter of time before enough light penetrates your heart; penetrates the darkness and you believe that prayer is good for you. And really, what prayer is all about is us exercising the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ on the earth; for your life personally. Everything that He said that your life should be, could be; it's you exercising that headship for your life personally, because that's how He works, and then for all of us corporately and as a Church. Amen.

So Pastor John said this, I wanted to say this and I didn't say it this morning so hopefully young people will listen to this from Witbank; that if your parents are not coming to prayer, you should ask them to bring you to prayer. If they're not setting that example for you, you ask them to bring you to prayer. And if they won't bring you to prayer, then submit to them, and ask the Lord to deal with them. And He will. So Pastor John said this; what God is busy with us here is not just for us. It's for generations to come. God needs a people that will stand for this message.

So, you know, it's an amazing thing to me, and I put myself in this equation too, that parents think that certain things that they do go unnoticed by their children. And us collectively, we believe in prayer. And so, when we have prayer meetings, and either

the parents don't go; or we have a big prayer meeting and the young people that come; they are aware of how many people do not come. They are aware of it. They see. And so, what do you think that is doing in the life of a young person? It's what Pastor John was talking about when he said how people, when they don't do the Word that they're taught in the church, and then the children grow up watching their parents go to church, and then not doing the Word at home. Then they get confused and they think; okay, church is just something that's separate from real life. That's what happens to young people when they don't watch their parents; okay, they're teaching about the House of Prayer, but, you know, I see a lot of older people don't come. So, maybe it's just something that some people do.

So why should I pray? So God can make you like Him; that's why. So do you want to be like Him? You have to talk to Him to be like Him. Remember what I mentioned earlier about Pastor Sharon's message? *We want, we prepare, He comes.* You know, the Lord has been asking me this question ever since I came out of rehabilitation. And the more He asks me, the more, it's like multi-layered. He's been asking me, "What do you want?" And then a circumstance will happen in my life and He'll say, "What do you want?" And then I'll choose something spiritual, and then I'll get a certain result, and then He'll say to me, "Okay, now what do you want?" And then something else will happen and then, on top of that He'll say, "Okay, now what do you want?"

And I'll never forget the conversation I had with Marcelle the one day about disciplining the children. And I was sitting in the bath with her and she was talking to me and I was kind of like, not really paying attention. And the Lord got my attention. And He just said two words to me, but it was like he sucker-punched me. And He said, "Impartial, and indifferent." And He said, "She's having this conversation with you about the discipline of your children which I think is a pretty big deal, and you are impartial and indifferent." Which means you don't really care either way how much you discipline. So then He said to me, "What do you want, Garth, with your children?" What kind of children do you want? Because there is no behavior in children that are little that cannot be changed. And so of course, those words have resounded with me with many things in my life. Not to be impartial or indifferent but to actually decide what it is that I want from every area of my life. Not to just kind of have a vague idea. You know, I'd like my kids to be well-behaved but I'm not really prepared to discipline them for this, this, this, this, this and that, you know. Or, I'll let these kinds of things go but those kinds of things, I'll, you know.

So, do you want to be like Him? We want to be like Him. So then the next thing that I get from a lot of people is; well, I don't know how to pray. And I feel really awkward praying. Which is another way of saying, I'm self-conscious. Which means; I'm seeing prayer through the wrong set of eyes. So there's no better place to come, you know. And when I was preparing for this, the Lord, you know, again I'm very visual with Him, He said it's like enlisting in an army. And this is our army by the way that we've enlisted in. It's like enlisting in the army and then they want you to do leopard crawling and they want you to, you know, run with your rifle on your back. They want to teach you how to shoot and it would be like saying to your commander, "I feel really awkward shooting. It's so strange. You know, I don't even know where this thing goes in the gun," you know. You've enlisted in the army so that you can be taught how to shoot, how to climb the, you know, those nets and how to leopard

crawl and how to do all those weird things that you've got to do in the army. How to do all those things. So we are in the army of the Lord and this is where we've enlisted. So, let Pastor John and Sharon train you. So I hope I'm dealing with all your excuses about why you're not praying. And, you know, praise the Lord.

