

**Scripture reference: Ephesians 3:11-12 (TPT); Hebrews 10:35-36 (TPT)**

Hello, everybody. Thank you for joining us. This is Sunday. This Sunday is always one of those really challenging Sundays, certainly for a pastor, in any given year, because it's the Sunday that's between Christmas and New Year. In South Africa for most people, this is like the one week everybody wants to be on holiday, everybody's going away, everybody wants to rest and so here we find ourselves.

This year is particularly more challenging, because the government has put certain restrictions in place, in terms of people attending church services and all the things that governments do to try and control the pandemic. So, we're doing digital Sunday, in this particular year, in this particular season, and the way things are, digital Sunday. Welcome to this Sunday, that is always a neither here nor there Sunday, because so many people are out and about having fun doing whatever they want to do.

I'm here to encourage you today. If you are watching this program, either Sunday morning or later Sunday or at a different time, I'm here to encourage you. No matter what the time of day, no matter what the time of week, no matter which week in the year, no matter what time of the year, this is the time, where you need to be flowing with God. This is the time of the year, where you need to be in the order of God and not to just do whatever you want to do, but be in the order of God.

That means that whatever you are doing, don't forget who you really are. You are not the person that wants to feed your physical body with burgers and pizzas and milkshakes and cakes. That is not the person who you are. You are not the person that wants to just, whatever your body wants to do, let it do whatever it wants to do. Whatever your soul wants to do, let it do whatever it wants to do. That is not who you are. You are a new creation and new creature in Christ Jesus. That spirit creature that's inside of you, that new creation, that Jesus, that Holy Spirit in you, always wants you, no matter which day, time of year it is, always wants you to be free, always wants you to be in liberty.

That means, the Holy Spirit, the Jesus in you, always wants you to be connected meaningfully with the Father, with the Word of God, with the presence of the Holy Spirit. So, whatever you're doing, if you're playing golf, if you're playing tennis, you're going for a run, you're going for a bicycle ride. If you are going to go and have the pizza and the hamburger and the milkshake, why don't you also make sure that you feed the inner man. Make sure that first thing in the morning when you wake up before you go to the beach, before you go out and visit friends, before you call someone, before you switch your radio on, before you do anything, why don't you rather just for a moment take time to connect with Jesus.

Just thank Him that you're alive, thank Him for the time that you're in and even though things may be difficult, and you're saying this is timeout for me, even in your timeout for Him, you may just say, "Lord, I don't really have much to say to You, I'm just thankful that You're my Lord, You're my Saviour and everything that You've got planned for me will come to pass eventually, even though it might not feel like it right now."

I want to encourage you, don't forget who you really are. You really are a spirit being, you really are someone that's, inside you're really powerful and you have so much power, that if your natural man, if you've given your natural man permission to speak loudly to you, at this time, in this season, you still have great power inside of you to dominate and control what seemed to be uncontrollable. I want to encourage you, don't let circumstances stop you and hinder you, from letting your spirit man have communion with God.

This is really an important week, right now, right now this is, a lot of people are saying, "I don't need to go to church, I don't need to be at work, I want to rest, this is my timeout." Take it, take your time out, go and play golf, read a book, whatever you want to do, but also take time to just meditate on the Word of God. Take time to be free in your thinking and your spirit man and in the things that God has got for you. Take the time to be free in that space because in that freedom, God can speak to you, in so many ways about so many different things.

It has been for me in the past, really, this time of the year has really been an opportunity for me, to have the Holy Spirit speak to me. Because oftentimes there is less responsibility, clutter, there's less responsibility chaos, happening in my world around this time. I can shut out a lot of that responsibility and so whilst my physical energies are wanting to kind of lay low or do something that is an activity that gives me joy, I still see, and have many times, the more I connect with God earlier in the day, especially in these kinds of timeouts, I find that God speaks to me through the day and He begins to show me things, new things, wonderful things, that are possible in my world.

I hope this has been an encouragement to you. I'm not done yet. I want to read you two passages of Scripture. Next Sunday we're going to have another digital Sunday and I'll talk to you more about what I'm just going to speak to you about now and we'll have some wonderful conversations next Sunday, which will be the first Sunday in 2021. It has been my experience that God often has something to say on the first Sunday of a new year. Maybe it's just because of our awareness, our humanity that connects with time, whatever it is, maybe it's the week before that you're just resting, and that God is able to speak, but I have often seen that God is significantly spoken on the first Sunday of a new year.

I want to read you this scripture in Ephesians 3 and then I'm going to go to Hebrews. And so, Ephesians 3 verse 11 says, <sup>11</sup> **This perfectly wise plan was destined from eternal ages and fulfilled completely in our Lord Jesus Christ, so that now** <sup>12</sup> **we have boldness through him, and free access as kings before the Father (Ephesians 3:11-12 TPT).** I just want to say, we have boldness through Him, and we have free access as kings before the Father because of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Now, what the Lord has spoken to me about 2021 is, He said, *"I want you to be bold and I want you to go big."* So, why am I reading you this passage of scripture? Well, because if you have this faithful Lord and Saviour that the rest of the verse speaks about, faithful Lord and Saviour, that you know He is faithful to you and you have confidence that you have free access, *boldness*, that has come to you because of the Word of the Lord, then you behave as a king.

