

26 March 2023 Progression for Cooperation Part 2 Pastor John Bendixen (WTB)

Scripture reference: Romans 12:3 (NKJV); Hebrews 11:8-9 (NKJV); Romans 4:18-20 (NKJV); Romans 4:14-25 (MSG); Mark 4:23-33 (NKJV); Mark 4:13-19 (MSG); Mark 4:13-20 (TPT)

Pastor Sharon Bendixen:

For the entrance of Your Words, brings Light, Lord. We continue to walk in the Light. As we continue to give, entrance of Your Words into our heart, Lord, the entrance of Your Words into our hearts, brings us Light. We are children of the Light, we are sons of the Light, Lord. We love the Light and we believe the Light and we come into the Light. Even as Your Light, revelation Light comes forth this morning, Lord, the eyes of our heart will be flooded with that Light, Lord. We thank You for Light beaming and life streaming, life streaming through Your vessel, through Your messenger this morning, life stream. We receive You, Who speaks from Heaven through an earthen vessel. We are ready, Father. Our hearts are ready and prepared. We thank You, Father, that Pastor John speaks as the oracles of God and the anointing with which he speaks, destroys and breaks yokes of bondages in our own lives, Father. Continuing to form Christ in us, continuing to form Christ in us. We thank You Holy Spirit that today, through the ministry of the Word, You will have Your say, You will have Your way in the precious and mighty name of Jesus. And we all say, amen.

Pastor John Bendixen:

Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. You know, when the first album came out, this song, *Walk in the Light* was my favourite song. Everybody's got a favourite song ûon that album, right? This was my favourite song and when I hear it being sung like it was sung this morning, it remains my favourite. Because for us to walk in the Light, I mean this is everything we're about, is walking in the Light. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Praise Jesus. Thank you, you guys may be seated. Thank you.

I know school holidays have begun and it seems always in the Highveld area, school holidays, there's some form of exodus of people that go away and do things. There're two times of the year that as a Pastor, I wish I could scratch them out of the calendar would be this period of time and December. Because of the exodus. People have a self-imposed *exodus*. It's not the same as the God-given Exodus. It's their self-imposed holiday vacation exodus. Haha.

So last year, on the Easter weekend we spent a lot of time telling you that we were going to have a conference and it turned out to be what a marvelous long Easter weekend we had. This Easter weekend, Pastor Sharon, as it turns out, we are going to be away in the USA. We are with Brother Jerry on his President's cabinet, a special set of meetings that we are asked to be at every year. So we are leaving tomorrow. We will be away over that Easter weekend timeframe. But we are going to have an Easter Good Friday service here. We're inviting you to come and enjoy each other's company.

The pastors are going to be there. Pastor Garth with his whole brood and his clan is going to be there. Pastor Christi and Grobbies and some of the people will be hosting. We're going to go down to the dam, the nature reserve there and we're going to just enjoy each other's company. We'll probably spend the time up at the tennis courts, where there's also like a volleyball court and stuff and we'll have a braai over there and just enjoy some time of fellowship after the Good Friday morning service. I mean, what else are you going to do? Go back to your home and do what? Huh? Might as well come and spend it with us. Have some good healthy conversation and good company. Amen. Praise the Lord.

Well, God is good to us. I, there's a few things that are really just big in my heart and in my spirit as I meditate during the week on the things that face us, as a church, as a people, as a humanity. You will know that there have been many, many years of many people saying many things about the end times. I find myself as a matter of pure observance of what the Word of God says. I find myself looking at world events and recognizing that there is definitely a time when God is going to change the order of the way things are now, to the way things that God has prophesied they would be. There will definitely come an end of this time and there will come a time when there's a new age that is busy, that God will introduce into the timeline of eternity.

So, you know, it's not a coincidence that if you look at some things, to me, I tend to not be sensational about these things and oftentimes, people are sensational about these things. Because it makes for sensational preaching. And it captivates people and draws them to church. You find that, I know that there are two things that will get people to church. One thing is to talk about endtime prophecy and world events, people like that and the other thing is to say I'm going to prophesy over everybody. Next week, you'll find that the church will be packed and then, you know, healing miracles. I'm not degrading any of those things. I'm just saying, I tend to not want to be sensational about it. I tend to want to be more in the order of God and more intentional about the way the Holy Spirit leads us.

But it's hard to ignore some things. It's hard to ignore the weakness of the Western world at the moment. And what the Western world stands for in terms of capitalism and a form of democracy versus the Eastern world, the North and the Eastern world, which generally stands for autocracy, socialism, communism, that kind of thing and then you've got the Middle East, you've got the Middle East, that's always the nexus point of everything. And it's hard to ignore the fact that China and Russia strengthened their economic and military alliances this last week. It's also hard to ignore that Iran has actually signed a, strengthened an agreement with Saudi Arabia that was orchestrated by China.

So, if you're read in the Bible and you read things like Gog and Megog, and many of the words that are used for the old Russia, the old China, the old Persia, all of those things being Iran, is the old Persia. If you begin to just read all of those things and you see for the first time Iran is very close to actually getting a nuclear weapon. The West is very easy on China, easy on Russia. They've become dependent on Russia for gas and oil. I'd say these are more signs of things that are coming to a close and to a head, than anything that we have observed before. It's because the West has become weak. We can't ignore it. Don't look at me so shocked. Jah, this is your

Pastor speaking. This is not an end-time dramatist speaking. This is your Pastor speaking.

So, why would I start my message today with this? Because if we at any given time of our history – if we ever thought there was a confrontation or a conflict, between what is light and what is dark, what is good and what is evil, what is of God and what is not of God, we're hurtling towards that. Even if you take all the end-time signs out of it, and you just look at the state of the world right now, the state of the very volatile financial and economic systems of the world, the degrading education system of the world. If you look at the fact that people are losing their ability to communicate and talk to each other because social media has become such a big deal and has become so pervasive in society. If you look at all these factors that are coming together, humanity is losing its way. Humanity is losing its quality, humanity is losing value, humanity is losing purpose, and it is causing it to, as it always has in the past, it's causing it to grasp for meaning and purpose in all kinds of different religions.

