

**28 May 2023 Intentional Relationships Part 7: Mercy, Judgment, Tolerance, Grace
Pastor John Bendixen (WTB)**

Scripture Reference: 2 Timothy 2:1-6 (TPT); Matt. 6:33 (TPT); Matthew 6:33 (MSG); Matthew 6:33 (TPT); 1 Corinthians 2:6-7, 9 (NKJV)

Pastor Sharon Bendixen:

Father, we thank You for Your words that are spirit and that are life that come to us this morning. The words that You speak to us this morning, Father, they are spirit and they are life to us, Lord, and we receive them as such, Father. We receive them without any self-consciousness of our condition or our needs. We are as little children Father, receiving the Rhema Word straight to our hearts that become engrafted, Lord, in our hearts. Hallelujah.

We thank You that You have delivered us from ourselves. We do not compare ourselves with ourselves when we hear Your Word, Lord. We listen with our spirit ears. And we are aware this morning of the one overwhelming truth, the power of Your Word that comes to us. We receive it this morning like that. And we thank You for it in Jesus' name. And we all say; Amen. Hallelujah.

Pastor John Bendixen:

Hallelujah. Turn to someone and say, "I'm glad I'm in church today." And turn to someone else and say that again. And then you may be seated, thank you. Praise the Lord. You know, faith without works is dead. And many, many times in your life you need to do something, you need to do works to stand or to show that you are standing in faith. Amen. Hallelujah.

I was blessed this morning with this little card they put in my hand because next weekend is going to be a very, very special weekend. And I want to encourage you all to be here in every service, if possible. And if not possible, because of a financial reason, please let us know and we will do what we can to help you come and be here for just about every service. When you leave the auditorium today you will get this little card, and it's got a QR code on it. And if you scan it with your camera, it will lead you to a new website that's been set up and it's got some of our new songs on there. Because next weekend we are launching a set of songs, which is actually two albums. We are releasing to you next weekend. Hallelujah. So that you will have lots of music, sound and song to praise the Lord with. Hallelujah. From this Ecclesia, from this church. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

There is, next weekend, also going to be some very powerful ministry as well as moments of sound and song. So I really want to encourage you to make every attempt and effort to be here. We'll also have an opportunity for children to be taken care of. So please don't find a reason not to come. In fact, if you have a reason not to come, change it. This weekend will be a real blessing to you. Amen.

If there's one thing that I've learned to count on in my life, it's the love of God. The love of God is the most powerful force in the universe. Without the love of God, you and I would be lost, we would have no ability to connect with Him as our living God. The love of God has, for all intents and purposes, been revealed through the death of His own Son. Showing us His great love, that He would send His own Son to the

earth for us to have life. And because He was killed illegally, He was able to raise Him from the dead. Now, the issue that we live with is no longer whether we can perform well enough to inherit the love of God. The issue that we are faced with, is whether we receive Jesus; what we do with Jesus, and Jesus and the Word are the same.

If you read the Bible, then you are reading about Jesus. Everything that is in the Bible will elevate and lead to and direct you to the person Jesus. The Holy Spirit will make the Words of the Bible come alive to you. That means He makes Jesus come alive to you. Everything that we have in our lives is because of Jesus.

Last week, I ministered to you on the word *tolerance* and *mercy* and *judgement* and *grace*. It's an interesting thing that is happening in society today; that the demand for more tolerance has created less tolerance. And so, if you're not tolerant, then you're going to be cancelled. And so, "We will show you that we don't like your intolerance because you need to be tolerant. If you're not tolerant, we will cancel you. We will eliminate you from a network of people, we will 'out' you from a system, we will do everything to turn the focus, and focus all of our resources upon you to cancel you if you are not tolerant." So in our world, as we see it today, tolerance is a very big issue. It's a very big word. It's what people are demanding.

Primarily that is because they have an agenda, which is a self-empowering agenda. And, well, it's a fulfilment of prophecy. Because the Word of God says in the book of Timothy that in the last days, men will become lovers of self, they will become lovers of money and they will hate all of the things that are God. It's a prophecy in fulfilment and we are watching as we speak, how the people that are lovers of self are elevating themselves. They are not interested in elevating a God, other than the ones they choose.

When you come along with your love for Jesus, or you come along and say, "I'm a Christian," they will tell you that you are an intolerant person and you are a judgmental person. So we do not accept anything you say because your words come from a point of belief that elevates an unseen God, no one we can touch, no one we can feel, no one we can connect with. But that's only because they choose to elevate themselves. So their question is not a question of tolerance. Their question and their issue is an issue of choice. So they want to say, "Everybody has a choice." But they're very intolerant of some choices.