So, Pastor John recently said this; if you don't live by faith, you can never cross that bridge of knowing how, if you don't start to live by faith. You cannot reason and intellectualise the process of living by faith or someone who lives by faith, because it doesn't make sense. So I want you to think about this in light of prayer. You cannot intellectualise it. Faith, or prayer, is something that you have in your heart. The ways of God are what you choose from your heart and not from the realm of reason and what makes sense. So the next time that I talk to the church, I want to talk about us being a House of Faith. And then the next time a House of Praise. But I want you to bear this in mind in terms of prayer; if you don't live by prayer, you can never cross that bridge of knowing how, if you don't start to pray. You cannot reason, and cannot intellectualise the process of prayer or someone who lives by prayer because it doesn't make sense. Especially when, you know, we pray in our heavenly language. You know, that's now really doing the leopard crawl, you know, with stuff on you and, you know, it's just weird to the mind - it's weird.

I'm almost finished. I was saying this to a young man the other day who, I can tell you because I don't think any of you will know him, but he hit another young boy in school. And he hit him so hard – one of his teeth came through his lip. And so the parents actually laid charges against him. And so, I was talking to him and the Lord led me to say which is the process of faith because I was just ministering to him that he needs to do what we all do, which is to sow the Word, speak the Word, allow the Word to change you, allow the Word to make you spiritual. Otherwise, you know, the next time, because, you know, he was saying to me, "This, it won't happen again. It's never happened before, it won't happen again." And I said, "Well, you can't say that unless you put the Word in you that changes you because the enemy's sneaky. The next time it will be a different set of circumstances. The next time it might be a taxi driver that cuts you off and you've been saying for so many years, you know, "I can't stand these taxi drivers", you know. And a taxi driver cuts you off and now you want to get out of the car and you hit the guy so hard, you know, he ends up in hospital. Or, he's got a gun, you know, and then the enemy, he's got you.

Where was I going with this? Oh, faith endeavors seem fake. So I was saying to him, and the Lord led me like this because young people often, you know, they want to be authentic in what they're doing. They want to do it and it must be, you know, they must do it properly. And the process of faith, when you start to speak the Word or you do anything by faith it's seems fake. Like Pastor Justin said, "I love You. I love You. I love You. I love You. I love You. I love You. I love You." When he started out saying that it was probably weird every time he said it until that little thing started to grow in him. "I love You. I love You." Now there is some kind of response internally, "I love You. I love You. I love You." And now; "I love You, Lord. I love You, Lord. I love You, Lord. I love You, Lord." And the more he said it, which was why the Lord said to him, "Don't stop saying it." The more he said it, the more it produced life in him until eventually in that moment; he received his salvation and his healing of his body. Hallelujah.

So it's the same thing with prayer. It's the same thing with any faith endeavor. You start to say it, you start to do it, it feels fake. And you know, I was saying to Marcelle, we were watching this American show on Netflix called *The Wake*. So they have to count money over the space of 24 hours and they get really tired. But they have to keep track of how many quarters they're counting. And, anyway, that's beside the point. But Americans, they have no problem being fake. And, you know, I was saying to Marcelle, "It's so interesting that as a South African culture, we really, we are just not like that." We want to be authentic in what we're doing; what we're saying, what we're believing, what we're talking about and what we're doing. We really don't have that in our culture. We want to be authentic. We want to be real, you know. And so, for us to speak the Word and it doesn't seem real, it's like, you know, but there is a time where a faith endeavor is fake. So when you're saying, "I praise You, Lord; I praise You, Lord", and there's no evidence of joy, there's no evidence of life, there's no evidence of anything, it's like that little seed that's been put in the ground and that the farmer's put, but there's no evidence yet. You've just put the seed in the ground but time has to go by for that seed to grow.

So prayer doesn't make sense initially. It seems fake, it seems awkward till eventually, you know, most of us are a force to be reckoned with now when it comes to prayer. We didn't start off like that. We started off fake, faking it but now we're making it. Praise the Lord.