Climate is a religion. Money is a religion. Power is a religion. All of these things are gods. The pervasive perverseness of sexuality has become a religion. Idol worship, it's a problem in young people growing up today, because they have such access to graphic sexuality so easily and it is dominating ongoing relationships. People don't have a need to, well they think they don't have a need because they substitute relationships with online stuff. Things are becoming more and more isolated. Things are becoming more and more, they're degrading. Human experience is degrading. Our connectivity with each other is degrading. And so, what is to be done? Well, what is to be done is the church. The church has to show what it is. The church needs to stand up and reveal itself as the organization, as the body that has the answer. We have answers to relationships, we have answers to education, we have answers to economic problems, we have the answers. For us, we have to be willing to go there.

So, the Lord has spoken and declared that this is a year for us to *Step Up and to Step Into*. This is a year for *The Maximum*. This is a year for *The Highest Level Attainable*. But what is it going to take? What is it going to take for us? What is our responsibility going to be? What are we going to do to go to *The Highest Level Attainable*? What are we going to do to go for *The Maximum*? What does it look like? So, I'm going to title my message today, is *Part 2 of Progression to Cooperation*. But I'm going to speak quite a bit this morning about measurement or the measure and measurement. What does it mean for us to go to *The Maximum*?

I've had two weeks where I've been a little subdued in terms of my interaction with people because, I mean, just God arranged it for me where I went to go and have an eye test and it needed an increase in strength of glasses and then they discovered that there was some cataracts forming in my eyes. Just like that God arranged it, that I could have an operation, first on my left eye and then on my right eye to put artificial lenses in the eyes and take my old natural lenses out and put artificial lenses in. So, I stand before you today being able to see your eyeballs. In the past I had to wear glasses to see your eyeballs or contact lenses. Now I can see even Quinton sitting at the back there with his hands raised up in the dark and I can read the smallest of writing here. Praise the Lord.

So, what's happened to my eyes is that I've gone to the maximum, highest level available to my eyes at my age. But it required some pain. It required some discomfort, it required me to put myself into a place willingly, because I could have kept wearing glasses and I could have done other things to do what I needed to do. But I willingly put myself into a place where they would operate on my eyes, had to wear things on my eyes. I couldn't go outside, I had to be very careful in terms of making sure that my eyes are clean, that you have all the antibiotics and things in eye drops and things that they put into your eyes. I mean, there's a lot of stuff you have to do to make sure that you don't get infections and your eyes are very sensitive, you can't bend over, you got to make sure you're not constipated. Because you can't put pressure on the eyeballs.

Come on, I must be real with you here. You understand, if you're going to the highest level available, there are some practical things that make you uncomfortable. You got to do stuff to make sure that you can get through the uncomfortable zone. So you can get the highest level attainable, so you can go to the maximum. One of the things that that happens is when you do that, the ophthalmologist immediately the day after you have the operation, you got to go in, they've got to check that your eye is doing okay, they look through their little machines and everything and they make sure that everything is the way it should be because this is after all your vision. This is, you know, what you can see, if you can drive again, if you can't I mean it's a big deal. But thank God it all worked well and God favoured me that I could get it done before I went to America and it would all settle down before I go to the next trip with the Chariots of Light tour and so praise the Lord. It was all in the timing of God. But I had to be ready and prepared to go for it and then I had to go back and they had to measure that everything was working fine. Yes?

Part of the measurement of whether I got the maximum and the highest level attainable is that this is now working. I can read, I can see distance, I can see close, I can... many things. The only thing that I can say for sure at the moment that's still, I struggle with is these bright lights shining in my eyes because my eyes are still light sensitive so I'm having to put up with some discomfort this morning for your sake. Amen. Praise the Lord.

So, in every one of us, we have to take the responsibility of what it's going to take to go to the maximum and to have the highest level attainable. So, let me put to you a very real scenario that could occur for me at this time and I'm going to put it to you. I'm used to now, if you remember, many of you would've remembered that for years and years, Pastor Sharon and I have always only flown economy class. There was a time that came and the Lord, we really felt that the Lord wanted us to fly business class and that we had to go to the next level so everybody else could go to the next level.

So the last, I'd say the last five, seven years or so we've flown business class. Amen. So now, is this the highest level attainable to me? No. What's the highest level attainable to me, what's the maximum that I can do? First class. So I could go with my own private jet. That would be something that I have to work with the Lord to see whether that's something He wants for me because that's a whole new set of events. But if I wanted to fly first class, that would be the highest level attainable, commercially. Yes?

Now, come on, what is the next thing that goes on in your mind that you think comes into my mind? How much does it cost? Is there value in it? Oh, but Brother Jerry said, "We've got to press for the maximum, the highest level available." He didn't say, "But you must evaluate the value." He didn't say, "Only if it suits you. Only if it's cost-effective." Huh? Why am I telling you about this? Because if the Lord has got to deal with us about going for the maximum and the highest level attainable then He has to deal with me and if He's got to deal with me then He's got to deal with me on things that matter in my world as much as things that would matter in your world. So I don't know what matters in your world. Maybe something in your world would be; you always buy the cheapest pair of tekkies available. So what's going to be the highest level attainable for you? Maybe you don't buy the cheapest pair of tekkies, maybe you buy the right pair of tekkies. Maybe your cheapest pair of tekkies would be R500 and now it's going to cost you R2000. You might say; "Well, I don't think that there's value in the R2000 pair versus the R500 pair because the R500 pair you can still walk somewhere, as well as you can with a R2000 pair. So why buy the R2000 pair when you can buy the R500 pair."

Now you are not in the conversation of maximum or highest level available, you are in a value based conversation. Which means you are preventing yourself from thinking maximum. By default, you're looking at your circumstances to determine your maximum. So if you allow your circumstances to dictate your maximum and your highest level attainable, then you will never go past your circumstances because you've got to make a choice to go to the highest level. You've got to choose the responsibility of what it takes to get there.