You go to the King of kings, with the spirit and the attitude of a king. So, what does a king do and how does a king behave? Well, if the king is in his Kingdom, and the king is in the resources and is around the resources that are in his Kingdom, then he doesn't have to ask anybody whether he can utilize the resources. He commands it. He just speaks and he commands, that the resources that he wants to use, that he uses them.

For example, in a modern-day world, if a king in his kingdom wanted to drive a Rolls Royce or drive a Ferrari that belongs to him, he doesn't ask anybody's permission whether he can drive his Bentleys, his Rolls Royce or his Ferrari. He just tells the driver, "Bring it to me, I'm going forward for a drive." So, in our modern-day world, often that it goes accompanied by bodyguards or helicopters, or whatever the case might be, but my point is that he goes where he wants, and he orders and he commands what he wants, because he has boldness and confidence that in the kingdom, he is the king of the kingdom.

So, he has access to everything that is in the kingdom, and he has access. There is no limited access anywhere for him. There is no sign that says, '*no access allowed*'. He is allowed anywhere and everywhere, because he is the king of the kingdom. This passage of Scripture says, "We have boldness through Him." Who Him? He is King of kings; He is Lord of lords, Jesus. We have boldness through Him and free access as kings before the Father.

That means the Father's Kingdom is accessible to us, anytime, anyplace, anywhere, and there is nothing in His Kingdom, in His resource base that doesn't belong to us that we can't access. Because we have confidence and boldness, because of who we are in Him. Wow, this is really a wonderful, wonderful position to be in.

Now, I want to read to you from Hebrews. I'm going to read you Hebrews chapter 10, verse 35, and it goes as follows; <sup>35</sup>**So don't lose your bold, so don't lose, don't lose your bold, courageous faith for you are destined for a great reward! Why? Because of your faith, because of your bold, courageous faith. You are destined for a great reward. <sup>36</sup>You need the strength of endurance to reveal the poetry of God's will and then you receive the promise in full. (Hebrews 10:35-36 TPT).**

You receive the promise in full. How? If you continue to be bold, you have a lot of courage, and you have the spirit of, "I can be bold, I can be very courageous, I can be strong, because I can behave as a king. I have full access, as though I were a king because I have the spirit of the King inside of me. I have because I belong in the kingdom of God. I am in the kingdom of God, and because I am in the kingdom of God, and God is my Father through Jesus, the faithful, Lord and Savior of our lives because of that, I can behave as though I have free access to everything."

Now, as you contemplate, and you meditate, and you ponder and consider over these next few days, between Christmas and New Year, this time out, this time of rest and relaxation and reflection. I want to encourage you to continue to make Jesus the center of everything you do. That doesn't mean to say that while you're playing your nine holes of golf, or your 18 holes of golf, that every word that you speak must be about Jesus. If He's the center of your thought pattern in the beginning of the day, then while you're walking around playing golf, you want to continue to those around you, to be thankful and be grateful and express the goodness of God in your life.

Even if there are those people that are around you that are not saved, they are not born again, they don't know who God is, you can still express your gratitude. You can still express thankfulness. You can still express all of the good things that God is to you in your life. Even though you don't necessarily mention the name of Jesus, you can express the blessing of God in your life. I'm going to finish by just telling you a quick story.

Part of my December is full of physical activity and in fitness conditioning and I enjoy it at this time of the year because I can push myself a little bit harder and spend more time doing that than I would normally do. So, I went into a sports store to go and buy something that I needed for this period of time. The owner of the store, it's a small, specialized sports store, and the owner of the store sold me an item. So, I just asked him how's his business and how's things going. "Oh boy, I tell you it's..." He spent the next five minutes using a very unseemly language because there was no one else in the shop.

Unseemly language, just assuming that I would be okay with the unseemly language, but he just kind of ranted and raved for five minutes about how bad things are and how negative things have been and this COVID year, and he just went off and he was just, I want to say poisonously negative. I walked out of the store and immediately I said to the Lord, I said, "Lord, won't You please touch his life, won't You please help him because he's in such a bad way, he's so negative in his conversation, he is so down and out." Every time he would say something to me, I would speak out, "No, I'm not experiencing that at all. My life is good. My life is wonderful. My life is just blessed," you know.

I could see that he was taken up because, his bitterness if you like and his anger and his resentment at what had happened. That it impacted his business just overflowed and yet I was pushing back, I wasn't just letting him rant at me. I was pushing back on the goodness that was in my life and the goodness and the blessings, using words, spirit life words. Using those words to him, as I kept speaking to him and eventually, he just rang up my thing and I paid and I left, because he had nothing else to say because I was so positive. I was so upbeat about everything and he was just so negative. I would not allow his negative spirit to impact my world.

I want to say to you, as you contemplate, meditate and have this time; speak words of life. Meditate on the words of life. Speak good things about your future. Speak good things to others about what God is doing and what good things are about to happen to you. This is a perfect time, in this week, for you to do that. It is just an opportunity for you to speak good things and speak life, and enjoy.

I want to call this the alternative Sunday of 2020. The alternative Sunday meaning: *the alt Sunday*, you know, the Sunday that's kind of not here or there, it's sort of in-between. I trust that you enjoy the rest of your *Alt-Sunday* and that you enjoy the rest of your year because 2021 is going to be a year that is blessed and full of power, full of glory, and full of good things for us in 2021.

Thanks for joining. I trust you enjoy the praise and worship and will continue to enjoy the praise and worship and be blessed in this season of your life, with you and your family. In Jesus' name.