

15 January 2023 Journey to New Discoveries Part 17
Pastor John Bendixen (WTB)

Scripture reference: 2 Corinthians 8:1-4, 11-12 TPT; 2 Corinthians 9:6 TPT; 2 Corinthians 9:7-13 TPT; Philippians 4:10-14 TPT; Philippians 4:17-18 TPT; Judges 6 NKJV

Right, good morning everybody. Welcome to everybody. Pastor John asked me to do this last week as well before we minister to the Lord in Sound and Songs. And this is part of the preparation of our hearts for the financial seed that the Lord would be so pleased for us to prepare for Brother Jerry, Brother Joe, and all his travelling companions that are coming with him – Eric and Tony. And so, they are coming and like Pastor John said last week, it's an expense that he's never had before and of course, we are not daunted by it, because God is going to supply Brother Jerry's needs, all of his needs. Hallelujah.

And so, there are some Scriptures here, that the Lord wants your eye to see, and for you to have your heart prepared. This is not something that you have to do. This is something that you're wanting to do. Hallelujah.

We are going to read – last week I read to you out of Corinthians, because we check our hearts with Scripture, you know. And so, last week – we are not going to put that Scripture up, but I did read to you about the apostle Paul that said, **we must tell you about the grace God poured out upon the churches of Macedonia. For even during a season of severe difficulty, (2 Corinthians 8:1-4 TPT)** don't let the enemy lie to you and say to you that you are having extreme financial difficulty, that you cannot, you cannot allow the Holy Spirit to actually just speak to you, because here is a beautiful Scripture - **For even during a season of severe difficulty, tremendous suffering, and extreme poverty, their super-abundant joy overflowed into an act of extravagant generosity. They exceeded our expectations. They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. (2 Corinthians 8:1-4 TPT)** Hallelujah.

And then I just wanted to remind you about the Scripture that the Lord wanted me to make a point of to you out of The Passion Translation, that says here, it says here, the gift - ¹¹...**finish this act of worship according to your ability to give.** ¹² **For if the intention and the desire are there, the size of the gift doesn't matter,** but here is how the Bible explains it. **Your gift is fully acceptable to God according to what you have, not according to what you don't have. (2 Corinthians 8:11-12 TPT)** Your gift is fully acceptable to God according to what you have. So, if you don't have the amount to give that somebody that has a lot can give, then God says, I accept your offering according to what you have, not according to what you don't have.

And so, we are going to go to second Corinthians chapter 9 – and we're gonna go... actually I want to go to verse 6 from the Passion Translation. Second Corinthians chapter 9 and verse 6, because this is very, very amazing here. Verse 6 – here is the Apostle Paul saying, ⁶ **Here's my point. A stingy sower – a stingy sower will reap a meagre harvest, but the one who sows from a generous spirit will reap an abundant harvest. (2 Corinthians 9:6 TPT)** Now, something that you need to see

here is this stingy sower – the Aramaic translation of this says ***the one who sows with a storehouse of seed remaining. This describes a farmer who is stingy with his sowing since he has a storehouse of seed – he can afford to sow liberally.***

So, your gift will be acceptable to God not according to what you don't have but according to what you have. And so, if you have a lot and you give a little, it's better for you to just, you know either get with God and like Pastor John said last week, speak to your stinginess. Speak to your – nuke it with the Word of God. Nuke it. Speak to your stinginess – if you find that you are stingy and you're afraid because you've got to keep that for a rainy day, speak to your fear. Nuke it with the Word of God. Cause God is not trying to take something from you, He is trying to get something to you. Hallelujah.

So, that is a big deal that, to God. Listen, you're preparing this financial gift for God, not for Pastor John, not for Brother Jerry. You are operating in the principles of God's Word of what is pleasing to the Lord. What He accepts that it says as a perfume to Him. Right, and so here we are, so the gift is acceptable.

So let's go for away from the stingy sower. You understand that now, right? Because the Macedonia churches had very little but they gave superabundantly. The Word of God is making a distinction here and a point, the Word of God is making a point. So, here's verse ten. Let's go to verse seven. ⁷ **Let giving flow from your heart, not from a sense of religious duty. Let it spring up freely from the joy of giving—all because God loves hilarious generosity! (2 Corinthians 9:7 TPT) God loves hilarious generosity.** If you can't bring an offering that's worthy like that, then you will keep it. You'll keep it. Right, so then keep it but this is the kind of giving God's bringing this to people who are wanting to prepare this financial offering before Him and with Him, right?

⁷ **God loves hilarious generosity** ⁸ **Yes, God is more than ready to overwhelm you with every form of grace, so that you will have more than enough of everything—every moment and in every way. He will make you overflow with abundance in every good thing you do.** Let's go to verse ten. ¹⁰ **This generous God who supplies abundant seed for the farmer, *which becomes* bread for our meals, is even more extravagant toward you. First he supplies every need, plus more. Then he multiplies the seed as *you sow it*, so that the harvest of your generosity will grow. The harvest of your generosity will grow.** ¹¹ **You will be abundantly enriched in every way as you give generously on every occasion (2 Corinthians 9:7-11 TPT).** And the footnote in the Bible says here, you will always be rich enough to be generous at all times. You will always be rich enough to be generous at all times. Hallelujah. I want to say that before the Lord, "I will always be generous." I will always be, let's say, "I will always be rich enough. I will always be rich enough to be generous at all times." [*Congregation repeats after Pastor Sharon*] Oh Hallelujah. Glory, glory, glory.

And then it says here, ¹¹ **...for when we take your gifts to those in need, it causes many to give thanks to God.** So, we're going to take your gift to those in need. Who are they? They are Brother Jerry, who's paying a hefty fuel bill, and like Pastor John said last week, "Don't say but they could have just got flown economy and it

would have saved us having to.” No, no, no, no. When a general comes, a general comes as a general comes. Glory to God, hallelujah.

So, ¹¹ **we take your gifts to those in need.** ¹² **The priestly ministry you are providing through your offering not only supplies what is lacking for Brother Jerry, it inspires an outpouring of praises and thanksgiving to God himself (2 Corinthians 9:11-12 TPT).** Hallelujah. That's what's going to happen in Brother Jerry. It's going to say, “Praise the Lord. Look what this congregation did for me.” An outcry of thanksgiving from Brother Jerry which has happened to him before because of the blessing that this congregation has been to him.

And then it says here, thanks to God, ¹² **The priestly ministry you are providing, verse 12, through your offering not only supplies what is lacking for God's people, Brother Jerry, it inspires an outpouring of praises and thanksgiving to God himself.** ¹³ **For as your extremely generous offering meets the approval ...it will cause them to give glory to God—all because of your loyal support, your loyal support and allegiance to the gospel of Christ, as well as your generous-hearted partnership with them toward those in need (2 Corinthians 9:12-13 TPT).** Hallelujah. Glory to God.