The only choices they're very tolerant of are self-empowering choices. That's not a coincidence. That is prophecy happening before our eyes. I read the Scripture to you last week, second Timothy chapter two verse one, from The Passion Translation ***1Timothy, my dear son, live your life empowered by God's free-flowing grace, which is your true strength, found in the anointing of Jesus and your union with him! (2 Timothy 2:1 TPT)***

You and I have a great deal of power because we are not self-empowering, we are empowered in our union with Him. And everything the enemy will try and do is to separate you from your source of power. He will try and separate you from your source of power so that he can weaken you. Because when you are weakened, then he can start to unravel some of the fabric of your choices. He further writes to

Timothy, ² **And all that you've learned from me, confirmed by the integrity of my life, deposit into faithful leaders who are competent to teach the congregations the same revelation (2 Timothy 2:2 TPT).** I trust that God, I know actually that God is in the process of raising up people in and around us that are competent to teach others also. Hallelujah.

Verse three says, ³ **Overcome every form of evil as a victorious soldier of Jesus, the Anointed One (2 Timothy 2:3 TPT).** Evil is a part of our present world. Evil is present around you. Do you know that when it gets dark, the sun sets and the moon rises? Nighttime in the part of the world where you live, it's present. It's there, the only way that you can get rid of that darkness is to create some light. Darkness and evil are around us. It's around every corner, where you work, where you live, people that you connect to. Darkness and evil are everywhere. You don't have to look very hard to find it. It's very close to you.

Sometimes evil comes to you without even leaving your house. You can have a thought and you can meditate on a thought and meditate on a thought and meditate on a thought and you just don't let go of that and before you know it, you're in depression. Yeah? Evil doesn't even have to come to you from another person, it can just come to you about a decision you made in your past or a conversation you had with someone else and you have a thought and the next minute you don't know where you're going. Save me from myself. Right?

Evil is all around us. You can't stop the evil in the earth. While we are in this segment of eternity, this theological world called this dispensation, while we are in this dispensation, darkness and evil has a right to be here. The only force that can stand against this evil is the church. It's Christians. So, that's why the enemy of God will do everything it can to shut down the church and to cause people to view the church in a very compromised manner. For you and I, we can't afford to look at churches and evaluate our Christianity and evaluate our walk with God based on how good the church is or how bad the churches are. We have to follow God. We have to follow the Word. We've got to follow Truth. If there's anything that's said and done, that is not coming from the Bible, then you have to measure it and evaluate it by the Bible.

So a soldier is someone that has a job to do. It's part of a force that is supposed to go to battle and go to war. So when he says, ⁴ **For every soldier called to active duty must divorce himself from the distractions of this world so that he may fully satisfy the one who chose him.** Well, we've got to be ready to be at war with those things that want to undermine the light that God has called us to be. Are you called to be light? Hallelujah.

⁵ **An athlete who doesn't play by the rules will never receive the trophy, so remain faithful to God!** So what's our trophy? Our trophy is the life of God, it's the joy of God, and it's being on assignment with God. Ultimately, when we pass from this body and this age, and we pass into an eternal and eternal life, we will pass and as our spirits, and our soul leaves this physical body, we will receive another reward. And that reward will be the reward that our Heavenly Father gives us for being a good soldier, for being a good athlete, running the race of faith, running the race of the love of God. ⁶ **The farmer who labors to produce a crop should be the first**

one to be fed from its harvest (2 Tim. 2:4-6 TPT). And so we need to be good farmers, sowing the Word of God.

I'm going to read to you Matthew chapter six, verse 33 from the Message Bible. The Message Bible says, ³³ **Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met (Matthew 6:33 MSG).** How? When you steep yourself in God's reality. I'm going to come back to the Message translation in a minute, I just want you to hear it from the ... Sorry, I was reading from the Message translation, I'm going to come back to that and I just wanted you to hear it from The Passion Translation which reads, ³³ **So above all, constantly chase after the realm of God's kingdom and the righteousness that proceeds from him. Then all these less important things will be given to you abundantly (Matthew 6:33 TPT).**

So what are the less important things that will be given to you abundantly? Food, houses, clothing. Right? These are less important things. You mean to say God is saying Kingdom things are more important than food and clothing and provision? Well, the Bible says that. But most of us don't really believe that because if we really believed that, we would pursue God more than we would pursue the possibilities or potential opportunities that lie ahead of us. So then our focus becomes based on God's reality, and if I go back to the Message, ³³ **Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions... (Matthew 6:33 MSG).** So steep your life in that and then you don't have to worry about what you're going to eat, what you're going to drink, what you're going to wear. This is a big shift.