So come on, let's work together with me a little bit. If I've been flying business class for seven years and I'm thinking, "Lord, what is the highest level attainable for me?" So, Pastor Sharon and I had the conversation. If we don't have this conversation, you won't have it because then I can't come here and speak like this to you if we're not having this conversation. If I'm not having this conversation, then I'm not hearing what Brother Jerry said. Then it's just words. It's not just Brother Jerry that said it. It's the Holy Spirit that spoke through him. It's the Word of God to us. So, I've to evaluate, what does this mean? What's the measure of this? If it's not something that I can measure, that I've gone stepping up and stepping into, if I can't measure what it means to go to a higher level, if I can't measure what the maximum impact is, then how do I know I've got there? Come on, this must make sense to you. It's faith sense, as well as natural sense.

So, what does it mean for me? Does it mean that I can fly first class? Well, I will be honest with you that I'm evaluating that. Pastor Sharon and I are talking about and saying, "What does that mean?" Because it's something that I can measure. It's something that can have an impact and it's not something that is necessarily an ongoing cost, but it is an indication that I'm willing to take responsibility to go there. What kind of responsibilities? Well, it's a cost responsibility, number one. Number two, there's an image responsibility. Because if any one of you saw me getting on a first class ticket - so Miranda's sitting here, she will know that I'm not flying first class. We haven't booked first class tickets; not yet. But I'm going to have this conversation with you because I've got to be responsible and accountable to you. But if I say your opinion about whether I should fly first class or not is my measure, then I'm making

your value my value. Then I can't go beyond what you think my value should be. Ne? It could be just the same as if you didn't think it was good enough for me as a Pastor to drive a certain car. Then I would never be able to drive that car because your value would be more important to me than what God says I should press for. Now, I recognize that the Word of God says that I shouldn't do things that cause people to stumble. So I'm always very considerate and very careful about the way I manage finances in the ministry, about the way we go about doing things in life. Because God requires us to be considered, accountable, responsible. So that we live a life that is without reproach. Yes? That is a requirement of the calling. It's a requirement of this position, that we are responsible and accountable, and that we don't do things that cause people to stumble.

At the same time, there is this other side where you have to press for things with your faith and you can't allow people's opinions as to what's available to you in faith to determine whether you go for it or not. So what's to do? Well, what's to do is to have a conversation with you about some things that I have to press for. So then this should open up conversations for you to press for. It might be something like, "Well, I'm renting at the moment, a house that is barely capable of meeting my needs and I want to move into a bigger house, something that will be the highest level attainable for me and all my family." Well, what does it take for you to press towards it? Well, maybe it means you have to press towards a higher level of income to get to that? Well, then that's where you can start sowing, exercising your faith, doing the things that you need to get there. So, if you don't reach for it, you won't ever get there. If I don't reach for something, how are we going to get there? Amen.

I mean, there's many things that I'm reaching for in the ministry. I mean, we reach for things that we as a ministry can go for, I want to tell you that as far as I can tell you we are there with the glue. Mixchange is going to have Mixchange business. It is going to have Mixchange education. It's going to have Mixchange professional services, it's going to have Mixchange ministries or ministry and Mixchange is going to be the glue that is going to give a platform for people to do business that are involved in Mixchange as a ministry, as a program that is going to go into business. It is gonna go into education that's going to go into many different things. We are busy putting it all, a lot of it is coming together. And we are going to allow Mixchange to be a platform that the world is going to look at our young people and other people that want to join through the Mixchange environment. And say, "We have a vehicle." That we can say, "We need professional services in video editing, in internet stuff, in whatever." People may be able to connect with Mixchange and say, "We need a good doctor." Well through Mixchange here is a doctor that's available to you. Well through my MiXchange here is a doctor that's available to you. Because MiXchange will be a program that has got the status.

We've been coming this way for some years. Now we got, we there now. We are there now. So, when I talk to you about these things, it's, I'm not just reaching for the maximum and the highest level attainable in one area. We're reaching for it in many areas. But I recognize my responsibility that if I don't go there completely, then we none of you can go there. Because otherwise, I become the limitation. I don't want to be your limitation. I want you to go for the best. It's one of the reasons I'm so grateful that we are connected to Brother Jerry, and to the whole legacy of faith ministers

through Brother Jerry. Because they're always pressing for the highest. They're always a lifestyle, they press in faith for things. Yeah.

I mean Brother Jerry's 77 and he's believing for the next best jet. He's believing for a bigger, better, faster, higher, maximum-level intercontinental jet that he can fly with. Well, surely, when you get to 77, you can get to a place where you think well enough already. Says who? Says why? I want to go bigger, I want to go bigger, I want to go bigger, bigger, bigger, bolder, bigger, higher, maximum, bolder. We have the legacy of it, in the Word.

In Romans chapter one, verse twelve verse three, it says, ³ **For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than you ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith (Romans 12:3 NKJV)**. Here's the, here's the measure coming in. God says He has given us a measure of faith. I have ministered on this recently, very recently. You have a measure, I have a measure, it's the same measure. The same faith that it took for me to get born again is the same faith that I can use to stretch for more things. Amen.

If God talks about a measure of faith, then He's talking about something that He's given you, that it's got substance, it's quantifiable. So how is faith got any measurement? How is faith got measurement? Well, the measurement of faith is how it is making what you hope for into real visible substance. So, if I'm hoping for something, it's never going to be something that faith brings into being unless it comes into being. Which is why the Word says, when faith is full, grown, and it comes into its own, then you don't have to believe for it anymore because what you have hoped for has come into substance. You no longer have to hope for it. So faith and a measure of faith is the substance of something that comes into materialism that wasn't there before. Means you can touch it, feel it, you can see what it does. Yes. So, we've all been given the same measure of faith. What are we going to do with it?