We're preparing our hearts to bring our offering so that Brother Jerry can know, like that other Scripture that I read to you, it's our love. We're showing our love for him. Our honour for him. Hallelujah. And so, I would like to finish off with another Scripture, Pastor John. I'm going to just finish off with this last Scripture. We're going to go to Philippians chapter four. And we're going to go to verse 10. Philippians chapter four, verse 10. Now, you have to see this in context of what's happening with our congregation and Brother Jerry coming. And this is Apostle Paul speaking to a church who is generous to him. But see it as - what can be in Brother Jerry's heart towards us, right? That Brother Jerry would say, ¹⁰ **My heart overflows with joy when I think of how you showed your love to me by your financial support of my ministry (Philippians 4:10 TPT).** That is what we want first Brother Jerry to experience. Let's look at that again. *That his heart would overflow with joy when he thinks of how this congregation, these people demonstrated love for him by the financial support of his ministry.* ¹⁰ **For even though you have so little you still continue to help me at every opportunity.** Hallelujah. What an opportunity we have. **You still continue to help me at every opportunity (Philippians 4:10 TPT)**

Verse 14, oh no, no, let's go to verse 11. ¹¹ **I'm not telling you this because I'm in need, for I have learned to be satisfied in any circumstance.** Brother Jerry has asked for nothing. **I have learned how to be satisfied in any circumstance.** Why? Because he has learned to put his trust in God and to walk and live by his faith.¹²⁻¹³ **I know what it means to lack, and I know what it means to experience overwhelming abundance. For I'm trained in the secret of overcoming all things, whether in fullness or in hunger. And I find that the strength of Christ's explosive power infuses me to conquer every difficulty.** ¹⁴ **You've so graciously provided for my essential needs. (Philippians 4:11-14 TPT)** This is what we want to do. We want to so graciously provide for his essential needs.

And then let's go to verse 17. ¹⁷ **I mention this not because I'm requesting a gift...** ¹⁷ **I mention this not because I'm requesting a gift, but so that the fruit of your**

generosity might bring you an abundant reward. ¹⁸ I now have all I need - more than enough - I'm abundantly satisfied! For I've received the gift you sent. You see, this is the experience we are wanting Brother Jerry to have, hey Pastor John? ¹⁸ **I have received the gift that you sent and viewed it as a sweet sacrifice, perfumed with the fragrance of your faithfulness, which is so pleasing to God! (Philippians 4:17-18 TPT).** Hallelujah. It is that perfume that arises to God as we give. Glory to God.

Do you want me to take up the offering, Pastor John? Do you want to say something?

Pastor John Bendixen:

So, Pastor Sharon is doing just the offering in the next couple of weeks. I just want you to understand something. If you have nothing to bring and give, bring yourself. And make sure that you come and attend all the meetings. Pastor Sharon and I have decided on a personal level, this is only for the time that Brother Jerry is going to be here. That if you are in the Johannesburg church, and if the Johannesburg people are not here today, for whatever reason that they couldn't make it for financial reasons. We know there are some people like that from Johannesburg. We, personally have set aside R20 000.00 for the whole period that Brother Jerry is coming, to sow into individual's lives, so that they will have enough petrol, and if they have to stay over, they will come and need to stay over for a night or whatever, so that they don't miss any meetings.

It is more important for us that you come and you bring yourself, you come and you hear. And if finances are a reason why you can't, then we are going to put that money in. You see, we are expecting God to meet all the needs. So the way we meet, we get our needs met is we know how to sow.

Pastor Sharon:
Yes.

Pastor John:

We sow the Word and we sow our seed. So we never asked you to do something that we don't do ourselves. If any of you feel like you want to contribute to this particular way of letting people come here, please send us an email or WhatsApp or let Miranda know, my PA or just deposit an amount of money into the church account and mark it for that for *Petrol for Joburg, people or travellers* or whatever the case might be. And then we'll know how to distribute that.

But I also want to tell you that this is not our offering that we are making to Brother Jerry, this is over and above our offering for Brother Jerry, this is a seed to make sure that those who can't afford it can be here. More than anything else, we want you to be here. Hallelujah. I want to say this else. Because, you know, Pastor Sharon, Brother Jerry is a general in the faith. He is our spiritual leader. God has placed him in our lives.

Pastor Sharon:
That is right Pastor John.

Pastor John:

And I think this last December, he was 77. So he is in his 78th year. The last time he came here was five years ago. Doesn't seem that long ago. But in the meantime, COVID came and went and so it is five years ago. I don't know if he is coming back next year, or when he is going to come back. But I consider every moment and every opportunity to use the opportunity to be extravagant in the show of our love towards him.

You know, Brother Copeland says he is going to live to 120 and so Jerry Savelle has to live to 110 because they are 10 years apart. You know, well, their faith is out there, but who knows what God's plan is? I just see every opportunity to have opportunity to bless them.

Pastor Sharon:

Hallelujah. Glory to God. Let's take up an offering.

Pastor John:

Pray over the offering first.

Pastor Sharon:

Okay, let's pray together. Father, we thank You for the opportunity. I know that many of you are going to go away and pray and you are still preparing your hearts. But this morning is an opportunity and we thank You, Father, that Your people are blessed. Your people are blessed as they sow, Lord and their offering is acceptable to You it is a fragrance to You according to what they have Lord, according to what they have and what they give it is a fragrance to You and we want to thank You for that this morning. In Jesus' Name. And we all say. Amen.

[*Sound and Song*]

Jesus, thank You. Father, we are expecting Your nuclear power of Your Word Lord to be at work today in Pastor John, through Pastor John, to us Lord; to our hearts Father. Thank You that every spiritual ear would be opened today Father, by Your Spirit. Every heart would be open this morning to hear what the Spirit of God is saying to this church. In Jesus' name, we thank You, we receive it, we believe it and it will work it's supernatural power in us Father, all through the week, Lord. In Jesus' name. We all say, amen.

Pastor John Bendixen:

Praise the Lord. So glad you're all in church this morning. It's good to be in church. There are a lot of people out in the world there that think church is no longer relevant. They also think that they can live their own life in God without the Church. They are very wrong. They are very wrong. Because the life of God is in the Church and the Church is the life of God, and so if you're not in the Church, and you're not participating in the Church, then you are very limited, you are limited in what you can do in your walk with God.

Would you please say this with me; *limited in my walk with God?* You see, you are limited in your walk with God if you just walk with God by yourself. Of course, you have unlimited access to God. But you are limited in the way that you can grow in

God because the growth that you have in God is directly connected to your participation in the Church of God. Everything I'm telling you now is in the Bible, it's not man-made talk. This is not the Pastor saying so that I can have people come to church. The reason I do what I do is because God wants me to do what I do because you can't grow without the Church. And by the way, a lot of your growth happens when you take the Word of God and you use it together. Amen. Praise the Lord.

Therefore, the Church is not an insignificant component of your life. It should not be a tick box. "I go to church once a week, I'm okay. I pray every day. I go to church once a week, I give my tithes. I'm okay." No, that means you can just have a church box as one big ticket list. "It's part of my to-do list. As long as I've got to do, then I'm okay." Well, that doesn't speak to... Listen, if I ran my marriage with a 'to do' list I wouldn't be 'to doing' my marriage, or it will be very unfulfilling for me because it's just a 'to do' list. Right?

So if your walk with God is just a 'to do' list, then actually you don't have a real walk with God. You just call yourself a Christian. Sjoe, I'm preaching good already this morning. So you better sit before I get on the 'to-do' lists here.

Well praise the Lord, we had a very good week, this week, we went away with young people and my staff. And we had an orientation week, and it was just marvellous; we had lots of fun in the sun, and lots of spiritual impartation, lots of things that God had to say, for us to be able to have a wonderful cooperation spiritually. You know, we, as a ministry, I would say this week away was probably one of the highlights of our life together.

It was really a supernatural, amazing time. We had so much peace, we had so much joy. And we did a whole lot of things together. And so it was really amazing. I thank God for it. I just wanted to let you know because, you know, God is working on different people in different ways all the time. And so, you should feel like this is good news. Because as God is working in the people that are around us, He has got an opportunity to use them as a channel to you. Amen.