So, I want you to say this with me, "I am a House of Prayer. Praise the Lord." Okay. I want to read this little excerpt from Charles Finney's book and then I'm done. Sorry, I've got all my books on my phone. Okay. *Almost all*, he calls it religion but I'm going to call it all spiritual works. *Almost all spiritual works in the world have been produced by revivals. God has found it necessary to take advantage of the excitability there is in mankind to produce powerful excitements among them before He can lead them to obey. Men are so sluggish. There are so many things to lead their minds off from spirituality and to oppose the influence of the Gospel that it is necessary to raise an excitement among them till the tide rises so high as to sweep away the opposing obstacles. They must be so aroused that they will break over these counteracting influences before they will obey God.*

So I want to say this, Church. The Lord is endeavoring to excite us, to arouse us. But, you know, there's obedience that we can give Him right here, right now. You know, I said this to the Lord, and when I read this, I read this years ago and it impacted me so powerfully, I wept. I said, "Lord, that You have to excite us so much before we will actually obey You." It really impacted me. So, there is a flood of light in this place. And we have every opportunity right now to be obedient to everything that we are being told to do, which is who we are. We are a House of Prayer. We are a House of Faith, and we are a House of Praise. There's really no excuse, Church, for any of us. Let us not have to be so aroused and so excited by the Lord before we're obedient to Him. So I'm going to leave you with this Scripture; Isaiah 60. You can turn with me. Let us all read this together. Isaiah 60; **¹Arise [from the depression and prostration in which circumstances have kept you - rise to a new life]! Shine (be radiant with the glory of the Lord), for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you, ²For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and dense darkness the peoples.** Why is the darkness in the people more dense than what's on the earth? Good question, I will answer that next time. **And**

dense darkness [all] peoples, but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen on you.] (Isaiah 60:1-2 AMPC). And that is who we are.

The Lord said this to me a couple of weeks ago, I was just driving out in my car and out of nowhere the Lord said to me it is inevitable that at some time, in some place in the world, He will have a people that are fully matured sons of God. It will happen. And they will demonstrate His authority, His power, His goodness, His glory. It will happen. So He said to me, "It might as well be you and it might as well be us." Hallelujah. Hallelujah. It might as well be you and it might as well be us. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. It will be us. It will be us. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus.

Did I set the case before you today about who we are and what we're about and what Pastor John and Sharon are about? You know, I said this, I said this to the Lord when I was preparing for this, and we're family so I'm going to share this with you. I said, "Lord, you know, You show me these things and I feel like I fall so far short of all these things that You are showing me." And He said, "Garth, everything pales in the light of My glory. Everything pales." You know, if you shine a bright light on anything it goes like a pale colour. Doesn't matter how colourful they are. And He said this to me, He said but we are the only beings in the universe that can absorb His light and become more like Him. So I said, "Well, thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Jesus." And I'm so grateful to God that we're doing this together. I'm so grateful to God we're doing this together. And that He's dealing with the people, He's not just dealing with individuals. He is taking us all there. He's doing it in all of us. And He's doing it in our most magnificent leader. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus. Well, I'm done. Pastor Sharon, anything you want to say? Okay. Well, praise the Lord. Okay.

Father, thank You for sharing Your holy, precious Word with us. Your Word is precious to us. Your Word, Christ, is precious to us. It's the very thing that causes us to be more and more like You. So we thank You. We've received Your Word today and we believe Your Word today. We adhere to it. We rely in it. We trust in it. And we thank You that as we do, it becomes flesh in us and Your glory is revealed in us, for us, to us, and for all of us, Father. We're so grateful for what You're doing in our midst, among us, and we're so excited to have more and more and more and more of You. We're excited for what that looks like because truly we are a people that want more of You because of how magnificent You are, how great You are, how good You are, how faithful You are, how glorious You are. And we know that as You come, You bring everything of who You are. But we want You to know that we're in love with who You are before anything that You do for us; we're in love with who You are. You are so magnificent to us as a people. You are so good, You are so delightful, You are so full of joy, You are so full of life, You are glorious to us in every way. We give You all of the praise. And I thank You, Father, as we all go from here, You protect us, the blood of Jesus surrounds us and protects us. You keep our foot from any hidden snare. You warn us of danger. You talk to us. You lead us, You guide us. We thank You that You keep all of us in good health. You keep us strong in our physical bodies. We're grateful for it, Father. This is Your covenant with us. And we believe it. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Thank you for coming. Thank you for going.