Well, in Hebrews 11 verse 8, ⁸ **By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.** Hello.... he went out, not knowing where he was going. What caused him to come out? Faith, he got a word from God and he went out. ⁹ **By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise (Hebrews 11:8-9 NKJV)**. They didn't go based on a set of rules. They went out on a promise. We, as a ministry are busy creating a whole new foreign country that we are occupying. What is that foreign country? We are going into business and doing business in a way that we've never done before. We're going to do education in a way that we've never done before and we are going to do all manner of things in a way that we haven't done before. We're going into something that God is leading us into and coming out of the system, but we are doing it in obedience to Him.

We don't know exactly where we are going to, but we have to obey to go there. We have got to do it by faith. We have to do it with faith, we can't do it with anything else. "But Pastor John, you know, give us a little bit more because our logic and our natural world needs a little bit more." I can't give you more. We are all going to press

into it together. We are going to press in and press up and go higher and we're going to go to the maximum. We're going to go to the highest level attainable and we're going to do it together. We're going to get our inheritance, we are going to get what God has through Jesus paid the price for us to get.

Romans chapter 4 verse 16. Actually, I'm going to just read a portion of this scripture. I'm going to read verse 18, ¹⁸ **...who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be."** ¹⁹ **And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.** ²⁰ **He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief.** What is our biggest challenge? It's unbelief. "Well, I don't believe in this whole new thing that you're busy talking about Pastor John, because I don't see too many churches around the world doing what you and we are pressing in to do." Well, Abraham was only one guy out of a whole city of people. If Abraham had waited and said, "Well let's see how many other people God speaks to." Huh. What would've happened? He wouldn't have been the father of faith; not him.

Do you think we should hang around, we should wait, hang around to see who else God's going to speak to before we do it? Maybe God's waiting for us to obey. He's got to call somebody, why not us? Why not us? I mean, if there's a group of people that are really dedicated to pursue the will of God, it's us. If we have a really good, solid foundation of Bible in our lives, it's us. If we have a good, strong relationship foundation of the way that we do life, we have. If we've got a legacy of fathers that we can turn to and walk with to help us get there, it's us. If there's a people that are anti-religion, it's us. If there's a people that's anti-institutional, it's us. If there's people that are willing to obey and give ourselves fully to God, isn't it us?

So why are we not a candidate for God to say, "Come, let Me show you new things, let's go into a new space. I am re-quiring that you leave your old way and go into a new way, even if you don't know where you are going yet." You see, this goes contrary to our logic; we have to know where we're going, we have to have everything planned. Every T crossed, every I dotted; everything has got to be in order before we go there. I'm sure that Abraham would have loved that, he didn't get that option. "Abraham, go." "Where am I going?" "Just go." "How am I going to know when I get there?" "You'll know." "What does it look like?" "You'll see." "Are there any other options for me?" "No." "What must I do?" "Go, and by the way, don't take anybody else with you." "Ahhh. Not even my parents?" "No." "Ahh, but I think I'll do that." "Okay, it's going to cause you trouble."

Therefore, it is by faith, Romans chapter 4, I'm going to read this to you out of the Message translation, I'm going to read this whole passage to you. Verse 14, ¹⁴ **If those who get what God gives them only get it by doing everything they are told to do and filling out all the right forms properly signed, that eliminates personal trust completely and turns the promise into an ironclad contract! That's not a holy promise; that's a business deal.** ¹⁵ **A contract drawn up by a hard-nosed lawyer and with plenty of fine print only makes sure that you will never be able to collect. But if there is no contract in the first place, simply a promise - and God's promise at that - you can't break it.** ¹⁶ **This is why the fulfillment of God's promise depends entirely on trusting God and his way, and**

then simply embracing him and what he does. God's promise arrives as pure gift. That's the only way everyone can be sure to get in on it, those who keep the religious traditions and those who have never heard of them. For Abraham is father of us all. He is not our racial father, or our DNA father - that's reading the story backward. He is our faith father.

He's the guy that said, I'll go, I'll leave. I'll tell you this for nothing. This is just for free today. But I'll tell you that if we are not the people, to show the young generation how to build relationships, how to live in faith, how to pursue an assignment for their lives. If we don't do it, the young generation will be lost to social media, they will be lost to artificial intelligence, they will be lost to gamification of everything in our lives, they will be lost to a virtual reality world where they will have no ability to walk and live in the natural world. They will be controlled by all things digital and it will be one very close step away for the digital world to control everything they do. We stand right now required by God to go into a new land to show the way otherwise, younger generation people are not going to make it. They are not going to make it. If you like, this is our turn to be a father of faith, us together. This is our turn to be a father of faith, to be a source of faith, to be a source of relationship, to be a source of showing the future.

¹⁷ We call Abraham "father" not because he got God's attention by living like a saint. So this is for the young people. If you look at older people and say, "You got to live like a saint in order for me to follow you." You're gonna miss the boat because none of us are perfect. None of us are saint. Except me. I mean, there is a Saint John. Just to be clear, there's no Saint Jerry. But there is a Saint John, I'm just saying.

So, **¹⁷ We call Abraham "father" not because he got God's attention by living like a saint, but because God made something out of Abraham when he was a nobody. Isn't that what we've always read in Scripture, God saying to Abraham, "I set you up as father of many peoples?" Abraham was first named "father" and then became a father.** That's how faith works. You first name what you're going for, then it becomes what you say it's going to be. So I'm just making a declaration to you today that I'm going to fly first class. Because if I don't speak it, then it'll never come to me and I'm speaking to you first. So you can hear that this is where my faith is. Because if I can't fly first class, how am I going to get an airplane? If God does want airplanes for me, in my future, it's got to start with at least first class.

Now you understand how we have to really get a hold of our mindset that wants to always be a value-based thinking. I've come a long way on my own journey of value-based thinking. I have, me personally. I still find myself reverting to value-based thinking from time to time and then I've got to pull myself by this my straps and say, "Come on John, you can't just be valued-based thinking all the time you got to press for what's the highest? What's the maximum? What does it look like? Where are you going to go to?" Hallelujah.