All right. *Laat ek maar preek nou vanoggend, né. [Congregation laughs.] Ek sal gooi, soos Grobbies sê, "Laat ek gooi." Laat ek woorde gooi. Hallelujah. Goeie Afrikaans daai. Gooi hom.* Praise the Lord.

Okay. So, I just want to remind you, that Jesus came to fulfil the law, not preach it. Jesus came as a fulfilment of promise, so that we can be free from performance. Just want to make sure this thing is not going to keep. [*Pastor John adjusts his microphone.*] So we can be free from performance and in Him, know the Truth and live in power. Now we live with a promise, not performance. It's very, this is an essential thing because well, I'm going to give you an example in a minute. We live in power, not just personality. Every one of us has a personality that God has given us. But if you use personality to get things done in life without using the Power of God, then you're, again, limited to what your personality can do not release the power of God in you. And this is a wonderful thing. So, we exchange our lives for purpose, not popular culture. Praise the Lord for that.

Okay. When I was in the military, we, certainly when we did our basics, our extended basic program, we were not allowed out of the base, ever. So, if there was anything that you wanted to buy, you know, cold drinks, chocolates, things that you wanted to buy. They had a tuck shop there, kind of thing a little shop where you could buy sweets and things in those days. And so, you could buy some goods, but you were not allowed out of the base. Every now and again, a couple of guys get together and say, "We want to go and buy, we've had enough of Army food, and we're still hungry, and we want to go and get some off-base food." And so, a couple of the guys would together and they jump the fence and they go off base and go and buy food. And then as they're coming back into the base, patrolling guards or someone, spots these shadowy figures running back into the barracks. No one sees faces, no one knows who they are. They just run back in.

How many of you know that all of the guys that are in the, certainly in our company, anyway, know who they are? So, Corporal, Sergeant, maybe a higher rank, because this is a serious breach now of discipline and protocol. So they would call everybody together. "Who jumped the fence?" [*Pastor John imitates a soldier standing in attention.*] "Who jumped the fence?" And you just don't look anywhere. But everybody knows who jumped the fence. And so they walk up and down, and sometimes they'll come and kick you in the shin. "Hey, *jy!*, who jumped the fence?" [*Pastor John stands on attention*] "Oh, so you guys, you don't want to tell? Come, now we are going to run." So now everybody is running - sit-ups, push-ups and every now and again you will stop. "If you tell me who jumped the fence, the running stops. Who jumped the fence?" [*Pastor John stands on attention*] Run some more.

So now you end up running five or six hours because someone decided last night they wanted chips from that shop. And you didn't even have the chips, you didn't have the chips. You didn't enjoy, you know, the food that came with it. "Who jumped the fence?" [*Pastor John stands on attention*] So then after five or six hours, they realize they are not going to get anybody to speak, and so they might run you the whole day. And you might end up doing a whole day's worth of really unexpected exercise development because someone jumped the fence.

Now I want to ask you this question. What is more important: the governing policies of discipline, or the subculture of being quiet? What has got more power at that moment? Government and discipline, or the subculture of silence? [*Ps John answers himself*] The subculture of silence. Who told everybody to keep quiet? No one. Everybody just knows you don't tell on your *maatjie*. So you all just suffer in silence. So what do you do after all the pain has begun? You go to those *maatjies* who jumped the fence, and you say, "Come here *boetie*," you take them into the showers, and you make sure they understand they don't do that again. So you deal with it yourself. It's a subculture, right?

But if everybody just understood that the reason why they don't want you to jump the fence is. Number one: You are their responsibility. Number two: They are wanting to teach you what discipline is. Number three: If you are prepared to break rank and exercise lack of discipline on something as small as going to buy chips, or fish and chips or whatever it is, on what other big point would you break rank and break discipline order, for a subculture of silence?

So why do they actually make you run for eight hours of the day after someone just went and bought fish and chips? Because they want you to understand, okay, we can't break the code of silence here, but if you break rank, you are going to pay for it. Right? And so, they are trying to teach you that if you are ultimately confronted in a military situation where your training says you must behave in a certain way, and you don't behave the way your training says you must behave, it could be catastrophic in the consequence. You could pay with your life. So the reason they make you cut your hair, wear a uniform, learn to march together, learn to not jump the fence, learn to obey orders is that when it really counts, you shouldn't have to think whether this order is worth obeying, you should just obey.

Okay, I'm going to reverse this now. If you are a mother and father, and your child disobeys you, what do you do with that? Aren't you supposed to discipline them? But if the Father, God, comes to your parents and says, "I want you to behave this way," and you don't listen to God, how can you expect your child to obey you? You want to exercise control of your children, but you don't want to listen to the control that God wants over you. Why not? Well, I'm grown up. I've got to exercise my own will. Yeah, but God paid for your life with His. He paid the ultimate price for you, but you don't want to do what God wants you to do. You want to control the relationship you have with God on your time. The way you want to have a walk with God, not the way God wants you to walk with him. Hey?

So, what is the subculture that is more powerful that's running in the Church because the Church says, "I'll walk with God the way I want to walk with God? Don't put boundaries around me. Don't put discipline into my life, as a Pastor, as a Church. Don't give me boundaries. I want to serve God, the way I want to serve God." So, what's stronger in your life? God's boundaries and God's discipline, or the subculture of I'll do what I want.

So, how do I come? How does God come and break the subculture of your life? Well, the way that God comes to break the subculture of your life is He brings you to church this morning. Then He has the Pastor, like me, stand up and say, "You have a subculture in your life. Be aware of it." God being the gracious God that He is, He gives you time. He gives you time to rectify it, but every time you break the law of God in your life, and in The New Testament, it's the law of love. Every time you break that law in your life, the law of coming to church, bringing your gift to the church, bringing the Holy Spirit that's inside of you, willingly to church, not as a sacrifice.

God's not interested in sacrifice. He wants the willingness of your heart, and you say, "Well, I'm not willing to come to church. I'm not willing to pay the petrol price that it takes to come to church. I'm not willing to take the time that it takes to travel to church. I'm not willing to give up my spare time." Well, that's a subculture that's developed inside of you. That means your will is bigger than what God wants for you. Yeah, but Pastor John, a lot of what's happening in our church, and I'm talking about us as Heritage of Faith, a lot of what's happening in our church is circumstantial. So, why do I have to submit to the circumstances of the day? Well, every church has got circumstances everywhere all the time, and they just vary. Ours just as just happened to be this way right now. Come on now.

So, if you live in perception instead of truth, you will open yourself to deception because what you're saying is my perception is my truth, and so my perception can vary, according to my circumstances or according to my own philosophy. The only way out of deception is correction, and that correction comes from God. Rejection of correction will enforce your perception as the highest form of self-believing truth. Every time you come and hear the Word of God or you hear it through the way God would speak to you through the Bible, or the Holy Spirit or whatever. However, God speaks to you, and you say, "My perception of living the truth is the highest form of truth," then you are open to saying, this is the way that I will live according to my own truth. Therefore, you will never really be open to correction; your perception will always be the highest form of your truth. So, then truth can never be the real foundation of your life. Never.

Therefore deception will always be the thing that guides you and you won't even know that you're deceived. It was one of the greatest things when I was growing up. In my life, I said to the Lord, I said, "Lord, it is my desire, it is my desire to always walk in absolute truth no matter what the cost is to me, no matter how hard or difficult it might be for me to receive it." Because I know that the greatest form of darkness is to think that you're walking in truth but you're actually walking in deception.

And so, I've also been talking about the Source and the resource and the source is something where something originates, and a resource is aid or assistance. Jesus said, "**I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst (John 6:35 NKJV)**". So He's the source and if we believe in Him as our Source, then we will never lack resource. And sometimes you become the resource for someone else. So that your source is the source for someone else's resource. Praise the Lord. Are y'all with me today? Okay. I'm so grateful to God that in the recent six weeks or two months or so, I've had just wonderful encounters with the Lord through revelation knowledge and He's begun to reveal spiritual things to me and supernatural activities that go on around us all the time and He's revealed to me in some way, the dark forces that are at work on the earth and in people's lives and in church. Dark forces. At the same time, the reason He will show you dark forces is because you walk in the light and you know how to bring light to darkness. Hallelujah.

I heard a story from a minister one day; he was a man who was very active, in his whole ministry, he was very active in casting out devils and dealing with demon possession. So he got invited. He went into a town to go and preach in a town and while he was in that town preaching, he was asked to go and visit a young man that was in a mental asylum, institute, a mental institute and he was being treated for a mental condition. So he went to go and visit the young man in his room/cell, he was locked up in this room because of madness that had overtaken him and he went into the room and he began to pray for this young man. He started praying for him and started speaking the Word and began to seek God on what was going on here. For three hours, he attempted to communicate with this young man, at the same time praying for him and ministering to him and had no result.

He went home, he came back the next day and he spent another three hours. At this point, I might be getting some of the details a little bit, if you have heard the story, I might have a little bit of, a few of the details wrong. It won't be anything major, might

be hours that I might be getting wrong - how many hours - but as far as I remember, he was there for the whole of the next morning, again, spending time with this young man in the cell. Eventually, the Holy Spirit revealed to him that there was a demonic force that was at work in this young man's life. It wasn't just a matter of mental disease and sickness. It was a demonic force that had possessed him. When he came to understand the possession, he got understanding, by the Holy Spirit, how to deal with this devil that had taken over this young man's life. So, he took authority over the devil, cast him out of the young man's life and that process took some hours as well. Took some hours. You might say, "Well, why did it take that long?" Well, who knows? Doesn't matter. He got free. He got free. It was like when that devil left his body, left his mind, it's like, "Where am I? Why am I here? What am I doing here?" He became the young man again. He was clear of mind, articulate of speech and he was able to communicate.

So then, of course, this minister spent the next while, days - as I recall it - ministering to this young man so that he wouldn't have those devils come back to him and destroy his life further. Part of what he was wanting to find out is, "How did you get like this? Let's talk about, when is the last time that you remember that you were normal." Turns out that he was either in the last year of college or the first year of university. I believe it was the last year of college that he was in and he was having some fun with his friends in this town. They dared him to run across the town square, which had quite a lot of grass and then it had a statue in the middle and they dared him to run across the town square naked. And so he did, he and I don't know if there were other boys that were involved in it. But certainly, he took up the dare and he took off all his clothes and he ran across the town square naked. He says he remembers that when he got to the other side of the town square, something came over him and from that day onwards, he was never normal again.

Well, you might say, "Pastor John, that was just innocent fun." You know, young boys daring other young boys, take off your clothes and run. Well, it just depends on what was going on in that young man's life. It depends on a whole lot of other things that were present in the household and in the circumstances of that young man's life. So you can't say, well, just this or just that or just anything. Fact of the matter is that he got possessed by a devil that virtually destroyed his life until a preacher came to town.

Now you might say to me, well, you know, we've done lots of stuff in our lives and we haven't been possessed. But you don't know what you're doing when you reject anything that God brings to your life, what an impact it's going to have in your life. Because out there is a real world where people are worshipping idols, they're worshipping all manner of demon spirits that are the idols. They manifest themselves in idolatry and because they're worshipping idols, it allows all manner of spiritual forces to gain entrance into your life.

Okay, so I'm going to minister on this a little bit this morning, and I'm going to use a story out of the Bible. Judges chapter six, verse 11. **11 Now the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebint tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. (Judges 6:1 NKJV)** He's got wheat, it's got a harvest. It's got wheat, and he's busy working the wheat in a wine press. Where do

you normally thresh wheat? You would normally thresh wheat, where you work with stones to grind wheat, you would not normally mix wheat and a winepress together. Because if you were going to do wine in a wheatpress, you would contaminate the grapes. So if you're doing wheat in a winepress, that means you are that desperate to keep the stuff away from people that you would go and potentially contaminate a future harvest, because you want to keep this one. Are you all with me?

So why he was keeping it from the Midianites, cause what would happen is the Midianites were a large huge force of people that when the Israelites would come to gather their harvests, they would come and invade Israel and steal their harvest. So Gideon, he came up with a plan. Nobody's coming to look for my harvest, because the season is wrong. So if I'm doing this in the winepress, no one's coming to look for me to do my harvest because they're gonna find they're not won't find me and I'll be in the wrong place. It's quite smart. ¹² **And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!"** What? He's busy hiding. He's busy working his harvest in a different press. Because he's hiding. This angel says, **"Hey, mighty man of valor. Say, who's that?"** ¹³ **Gideon said to him, "Oh, my Lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? Do you hear many Christians? If the Lord is with us, why then has this happened to us?"**

He is asking the questions. Good question. So the Lord says, **"Well, and where are all the miracles which our fathers told us about saying, "Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt? But now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."** He's having a conversation based on his perception. He's not having a conversation based on truth. He's having a conversation based on perception. His perception is God has forsaken me. And we've heard stories about how God delivered all of our forefathers from an enemy similar to the Midianites the Egyptians, so God delivered us so why have You forsaken us? Perception.

Now God is about to correct his perception. ¹⁴ **Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?"** I'm here to tell you that your question is busy being answered. I'm here to answer your question. But you're going to have to take your hand and go and do it. Then the Lord... ¹⁵ **So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."** (Judges 6:12-15 NKJV). I find that so many, so many Christians have this inadequacy complex. I'm inadequate to be significant for God. And I find that people are looking to assess the church based on worldly principles and worldly results. So they look at the church and say, if the church is not as wealthy as the world, then which one should we believe? Or the church is not as influential and as effective as the world, so which one should we believe? Or we don't see miracles that God does anymore, and the world has all these miraculous things, sciences, and all these explorations happening. So why should we believe the church when all these things are happening in the world? It's an inadequacy complex, to say, we don't have the answers. So why should we serve God with all our hearts? We don't have all the answers. So why should we believe God? We don't see the results. So why should we serve Him and worship Him?

Well, listen, that's the whole basis of the conversation of the book of Malachi. Look how prosperous the world is, and we're not, so why should we tithe? And if we do tithe, we seem like people that mourn, while the world is a happy place to live. Well, that's because you don't know God, you're living by your perception, not by truth. This angel of the Lord that came to visit Gideon, he came to change his perception so that he could live his life with truth.

16 And the Lord said to him, so he just gets to say, I'm nothing and I'm nobody, what difference can I make? Hey? I'm nothing. I'm nobody. I come from nowhere. I have nothing. What difference can I make? Okay, maybe, maybe you have a self-inflated opinion of yourself and say, "I can make a difference. I will make a difference. Because I'm smart. I'm educated. I've got my act together. I've got... I've got stuff going on in my life. So I'm not like Gideon. I don't have to, I don't have to make that statement. I've got my act together. I'm not doing my wheat in a wine press, because I've got my stuff together." "Huh, really?" "Okay, well, then I'm about to reveal your attitude to you."