So, **¹⁷ Abraham was first named "father" and then became a father because he dared to trust God to do what only God could do: raise the dead to life, with a word make something out of nothing.** This is how we live, make something out of

nothing. Come on, people, let's make something out of nothing. "Well how you make something out of nothing?" You got to speak to it. You got to speak to it, you got to speak to it, you got to speak to it. "I speak to this job to bring more income into my hand. I speak to opportunities of jobs to come into my hand. I speak to relationships that I will have everything, it will satisfy me, it will bring joy to me, it will bring peace to me, it will be everything that God has for me. In the church, in business in different areas, I speak to it, I commanded it to be." Hallelujah.

But then when God says, "Go." You got to leave your comfort zone in the country where you've been living and leave everybody behind all your business networks, all the people that have sustained you to go to a place where you don't know where you're going. You got to have the boldness, the courage, the obedience. "I'm going there. I'm burning my bridges and I'm going there." It's the only way to get to what God's got for you is to leave where you have been. You can't stand where you've been. Abraham could have never got to a new country if he had kept living in the old city. You got to leave it behind.

¹⁸ When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not on the basis of what he saw he couldn't do but on what God said he would do. And so he was made father of a multitude of people. God himself said to him, "You're going to have a big family, Abraham!" And he never had one kid yet. This is the way God talks. **¹⁹ Abraham didn't focus on his own impotence.** You know what impotence is? Inability is to reproduce. Inability to be productive. Hah, so maybe you feel like you're impotent because you don't have the right people, the right job, the right wara wara wara. You're not focused on your inability, you got to be focused on what God's ability says He can do.

He **¹⁹ ...didn't focus on his impotence and say, "It's hopeless. This hundred-year-old body could never father a child." Nor did he survey Sarah's hey man, you got to watch out if you talk like this hey ... Nor did he survey Sarah's decades of infertility and give up.** Like talk to your wife and say, "You are incapable of following me through wara wara wara." You can't talk like that to anybody. You gotta make to say, "If anybody's walking with you. We're gonna have what God says he's gonna have, what he can produce, not what we say, we didn't get. **²⁰ He didn't tiptoe around God's promise, asking cautiously skeptical questions.** Hmm, I wonder how much we do in the name of wisdom, that is cautiously skeptical questions. Don't shut me down because I'm asking a skeptical question now. Yah. Cautiously skeptical questions. I wonder how much that figures into our faith. Cautiously skeptical questions. Let's talk about first class ticket. I asked my own self a cautiously skeptical question. What will people think? What will happen if they see me getting on a first class flight? What if I'm spending that extra twenty or thirty thousand rand and I could have spent it on giving it to somebody that is poor. You don't think other people are going to say that about me? They are. And so what must I do? I must not press for the highest and the maximum because other people have got something to say? Because they're asking skeptical questions about the value? **²⁰ ...He plunged into the promise and came up strong, ready for God,** **²¹ sure that God would make good on what he had said. ²² That's why it is said, "Abraham was declared fit before God by trusting God to set him right."** You see, we got this thing wrong. We want to make ourselves right, meanwhile, all we got to do is trust God and He'll make us right. He'll keep us heading in the promised land

direction. He'll do it. ²³ **But it's not just Abraham; ²⁴ it is also us! The same thing gets said about us when we embrace and believe the One who brought Jesus to life when the conditions were equally hopeless. ²⁵ The sacrificed Jesus made us fit for God, set us right with God.” (Romans 4:14-25 MSG)**

Now, I want to say this to you. If I take this perspective, that God can only do one thing to make me get to the maximum this year. If there's only one thing I'm aiming for, that's the highest level attainable. Am I not limiting God? Is God not capable of addressing all things that my life touches? From ministry, to relationships, to finances, to health. Is God not capable of touching all areas of my life and going for the highest level - simultaneously? He's not a - He's not a parallel God. I mean, He's not a sequential God. He's a parallel God. It's not a matter I've got to get this thing done before I can get the next thing done. He's going to make it all happen all at once. Come on. If you don't say, “Amen,” then you're gonna say, “Oh-mi.” And you said, “Oh-mi,” that's a cautiously skeptical question. “Oh-mi,” rather say, “Amen.” Then at least you're in agreement, so be it. So be it. Parallel, maximum. Parallel, going for the highest level attainable. Parallel, stepping up, stepping in. Hallelujah.

Mark chapter 4 verse 23, ²³ **“If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”** If you got ears? How are you listening this morning? With what kind of ears are you listening? Are you listening with ears that are just - I like the sound of your voice Pastor John. It's melodic. Or, I don't understand your English. What does melodic mean? No. You need to hear with spiritual ears. Ears that say, “Yes, yes, yes.” Because what I'm saying must witness with your spirit. Because your spirit man is saying, “This is the truth, this is the order of God, this is the timing of God. This is what God's saying for right now.” ²³ **If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” ²⁴ Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure, the same measure you use, it will be measured to you (Mark 4:23-24 NKJV).**

Hello, I had to get to a point in the ministry where I had to say, “I'm going for business class.” We all agreed that this is my time. Let me tell you if you've been flying economy class to America three, four times a year for thirty years then it's time, it's time. Should have happened a lot earlier but anyway it is what it is. I don't have to wait another thirty years to go to the next level. I thank God that the Word of the Lord came to us this year because what it's done, it has challenged me. Isn't that what the purpose of it is, to challenge where you're at? So that you can evaluate and say, “Hey what am I measuring here? Am I comfortable with my faith? Am I comfortable with what I've got now?” Because let me tell you flying business class versus flying economy class is a whole lot better. It's easy to get comfortable there. Easy. I really don't need to fly first class. Hello. From a comfort point of view. I really don't need to fly first class.