16 And the Lord said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man." **17 Then he said to Him, "If now I have found favour in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me.** What? I mean, he's busy having this conversation with the angel of the Lord and he's asking for a bigger sign. But it does sound like a lot of Christians to me. Like I think you're talking to me, "Lord, tell Pastor John that actually what I'm hearing is the right thing, then I'll know it's You." Meantime, Pastor John has already been speaking Sunday after Sunday after Sunday, and you just not listening. Because a lot of times, God will answer your questions from the pulpit, you don't even have to have a one-on-one with me.

So, **18 Do not depart from me, I pray, until I come to You and bring my offering and set it before You."** (Judges 16:16-17). Well, I mean, this is an amazing thing because even though he's wanting a sign, he recognises that this might be the most significant moment of my life. How do I kickstart this significant moment? I bring an offering. Come on, just work with me here. Fact he's busy doing wheat in a wine press. Fact number two he's in the smallest clan. Fact number three, he's the youngest in the whole family. He's got no authority to do anything. Now, he makes a decision to bring an offering, given all of that stuff.

But he recognizes that if this is really what's going on here, I must bring an offering. Hello? I can't tell you, I can't teach you much more than I have already taught you in terms of giving and receiving, other than to say to you, if you don't understand by now that your whole life is based on a heart of generosity, well, then all my teaching is not really going to mean much.

Because Jesus actually said, "If you don't understand the sower says the Word, then you don't understand anything." And so if you can't receive the Word from the pulpit, then you can't receive anything from God. "Oh, no, I don't have to listen to what Pastor John's saying, I'm gonna go to my own closet, and I'll make my own prayer time with God, and I'll have my prayer time. I have my own readings every day, and, and, you know, I'm okay."

So, do you, do you review? Do you consider, do you live by anything that comes from this pulpit? I know most of you do, praise the Lord for that. Well, why would you want to do that? Because you recognize that God has sent a messenger. Did God send a messenger to Gideon? God sent a messenger to him, and so he's saying, "Hey, if this is God, and I recognize the messenger, I must bring an offering."

What are we saying to you about Brother Jerry? God's sending a messenger, let's bring an offering. Okay, so, **¹⁹So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought them out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented them. (Judges 6:19 NKJV)**

I just want you to understand that he went and he killed a young goat. If he killed a young goat, he's talking about a goat that has got the potential to deliver milk and or substance for many years to come. It's likely that he presented a young goat because a young goat wouldn't have had the blemishes of an older goat. So it had the offering of the future and it had an unblemished consideration to it.

He also takes off his own handiwork, his own harvest that he worked hard to plant and to harvest and thresh it; and he brings all of this as an offering. So this took him some time, right? Come on, he had to go and kill the goat. If you're going to skin the goat, he had to go and do things. And he actually converted the offering from something that was not useful immediately to something that could be eaten.

¹⁹ and he brought them out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented them. ²⁰ The Angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." In other words, all of the good stuff that's come from the boiling of the meat, take all of that stuff and pour it on the bread and the meat.

It's a waste, it's a waste, It's a waste. If you're a good Christian steward, don't waste. I can just hear everybody having private conversations. It's a waste. That's just a waste. It's a waste. This is a waste. that's a waste; it's just a waste. Really?

²¹ Then the Angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in His hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the Lord departed out of his sight (Judges 6:21 NKJV). Why did he ask him to pour the broth out? Because a fire can just start but if you wet everything, then you know that if the fire is going to happen, it's going to happen because there was a miracle intervention.

So now angel, why did you cause a fire to burn up all of my next meal? Why would you waste my offering? You didn't take it, you didn't eat it, you just burnt up my offering? Why? Well, you asked me for a sign. You asked me for a sign. I trusted what is happening to you right now is that you beginning to realize that actually when you enter into the supernatural realm with God and you live supernaturally, God may ask you to do things that don't make any sense. You might have something on your heart. Let me tell you, none of this sign would have happened if Gideon didn't have it on his heart to bring his offering. He did it as a joy of his heart, not because he had a

command from the angel. When people bring the substance of their lives before God, they do it because of the willingness of the heart not because it's a demand. Hallelujah, praise the Lord.

Elrika, do you mind if I share a little bit of your story that you shared with us this week? I won't share all the details but Elrika is a medical professional. She studied as a medical professional, she functioned as a medical professional and she had a business as a medical professional. When she was twelve years old, in this very auditorium Pastor Sharon called to her and prophesied over her that God would use her life in ministry. We don't even remember the contents of that. But that is really what occurred here. In this auditorium, it looked very different then, but in this building, when she was twelve.

When she grew up through school time, she went about the business of running her life the way everybody else runs their life. When you finished school, you got to go study somewhere, you got to have something behind your name. You got to have something that you can count on to make money so that you've got a future. Am I right, Elrika? So she went about doing all of those things and she ended up being successful in transitioning from studying to implementing her studies in life. So anybody from the outside looking at her would say, "She's done a good job." But what nobody saw was that the system had infiltrated in her soul, had infiltrated her mind and had affected her so that she gradually, gradually had to deal with issues that were in that industry; politics, all kinds of emotions, relationships, issues that she had to deal with that the enemy used to draw her further and further away from God with her choices. Until one day, God began to speak into this congregation, *I Will Take the Children*. She got touched by God. She made a decision, "If there's anything that I can do to alter the course of my destiny, I must do it now."

So she came to see me. We had a long conversation and she said, "Pastor John it's my desire to have a start, a restart in life just like these MIXchangers and I know that I'm older than them and I know that I have all of this stuff happening in my life, but I can no longer walk with this heaviness and this burden and all of this stuff that has come into my life. I need to be free." She didn't know right at that time; I didn't know how this would practically come to pass. But through circumstances and through committed choices that she made God made a way when she closed her practice, walked away from all of her clients, and walked away from all of the knowledge that she gained in terms of using it to follow God.

Now she will tell you she has more joy, more peace, more purpose, more future, more everything in her life. God is taking care of all of her needs more than he ever did beforehand she's in a much better place than she ever was before because now she's following God not the ways of men. Do you know what happened to her? She brought her gift and she brought her gifting. So the other day, the other week God called her up here and said, "God's going to use you, God's going to use you." Remember that? So she's continuing to be obedient to God. So God's taking her life. Guess what He did, she brought her gift and He said, "Put it here" and He put his staff on her life and he burnt it all up. Do you know what that means? That everything that's in her past is burnt with it. She now only has a future and He said to her through this vessel just a couple of weeks ago, "Rise up this young woman of Valar God is going to use you now and He's going to do mighty things through you." Now I

ask you, what's better for her to actually say, "I'm a nurse that can do midwifery and can do this and can do that, I've delivered so many babies and done all kinds of stuff." That's her claim to fame or to say, "I'm being used by God." There's no comparison.

Gideon, do you want to go and thresh wheat in a winepress or do you want to go and do a mighty deed for God and take on the Midianites out there? Well, you might say. "Well, we don't have any more Gideons in the world." We do. There are all of them all over the place here we have Gideons in the world, they have said here we are bringing our offering God and He's put his fire on their lives and He's burnt up the old stuff and they're all coming with new things and they're saying, "Here we are God." And He's saying, "I'll take you. I found you in a winepress at a time where it is another kind of harvest and I'll take you and let's go and do some mighty exploits in God's Name." Why, why would you want to walk away from something like this?

And the Angel of the Lord departed out of his sight. ²² Now Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the Lord. So Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord God! For I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face." Here is the key thing. I want to tell you the minute God speaks to you you've got to say, "I'm going to remain face-to-face with God." That same day God called us all up here to sit here and He was making a statement, "You better remain face to face with Me because that's where I will talk to you." You walk away from face to face you're just going back to your old life. ²³ **Then the Lord said to him,** I just want you to see, the first thing after he touched his offering - so he brought the offering, God takes His offering. God can do anything with your offering that He chooses to do. He can burn it He can tell you to eat it, He can eat it himself, He can do whatever. It's His offering once you give it to Him. It's never a waste once you give it to him.

Come on, so, he brings the offering, he perceives that God is in the offering and then the third thing is that he says, "I've met with God face to face." When he has that realization that this a moment of God in my life. This is the moment of God in my life. ²³**The Lord said to him,** He speaks to him again, **Peace be with you Gideon do not fear, you shall not die. (Judges 6:23 NKJV).**

I tell you when you bring your offering and you get face to face with God, I tell you now, do not fear, you shall not die. Your future shall not die, your harvest shall not die. Your ways in God shall not die. It doesn't matter how great the force that is coming against you it shall not overtake you. ²⁴ **So Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it The-Lord-Is-Peace.** Well sure God came to meet with him, and he got out alive. **To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. (Judges 6:24 NKJV).**

Now watch this, ²⁵ **Now it came to pass the same night,** what night is this? The day that he brought his offering, the day that God spoke to him, the day that God said I want to use you mighty man of valour. That you are gonna take on the Midianites. But who is this boy, this least and the smallest of the smallest? Ha! But the world system says, "You gotta be the best, the greatest, the most, the highest, the biggest." God says, "I just need the smallest, watch Me." The lowest, the least, the smallest.

You know I always had this attitude before God, I did have this attitude for a long time, I said, "Lord..." I'm, I really, I grew up poor. I grew up in a preacher's house that had, was controlled by money, was controlled by people who ran the board of the church. I had, we had very little of anything that was ours. We always were told what to do and I grew up with the thing in my heart and I said, "Lord I don't ever want to be told." I want to be free of that spirit that controlling spirit, that religious controlling spirit that wants to control the pastor, it wants to control what the pastor preaches, it wants to control the money of the pastor, wants to control everything. I want to be free of that control. So, when the Lord called me to ministry I said to the Lord, I said, "Lord I just don't want to be poor in the ministry." I am grateful to God that He brought the message of faith to me that I could use faith and my trust in God to get prosperity. Amen.

One of the big things that we had in our lives is that, you know at times we didn't want as I did, I didn't want to have less choices, I wanted to have more choices. So, we ended up sending our boys to a private boys' school, one of the worst decisions we ever made. Because the world system says, "You got to give your kids the best opportunity in life," God says, "The best opportunity you can give them in life is to connect them with Me. Let them follow the will of God that I, the will that I have for their lives, not what you have for their lives." It was the biggest mistake that we ever made, they had more issues to deal with in their lives because of the fact that I wanted to control their future not give their future to God, through education. And so, the best that we can do is give our lives to God. And so I thank God for my children I ended up saying to them, saying to the Lord, "Alright Lord I give them to You as an offering, take them."

And in both of their lives and all their families, He has taken His rod and He has touched their lives and He has taken their lives and burnt them as offerings before Him, and now they can be used by Him. They can be used by Him. I would go so far as to say that because Pastor Sharon and I made that decision to give our children to God, God has said "I can trust you with many other children". God can't trust you with other people if you won't give yours to Him. And sometimes that might mean like in Erika's case, you have to walk away of years of investment. People say, "It's an investment. Why would you walk away from your investment?" It's not an investment if it's you doing it. It's just you choosing to say, "This is how I'm using my energy." It's not an investment. Hallelujah.

Do you mind if I talk about you? [*Pastor John asks Miranda*] I mean, you know Miranda is here sitting, she's married to my son. And, I mean, I've known Bertus and Stefnie a long time in the church. The Lord said to me, "Go and spend a day with him". Go spend the day riding around with Bertus and at that time Quinten and them worked with them and Quinten is still in the church. But, I went and I rode around with them in their business that day under the obedience and the guidance of the.. Listen, I do not do this with a lot of people. I do it because God tells me to do it, otherwise next minute, I got phone calls from everybody saying "Come and ride the day with me please." I don't have that many days. I will do that If God speaks to me and tells me to do that.

So, I asked Bertus, I said "Bertus, can I come and ride with you? Ride with you to where you're doing business deals, all the stuff that you're busy within your life." I am

only following God. I don't know what God's got to say here. I don't know what God's wanting to do here. My only step is that I got to obey God on this thing.

So we're driving in the car and I see the farms and all of the stuff that implementations and stuff that we're doing. And so, some of the time we're talking about God some of the time, we're just talking about the stuff that they do in business and things that manufacture installations and I'm meeting a few farmers and all that kind of stuff and we're driving on the way back from the Mpumalanga region and we're driving in the car. And the next minute the Holy Spirit is on me, "You got to speak to Bertus now." So I turned to Bertus and I say "Bertus, got to talk to you about your eldest daughter, Miranda. I got to talk to you about your eldest daughter." I said, "I do not know what is going on, and I have nothing to say about the fact that she's a medical student and has done three or four years in medicine. I don't know, but God wants to touch her life and all I've got is she's got to come to spend some time in the ministry with us because God wants to touch her life." Am I right Bertus?

I wasn't even got through speaking about that and Stefnie is on the phone to Bertus and saying "Miranda is having a moment" [*Miranda speaks to pastor John*] I wasn't going to say that; you're giving me permission to say that, thank you. She's having an emotional meltdown. She's having a complete meltdown because of all of the pressure of all of the stuff at university, all of the studies, all of the pressure that she's under, she's having a meltdown. And it was... she wouldn't have even told Stefnie just a circumstance happened for it to come out that she's having a meltdown. That wasn't a pre-arranged thing that Miranda was going to tell her mom that she's having a meltdown. In fact, her whole attitude was, "I'll get through this, I'll deal with this. I'll make it all work." But actually, she was at the limit of her life. God saw what was happening. So, God came to intervene. Through the messenger that God has sent to watch over the souls of God's people. I didn't even know Miranda then, but God said, "I know her, you're her Pastor." She didn't, she wouldn't even say if you say, "Who's your Pastor, yeah I go to that church. He's my Pastor, but I don't really know him." At that stage. Right, Miranda? But it doesn't matter how well we knew each other she was under the authority of her mom and dad and in this church, and God said, "I want to touch her and I don't want her life to go to waste."

And so while I'm in the car talking to him about her, that's how divinely God orchestrated that moment. While I'm in the car talking to her dad. God says, so it's like, "Okay, well I'll still keep with my studies and I'll come and spend a month here and over holidays you know, December holidays." And she came to spend a month and she never left. And all of that, that tension and that frustration and all of that stuff that was in her, all of that performance. I've got to get through this university degree. I've got to get through medicine, I've got to become something God said, "I never called you to that. That's all on you. And because it's all on you, you take it all on yourself, all the pressure is on you, and the pressure will drown you. So come give Me your life girl and so she came to give her life." Now she happens to be my daughter-in-law. Thank God for that. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus.