So, Pastor John, why're you talking about it? Because if I don't think maximum then I'm not going to go maximum and for me that's the next step. “Uh Pastor John you keep hammering on about the first class already.” Ja because I know what's going to happen to me. I know what happens to you. It's like, value. You don't think that if I get to the point when I get to the point that I'm going to book that first-class ticket that my mind is not going to scream at me, it's that much more! Why? And if I succumb to skeptical questioning then I will never exercise my faith to get to that next level and I will get stuck at my comfort zone. That's why God had to speak the word of the Lord

to us through the prophet of God and through me. Step up and step into. You have to do it otherwise we get stuck in our comfort zone. Don't have to use my faith for that. I'm already at that level, it's good enough. Not for God, it's not. I can just hear all the religious spirits creaking, "aaaa, shut up," because all the religious spirits are wanting to take this whole value based argument to the poor.

The thing about it is God never thought that way about Jesus and I ministered this last year sometime. When Jesus was born He didn't get born in a manger because He needed to be born in a poor circumstance. It was a matter of circumstance, number one. Number two, God didn't just send a couple of guys with a few small little gifts to come and give Him this little bottle of frankincense and this little bottle of myrrh and this little... and say, "Baby Jesus, here's some gifts for you, that you'd been born." These are wealthy, wealthy kings that came to the birth of the next King that was born that they had seen in the skies, that the angel of the Lord had taken there, and they're going to just rock up there and leave a little bottle of scent? Not even eau de parfum, eau de toilet. Because the value, the value. No, God the Father said, "My Son has just been born. I'm going to bring the kings of the earth, the men that have accumulated wealth, I'm going to bring them to worship at His feet and they're going to bring such wealth to Him, that His mom and dad will never have to think about money for another day in the rest of His life." We have this mindset that God... all the gold and the silver and the riches and everything in the earth belongs to God, but He couldn't give it to Jesus, because it would leave the wrong impression for everybody else. Come on, I'm preaching really good this morning – better than you're shouting.

So, ²⁴ **"Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.** I'm hearing, so, now I must give myself to what I'm hearing, because the more I give it, the more is going to be given to me. I'll be ready for what God's got next. Because if I don't go this next step, I'm not ready for the next. Hallelujah. ²⁵ **For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."** (Mark 4:24-25 NKJV). You want to be a value-based thinker? That which you have will be taken away from you, because it will always be about the cost and about the value. Always. You will never get out of the mindset of cost and value-based thinking, unless you embrace what God's got, to say, "Let's go for the maximum, let's go for the highest level attainable." Because what you are hearing now, is the deciding point to whether you're going to get more or you are going to go that which you have is going to be taken from you. This is real folks, this is real people. This is where the rubber meets the road, if you don't go for it, that which you have, that revelation of faith, that revelation of prosperity, it will be taken from you, and you will become more and more value-based thinking, more and more cost-based thinking, because you will never see that God has got an answer for you for the greater that is to come. Never.

Well, that applies to relationships. That applies to anything and everything. It's not just one area. So, ²⁶ **And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground,** ²⁷ **and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how.** ²⁸ **For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head.** ²⁹ **But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the**

sickle, because the harvest has come.” (Mark 4:26-29 NKJV) You see, you’ve got to be able to look at the faith and see your faith working, hear what is happening in your heart speak it out and when the time comes to harvest, you got to be brave enough to take it. You got to put in the effort to go get it. The harvest is not going to climb off the stalks for themselves. A lot of Christians think, well, you know if God provides it, then I’ll know it’s Him. Meanwhile God says, “The harvest is there for you to go get it.” Well, how are you going to get it? Speak it into being.

³⁰ **Then He said, verse 30 “To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? What kingdom do we live in? Are we in the kingdom of the men or are we in the Kingdom of God? Are we not a peculiar people? Set apart to live for God? Are we not God’s peculiar people, a nation dedicated to Him? Are we not a nation of kings and priests? That means we have a kingdom. It’s the Heavenly Kingdom. Right? I know we live as men on the earth but we also live as spirit beings, children of the Most High God. We live in an alternative Kingdom. ³⁰ “To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? ³¹ *It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; ³² but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.” ³³ And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it (Mark 4:30-33 NKJV).***

As they were able to hear it. What’s the deal about a mustard seed? The mustard seed is a different kind of seed to grain or wheat or maize or whatever it is that you want to call it and plant. It is different because it’s a seed that is very small and is planted once. The thing about it is that when you plant it, you can’t come next year and say where’s my harvest of mustard seeds. It grows into a tree. It’s got years before it becomes anything, anything after five years, but normally longer. It’s normally more than ten years that a mustard seed tree will grow into a herb bearing seed tree. But when it is grown into a tree it produces year after year, after year, after year, after year and not only is it a tree that keeps producing after itself, it is a tree that others use to come and nest in the tree.

Hey, God is talking to us and He is saying, “Hey, let the Word of God grow up in your heart. Let it be a harvest of thirty, sixty and a hundredfold return, but there is a greater harvest to that if you will be patient and let something grow and grow and grow and grow. It will be a self-perpetuating productivity value in your life.” That’s what faith will do. If you remember what I talked about faith. I said, I haven’t spoken about this for a year for a while but if you those of you have been around me long enough will remember that I said, “Faith is like a rocket, taking off from the earth.” When you learn to live by faith you burn all of the fuel and the energy to get your faith off the first ten meters. The first meter, then the first ten meters then the next hundred meters. You burn 90 percent of your fuel just breaking the gravity level. It’s like that with faith. When you start living by faith, all the old customs of the world, the cultures, all of the old mind stuff, all of your own emotional stuff, all of your roots that you’ve put down into your old way of doing things - it’s like gravity it holds you down. And you burn a lot of fuel getting yourself free from that system, from that gravity-holding force that wants to keep you on the earth.

So you burn an immense amount of energy. I receive it by faith. I mean, for me, it was like, "I'm debt free through the miracle power of Jesus. I'm debt free through the miracle power of Jesus." Just about anything that would come out of my mouth, it's almost day and night. You could press my button, "I'm debt free through the miracle power of Jesus." I spend an enormous amount of energy keeping my mind, my spirit man, and my words in line with the measure of what God was speaking me to become.