You want to talk about spiritual forces that are out to get our kids. It's called High School, it's called the institution of high school, primary school, university, knowledge institutions that says, "You got to go get knowledge because without it you got nothing." In the meantime, they brainwash you into thinking, everything's about how

you perform, and it takes away the power of God in your life. And if Gideon had taken that perspective, I'm a nobody in a no place with nothing and he said, "What can I do?" He would have been lost and Israel would have been lost because God chose Gideon.

But thank God he brought an offering. And thank God, God touched the offering and took it for Himself. Watch this now. I'm nearly done. But I'm preaching good this morning. You're getting something out of this today. This is so good. We could sit here for all day today. Hallelujah. Yes, I'm nuking many things. God's got me in nuclear mode. He has, He's got me in nuclear mode. I'm after all those holy sacred cows that everybody's been serving as idols all these years.

Let me tell you something, if you don't, if you don't if you're hearing this message, and you've got something to say about it to justify yourself, it shows you that you've put yourself into an anti-nuclear bunker and you will refuse the will of God in your life and it will end up destroying what you're trying to protect. The very thing that you tried to protect the enemy will see to it that it will get destroyed. Because you open the door to the devil because God's already calling your future. Don't protect what you've tried to make. Let go of what you've always tried to make and let God give... because He will always give you life. He will never give you death.

Watch this. Remember last week, I put a picture up here where the children of Israel made a bull of gold. And I said, "Do you know any symbols of bulls in the new day in the modern day?" And I put up a picture of the Wall Street bull because it's a whole lot of bull.

²⁵ Now it came to pass the same night the Lord said to him, take your father's young bull, the second bull of the seven year old and tear down the altar of Baal. Whose altar was it? His father's. Say again, "His father's." [*Congregation repeats after Pastor John*] Come on whose altar was it? "His father's altar." But we are supposed to honour our father. Go and burn down your father's altar that he has erected to Baal. The god who favours us, the god who prosperous us, the god who is supposed to represent goodness in our lives. Go and burn it. Your father's altar. Take your father's bull. Take your father's bull, "²⁵...**the second bull of seven years old, and tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the wooden image that is beside it.**" **Judges 6: 25 NKJ.**

So they have an altar then they had an image, a wooden image, that they use to worship the god of good things. The god of favour, actually directly translated it is the god of fortune, good fortune. Go and burn down that altar of good fortune. "²⁶...**and build an altar to the Lord your God on top of that same rock in the proper arrangement, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the image...**" In other words, take the altar of Baal, that image, use the altar, and build it in the order of God. Take the wooden image of the god of Baal, and use that as the wood to burn the bull, that is your father's bull, and burn an offering to Me, the Most High God. Watch this now, "²⁷ **So Gideon took ten men from among his servants ...**", apparently even though he was the least of the smallest, they still had ten servants. I wonder if God really has chosen the children of Israel to prosper, and if He got them as His covenant people, surely He is going to bless us! So, "²⁷... **But because he feared his father's household ...**"

Say this again, say this with, “He feared his father”. [*The congregation says “he feared his father”*] Say it with me again, “He feared his father”. [*The congregation says “he feared his father”*]. Do you know what that represented, it means all the ways of your father and the cultures of your father. If you fear that more than you fear God, then that will always control you. He feared his father. ²⁸ ... **and the men of the city too much to do it in the light, so he did it by night. And when the men of the city arose ...**” I mean here is the most important thing to me. The most important thing to me is, he obeyed God. Doesn’t matter if he did it at night behind his back, no one could see. You might say, “But he is being dishonourable to his father by doing that.” Who are you going to dishonour, God or your father? Who is more important to you, God or your father? [*Ps Sharon saying “God”*]

Ja, but you are bringing division between a father and his son. No, Baal brought the division. The system of good fortune brought the division, the people that will all be doing the same thing to the same, in the same way, they brought the division, not the church. But people want to blame the church because the church stands for truth, and it breaks up the stuff that you have been trying to keep holding together, desperately, so that “look how great I am!” ²⁸ **And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, there was the altar of Baal, torn down, and the wooden image that was beside it was cut down, and the second bull was being offered on the altar which had been build. ²⁹ So they said to one another, “Who has done this thing?” And when they had inquired,** so they began to ask around. Remember I started the story about the guys in the military; who did it? Who did it? Who did it? [*Pastor John stands silently like a soldier*] So they started inquiring; who did it? Who did it? And by the matter of; it wasn’t him, it wasn’t him, it wasn’t this family, it wasn’t that family...

“Who has done this thing?” And when they had inquired and asked, they said, “Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing.” ³⁰ Then the men of the city said to Joash, “Bring out your son, that he may die. What are you telling me? That this god of Baal is so big deal in a city that they would go after one of their own? The son of one of their own and kill him because they burnt a wooden image? I’ll tell you what; you better not touch the institution of education and you’d better not touch the institutions of money and you’d better not touch the institutions that men depend on because if you do, they will say, “We’ve got to get rid of this guy because he’s a danger to our ways,” not God’s ways, “he’s a danger to our ways.”

...**“Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has torn down the altar of Baal, and because he has cut down the wooden image that was beside it.” ³¹ But Joash said to all who stood against him, “Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him?** Now, Joash is in a pickle because he’s been worshipping Baal with everybody else all this time, but now his son’s life is on the threat. So, he’s got a choice to make; either I go with these guys or I’ve got to come up with an alternative plan here. So, he comes up with a very good argument. I would say, he’s suddenly beginning to catch a wake-up that maybe God’s involved in this. And he says, **“Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him? Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning!** In other words, you kill my son, you’re pleading enough for Baal to kill my son, I’m coming to kill you by morning. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. **“Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him?**

Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning! If he is a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down! In other words, if he's a god and his altar has been torn down, let him show himself how great he is. Well, I'll tell you what, that's how you can deal with everything in your life. ³² **Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, "Let Baal plead against him, because he has torn down his altar."** (Judges 6:29-32 NKJV)

I want you just to see, as I conclude this message, God is dealing with one person and because he's willing to tear down all of the stuff that his father demanded that he should be part of and he's ready to stand for God, burn down an altar, burn down a wooden image, cause chaos in a city because of his stand for God, it is a trigger point for things that happen in the spirit world. Here's the trigger point; ³³ **Then all the Midianites and all of the Amalekites**, all of these great people that come and steal the harvest of the Israelites, **the people of the East, gathered together; and they crossed over and encamped in the Valley of Jezreel.** ³⁴ **But...** So, what are they camping for? They're coming in their forces to steal the Israelites' harvest. Why were they worshipping Baal? That we would have favour with the gods that they would protect us from the Amalekites. God says, "Your wooden altar can't save you. I've raised up for Myself a man that is going to be ready to hear Me. Through him will I save My people."

³⁴ **But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet**, it was a special trumpet that would call the people to war. **...he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him.** ³⁵ **And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh his tribe who also gathered behind him. And he send messengers to other tribes Ashers, Zebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.** (Judges 6:34-35 NKJV). And suddenly the Spirit of God is using one man that is the least of the family in the smallest of the clan, and he is saying, "Blow the trumpet of God, I have come to deliver you from everything that has tried to destroy you," But it has got to start with killing Baal, and the worship of the world system that says, "This is the one that will favour us, and will protect us."

You think that all of the young people that have come into the Ministry, and they have brought their talent and that they are studying, all of their gifting, and all of their future, and they have come to give it to God. You think that they are wasting their time? Let me tell you, they have come to give their offering of their every substance before God, and He has taken His staff and He has put it on their offering and He has burned it up and He said, "This is Mine to take." And let anybody that wants to say, "Whoa, what about this, what about your future? What are you going to do? How are you going to do it? Let them stand before God and say, "Why do you do it? Why do you have to defend that if He is capable of defending Himself?" Why?

The system has no defence against the truth of God. But you got to put your trust in the truth of God, that the system has no defence against the truth. Hallelujah. I want to tell you something, when it comes to when it comes to the ways of God, it sounds foolish to the people in the world system. It sounds foolish. Why, if you have got the marks, why won't you go and study in the University and go and get a degree, and go and use this, and go and do that, and go? Why wouldn't you do that if you have got all of the stuff? Why would you not go and do that?

Well, I would ask you a different question. Why would you not obey God? Why is your question, why would you not go and do that? Why isn't your question, "Why don't you follow God with everything you have got?" Why is the question questioning whether the church has got it right? Because obviously those that worship Baal, they must have it right. Because everybody is doing it. Oh, everybody is doing it, everybody is using it, everybody is making money out of it, so it must be right. Really? Oh, I suppose that is why that is why so many children are being killed by drugs. I suppose that is why so many young people don't know what to do with their lives, they go and study and they mess up relationships, and then they take those messed up relationships into a marriage somewhere down the line, and then they can't handle a marriage, and then they have kids in the marriage, and the kids don't know what to do with lives and the cycle perpetuates, "Oh but that system works"

And so, but look how wealthy those people became because they..., Oh so wealth is the measure of success?" Oh no, but you can't see, look how he made it into the Bulls rugby team, or the Sharks rugby team, or, and he put *I love Jesus* on my thing, or he is the captain of South Africa, and don't you see he has got a cross [*Pastor John showing his wrist on his right hand*] and *Jesus saves*. And God is using him. Oh God needs his little cross on his arm to use, to actually promote himself.

In the meantime, they are all worshipping Baal. Why is it that that system is the working system, but God's system is not? Perhaps it is because the church is looking for a Baal substitute in the church. Because we don't want to give ourselves to the church, we don't want to give ourselves to the Lord. We want to keep one foot in the system of Baal like Gideon's dad. I'll have an offering and an altar to Baal but I'll also be a covenant child of Israel. I'll have one foot in each camp so that I don't get killed by the people in the city and I will still be a covenant child of Israel. But God said, "I've got a son of a father who's been unwilling to take a stand and I'll take the son and I'll show the whole nation what a dedicated son can do". Hallelujah.

Well, why're you preaching like this? Because I'll tell you I am on fire because God is bringing my spiritual father, my spiritual leader, he's bringing him to this pulpit and he made a stand at the beginning of his life when he had a business that he had started. It was the dream of his life to follow in the footsteps of his father. It was the dream of his life that he would have his own paint and body shop. That he would have a family that he would have a successful life as a family man, a married man and have a business where he could do his passion of paint and bodywork and do cars. And then God called him and he said "I walk away from everything I ever dreamed of and I'll give my life to God and follow His dream for my life".

That man is coming to preach in this pulpit and I'm wanting this Spirit of that man that has served God all of these 53 years in the same spirit in which he left his business. He has been worshipping the most high God and he has presented no graven images, no altars, no money altars, no any other altars before the most high God. He has worshipped that God all of his life and I want us to be ready that when he comes with his authority and he comes with his, all of the stuff that God called him to; that we are ready. That we don't bring our graven images and our altars and all of our stuff and we sit here listening to what God is bringing to us in the purest offering and we measure it based on our graven images and our pre-established altars that we refuse to burn.

Come on. So what if he comes here and he comes with a message and he says, “come bring your, come bring your idols”. He won’t necessarily talk like this but he might say, “God’s calling you to this or He’s wanting you to do this or He wants you to do that. Or let’s do this people come let’s praise the Lord now people. Let’s do this people”. Are you going to sit there and say, “No, I am very comfortable in my own altar of self-comfort. So I won’t do anything that Pastor Jerry Brother Jerry asked me to do because my comfort and my dignity and my self-esteem is more important than anything that he might want to say”. “Come here’s an altar. Come let me lay hands on you. Come let’s worship God together. Come let’s do something, let’s make a significant thing of burning up all of the past and moving into a dynamic army for the future of God”. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Glory to the name of the Lord.

As for me and as for my household we have burned our graven images and where they still exist.... You know when I came back from America you saw the serious mantle that was on me. Because what was I doing? I was evaluating if there were any images in my life, any idols in my life that I had to burn. Because I can’t preach this message to you if I am still worshipping idols. So those of you that have been around me a long time, you know that’s the way I work. When God deals with me I let Him deal with me and then when He’s done dealing with me, then he can deal with you. Because I got to be the one who stands before God and says “God I am not going to be one that stands up here as a hypocrite and ministers to everybody and I am living something else”. Hallelujah.

Come on, you guys, you’ve been around me long enough, most of you to know, a lot of you to know, that what you see is what you get. And if I’m having to deal with things with God, it’s because He’s shining light on stuff in my life that I’ve got to deal with, and I will deal with it - and if I don’t, my wife will deal with it for me. [*Congregation laughing*] I’m just teasing. Won’t you stand with me, please? Hallelujah.

This is a serious moment. I knew that this message would be serious, because we’ve had an amazing time this week away with the young people, and God did... we had a lot of fun, but we dealt with a lot of issues that would try and stop our young generation of people from properly being able to live together. Now I thank God for that. Hallelujah. But all the while, as Saturday came, I became more and more aware of the heavy serious mantle that was on me to come here this morning. So I didn’t do much conversations with them yesterday, because I had to get myself ready to preach this, this morning. Hallelujah, praise the Lord, praise the Lord, praise the Lord. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Jesus.

Put your hand on your heart please, say; Lord, You are my God, You are my Master, You are my Saviour. I choose today to serve You, to worship You, and put You first place in my life. I determine that if there’s an idol and an altar in my life that I need to burn and tear down, help Me Lord to do it – even right now, in Jesus’ Name. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

Do you feel the sacredness of this moment? Do you sense how sacred and amazing this moment is? Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

Well, I want you to know that God's got good things for us. He really has prepared a table before us in the presence of our enemies, and our enemies out there are plenty. There are many things out there that want to prevent us from moving forward in God. Many, many, many things... but God is our God, He's our Lord, He's our Saviour. Hallelujah.

And I pray that you are blessed as you go out, and you are blessed as you go in. Every time you exit and you enter, every time you go and you come, you are blessed, in Jesus' Name. I pray that the peace of God rests upon you. No weapon formed against you will prosper. He gives His angels charge over you, His Word and the Blood of Jesus surrounds you, and I pray that you live in a God bubble. I talked about that to the young people this week, I talked to them about living in the God bubble. We have an opportunity to live in a God bubble. It's a Biblical thing, living in a God bubble. Seek ye first the Kingdom, and all these things will be added to you is a God-bubble. The children of Israel often lived in a God bubble, in fact, they lived for 40 years in a God bubble. Heat by night, and air conditioning by day. Hallelujah. It's a God-ordained thing that if you will serve Him first, you live in a God bubble. I pray that you see that, you recognise that, and you receive that – living in a God bubble, in Jesus' Name, with His blessing, His favour, His protection, and all the goodness that He has for you. Do you agree with that? Say amen. Thank you for coming to church. Goodbye everybody