For three years I allowed that huge amount of energy to work in my life. But after three and a bit years I was debt free through the miracle power of Jesus. And when my ship took off from that gravity there was no looking back. Because now I'm free from debt and the world system couldn't hold me any longer. I'm into the realm of just a little bit of fuel that keeps me orbiting in the space realm of God. You know like those satellite things they just go... [*Pastor John imitates satellite sound*] a little bit of fuel and they keep racing around the earth with very little energy. They just operate in a whole different sphere.

They look down at the gravity of the earth and the way that it spins in the lights and the darkness and the moon and the sun and they look down on what its impact in the earth and they say, "I'm out of this space I'm out of this world I live on a whole different planet and a whole different way of doing things." That's where faith takes you. But you can't get there if you're not willing to go to the next step. So, now we're going to burn a little bit of fuel ... going to the maximum. Going to the highest level attainable - we're going to burn a little bit of fuel. But why not? It's worth it. Let me see how much time I got left [*Pastor John looking at his timer*] I'm just about out of time. But I'm also just about done with my message. I'm going to read to you this next passage of scripture from the Message Translation and then we'll see if we got time for The Passion Translation.

Chapter 4 verse 13 of Mark. ¹³ **He continued, "Do you see how this story works? All my stories work this way.** ¹⁴ **"The farmer plants the Word.** ¹⁵ **Some people are like the seed that falls on the hardened soil of the road.** This is like the hardened soil this is like where you walk with your mind, you walk with your emotions, you work with your life and you've created such a beaten path that it's hard, hard soil. And this word that I'm speaking to you if it lands on that kind of soil that's got no value. The circumstances will quickly come and steal it. So it ¹⁵ ... **falls on the hardened soil of the road. No sooner do they hear the Word than Satan snatches away what has been planted in them.** ¹⁶ **"And some are like the seed that lands in the gravel. When they first hear the Word, they respond with great enthusiasm.** ¹⁷ **But there is such shallow soil of character that when the emotions wear off and some difficulty arrives, there is nothing to show for it. (Mark 4:13-17 MSG)**

Difficulty. Mmm, when difficulties come, it just destroys the seed. ¹⁸ **"The seed cast in the weeds represents the ones who hear the kingdom news** ¹⁹ **but are overwhelmed with worries about all the things they have to do...** Sounds like skeptical questions. ...**worries about all the things they have to do and all the things they want to get.** The stress strangles what they heard, and nothing comes of it. ²⁰ **"But the seed planted in the good earth represents those who hear the Word, embrace it, and produce a harvest beyond their wildest dreams." (Mark**

4:18,19 MSG) Why is it beyond your wildest dreams? Because whatever you can dream of the Word of God in you has got more power than your dreams. Your dreams do not have the limiting power on the Word. The Word of God, if you let it grow and you let it become what it is, the Word is greater than your dreams. Because the power of the seed is at work, whether your dreams can stifle it or not, it's working. But if you let the dreams stop the Word growing, that's where you get only a thirty or a sixty fold return. Because your dreams stop the ability to harvest.

Can I read this to you in The Passion Translation? And then I'm done. ¹³ **Then he said to them, "If you don't understand this parable, how will you understand any parable?"** ¹⁴ **Let me explain: The farmer sows the Word as seed.** ¹⁵ **What falls on the beaten path represents those who hear the message, but immediately Satan appears and snatches it from their hearts.** ¹⁶ **...The seed sown on gravel represents those who hear the message and receive it joyfully,** ¹⁷ **but because their hearts fail to sink a deep root into the Word.**

Whose heart? Your heart. Your heart. It's your choice. It's not God's choice. Many, many people say this Word thing doesn't work, this faith thing doesn't work. That's your heart speaking. It's your heart that is preventing it. It's not the Word. It's not the power of the seed. Notice, I haven't talked about money here. I'm talking about the power of the Word. That's the seed. It's the power of the Word. ¹⁶ **The seed ...sown on gravel represents those who hear the message and receive it joyfully,** ¹⁷ **but because their hearts fail to sink a deep root, they don't endure for long. For when trouble or persecution comes on account of the Word, they immediately wilt and fall away.** ¹⁸ **And the seed sown among thorns represents those who hear the Word,** ¹⁹ **but they allow the cares of this life and the seduction of wealth ... cares of life, seduction of wealth ... and the desires for other things to crowd out and choke the Word so that it produces nothing (Mark 4:13-19 TPT).**

Notice, the seed is sown. The seed is in your heart. But there are other things that are growing up with that Word that choke it. Can I explain this to you, very quickly? If you hang around Christians who have knowledge of this message that I'm preaching, you will hear language like, "I'm believing God for this, I'm trusting God for that, I'm speaking the Word about this." And then they say that, and they say that, and they say that, but they're also speaking about their cares and they're speaking about their desires. And they're acting on their desires and they're acting on their cares and they're acting on the seduction that wealth brings into their world for many things that they can get. And they are distracted so then they don't keep the Word growing. Those other things choke it, but it's growing. But it's growing right next to the same seed.

That's why I say two things can happen at the same time; you can be sowing the Word but you can also be letting desires, seduction of wealth or even the lack of wealth, cares and the desire for other things to continually be your conversation rather than what you're going to do with the Word conversation. And where those other things are your conversation always and not the Word of God and what it produces, then it grows up because of your words. It's not that you are stopping the growth of the Word, but you are putting so much emphasis on other words, that those other words grow up and choke the Word.

And so, then it becomes unfruitful harvest. It's grown. It's there. If you could get to it, you could harvest it, but these other things have grown up and they're choking it. So what do we have to do? We've got to keep the soil of our heart clean and keep saying what God says. If you keep saying what God's says rather than what desire says, rather than what wealth says, what other things say, then I keep that stuff not growing and then it allows the harvest to grow.

This is where everything about your life becomes about assignment. You are assigning priority to the Word. You are assigning priority to what God's will is rather than what the distractions of this world are bringing to you.

²⁰ **"But the seed sown on good soil represents those who open their hearts to receive the Word and their lives bear good fruit-some yield a harvest of thirty, sixty, even one hundred times more than was sown!" (Mark 4:20 TPT)** Let me tell you, it is God's desire for us to live in the hundredfold zone - plus. Because there are things that He wants us to have that is as a mustard tree that you don't even have to work on it every year. It's just, the fruit is bearing. The fruit is bearing. The fruit is bearing. It just keeps on. Every season, it's there. Every season, it's there. Every time, it's there. And then there are areas where God says, "Now, you've got to keep working on this because in the season while you're waiting, you've got to have something to do. You've got to keep you productive while you're growing these things."

"Oh, but, Pastor John, I've got this..." No, there's always something new you've got to be planting, something new you've got to be harvesting because there's something more that God wants you to have. That's why we're here now.

So, as a ministry, we are doing just wonderful. Are we not? Come on. How amazing has God been to our church? Our ministry? I mean, God has blessed our ministry. We are fruitful, we are productive, we have so many good things happening in our church, our ministry. From missions to taking care of the poor to Bible schools to church to sound and song to our prayers to so many things. Our church is doing just wonderful! It is, isn't it? I mean look what God is doing with our young generation of people, and the old-young generation of people have impacted the old generation of people and the old generation of people are coming awake. Because the young people won't let you stay asleep. What has been keeping you asleep? The institutions. Older people get very institutionalized in thinking. Ja neh?

So we got to let the young people put their hands on our eyes so that we can see. That is a scripture by the way. Hah. Our church is doing just great. Not great enough. Why not? We are not at the maximum, we got to go to the next highest level attainable. We got to press now. We got to go now. We got to keep going now. We can't sit around and say, "Look how good we are, jah boys look at us." We got to say, "Joh, God has got a whole new everything for us. He wants us to fire those burners up and launch new rockets. He wants us to do a whole lot of burning of energy so we can go to the next level, the maximum and begin to do stuff that we couldn't even with our wildest dreams think we could achieve!" Hallelujah.

I got to do that. You got to do that. And so you got to do that in your personal life and you got to do that with me in the church so that corporately there is a body we can

go there, as a church we can go there, but you have also got to go there with yourself. Because it is where it happens between you and God, that is where it is going to count in the corporate space, because you got to bring that to the body and say, "Hey, look what God is doing. Are you in this? I am in this. Let's go together, let's make this happen together." Hallelujah! So with the measure that we hear, is what will be measured back to us. So we have got to be progressing in our cooperation with God. This is not a static relationship of faith. It is progression. It is a moving dynamic living relationship of faith, that we have got to keep working with. Hallelujah.

So, Pastor Sharon and I are off to go and be with Brother Jerry and I want to tell you that I am taking this spirit of faith, I am taking your spirit of faith with me, and we are going with all of our gifts, all of our callings, all of our prayers, all of you are going with us and we go into this legacy relationship that we are continuing to explore; What is the highest? What is the maximum? What can we step into and how can we step up to the things that God has got for us? Hallelujah.

And sometimes you got to leave one place and step into another place and it might feel a little uncomfortable, maybe a whole lot of uncomfortable. Welcome to the faith club. There is never any comfort in faith. The comfort is in the Word that the Word works. Hallelujah. He will never let us down. He will never leave us. He will never forsake us. He will never leave us begging for bread. He will never leave us in a place where we don't know what to do next. He will always guide us, He will always lead us, and He will always show us the next thing. But we got to be willing to take the next step. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Glory to God. Glory to God. Hallelujah. Come stand to your feet, everybody. Praise Jesus.

So we are going to have a real; you guys are going to have a real good time when I am gone, because Pastor Garth is going to minister to you, one Sunday, and Pastor Christi is going to minister to you on Easter weekend on the Friday and on that Sunday and of course the Sound and Song people will be here and we'll be checking you out. We'll be watchin', we'll be watchin'. Hallelujah. Our prayers will always be with you, and I trust your prayers will be with us; in fact, I want you just to agree with me right now, just stretch out your hands towards me. Sharon, you can come stand with me please, Babe. Hallelujah.

I mean, I'm going to travel for two weeks with this gorgeous babe. She's my favourite person in the whole world, she is. I'm going to spend two weeks with her; it doesn't get a whole lot better than that, let me tell you. Hallelujah. Just stretch out your hands, and just agree that all of what God has for us will come to us. Everything that He's pre-planned, predestined for us to walk in, we will walk into all those things and no weapon formed against us will prosper, no harm will come near us or our dwelling place at home. We will be blessed going out and blessed coming back and wherever we go, His blessing, His protection, His increase, His favour is upon us. Amen. His maximum, His highest level available is upon us. Amen. Hallelujah.

So now we in turn pray for you that the same is gonna happen for you that while we are gone the maximum comes to you, the highest level attainable is born in you is shining to come out of you and you gonna speak it and declare it and you gonna call it and His blessing will be upon you. Hallelujah. Whatever you put your hands to will prosper, wherever your feet go His giving you that territory to take for His will and His

glory for His Kingdom. Hallelujah and no weapon formed against you prospers, you are protected, you are washed in the blood of Jesus... and our family here in South Africa loves them. Amen. I don't want to put words in your mouth but I know what your words would be anyway, that would be your words right? Hallelujah.

I don't know where Garth is but I bless him when he ministers. I bless Pastor Christi when she ministers. I bless your ears to hear what God will say through the vessels that God would put in place. Amen. Hallelujah. Pastor Sharon and I, we travel with confidence because we know that in this church there is Ecclesia, there is a proper authority structure there is no politicking going on here, there is no strife and division going on this church in these people, you are children of the Most High God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Well, I have one more look at you because I love you, I don't like to be away from you, I like to be with her and Brother Jerry. Hallelujah. There is offering for you to your offering in the baskets as you leave the door, if you wanna so some seed, or do your EFT's, God is blessing you as you sow your tithes and as you sow your offerings, God blesses you, He gives you direction, He gives you increase, He gives you all of the good things. Hallelujah, praise the Lord, praise the Lord. Ok now we must go everybody. We love you all, see you when we see you.