You remember, many years ago, God gave me a revelation, I referred to it quite often in messages. I talked about how God showed me the two sides of our human existence; where we live as humans with reason, relevance, and reality. And when you wake up every day, you are faced with your senses. You're faced with your humanity. You're faced with your thoughts. You're faced with the fact that you have to brush your teeth. Reality; what's relevant to your human world. And the reasons that you have to deal with; your mindset, your thinking, all of who you are. You have to deal with that in your humanity.

On the other side, we have to live in our spirituality, which comes through redemption. The redemption that we live in can only come when you have a revelation of who Jesus is. When you receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour, then you receive Jesus as your Redeemer. You receive redemption. When you receive redemption, you're able to live in a whole different realm of revelation. There's a movie that's going around at the moment. I don't know, I haven't been to movies in South Africa in a long, long time. So I don't even know if it's in South Africa yet but it's called *The Jesus Revolution*. Have you all heard about it? It's a good movie to watch. Some of the people in that movie touched Pastor Sharon and I, our lives, personally. We knew them personally. Some of the people that are in that movie, or their characters anyway. But their characters, the people that they're referring to, we knew, we had interface with those people. But it's now... then it was called *The Jesus Revolution*.

When I started using the word revolution, you know, it was probably this revelation that the Lord gave me, is probably 13 years at least, ago. And, you know, it was a

sensitive word then. But I tell you that there is a revolution coming. There is a revolution coming. There is a God revolution coming. There is a church revolution coming. But there is also a revolution of evil that is busy trying to take over the earth and we should not get confused between the two. The Bible says where there is a lot of evil, there is a lot of grace. And grace is what empowers us to be free from evil. Amen.

We have a story of hope because our hope is in the love of Jesus. If our story is not in the love of Jesus, then it is based on what else? I ask you - what else? What else can we depend on if we can't depend on the love of Jesus? If I have to depend on someone's tolerance of me, I might as well quit now. Because somewhere along the line, I'm going to do something that you can't tolerate. Right? Tolerance is never a way to live because the goals keep shifting, the margins keep shifting all the time, as to where... And that's done on purpose because self-empowerment is whatever I want it to be. And so I'll change the goals and I'll change the conversation and I'll change whatever I need to change so that it empowers me.

If I have to count on someone's judgement as to be a righteous judgement or an unrighteous judgement, if I have to count on justice or injustice, that can change. The rights and the wrongs of what justice and injustice are and the judgements of them have already changed dramatically over the last 50 years. If this earth survives another 50 years, I wonder what kind of rules and what kind of justices and regulations will be at play then? I wonder what part artificial intelligence will play and the changing of the culture of humankind because of the capabilities of what it might provide for a better world order. Do you know what a better world order is going to produce? Empowering a few elite people to tell everybody else what to do. And you can be sure that they are not going to call on Jesus Christ to ask Him what they need to tell you what to do. Hallelujah.

I've got a story of hope because in my story of hope and love, if I had to depend on myself to be here today, to be standing here today, to be called here today, to be delivering this message to you today; I would have failed many, many times. My humanity would have prevented me and I would have had to be before the Judge of the Most High God, probably a long time ago, found incapable, unrighteous, not qualified. But because of His righteousness, because He sits at the right hand of the Father and He took all of my judgement on Him, He sits by the Father and He says, "I intercede for him still today, and what We purpose for him before time was, before his time began, those words that created John before he was even a person, that calling that We called him to, that mission that We had for him; I still intercede for him that he will finish his race, that he will run his course."

Without the love of God, that He judged all of us in Jesus, we would be nowhere. So how do you and I get to a place where we are intolerant of substandard living but live in the fullness of the love of God? Most of this is about your own walk with God. I can't tell you what that looks like for you but I can tell you that the more there is the love of God in you, you will know and you will recognise - you will know and you will recognise - when someone has started to make decisions around you that are beginning to be self-empowering and isolating. And you will know that there are things that people ... It's just, if you have the love of God inside of you, it's a wall around you. It's a wall around you and the love of God demands that you live with

grace. It demands that you live with compassion, with mercy and kindness. The love of God demands that. But the love of God is also not weak. The love of God is also, it's not a thing that you can just tread on all the time and say, "Well, I'll just depend on the love of God, I'll depend on the love of God, the love of God." No, the love of God has given you the grace so that you have the power to overcome.

There are some things that God empowers young Christians to do. I'm going to just give you an example. When a young Christian, someone who just gets born again... It's like when they enter this walk with God, everything is so beautiful. Everything is amazing. When you talk to a young Christian, it's like, they tithe today and God meets their needs tomorrow. Right? It's like they have something sick in their body and they pray and the sickness goes. And it's like, everything they ask God for, it just happens. Yeah? Well, that's because they're a baby Christian. What do you do with a baby Christian, or a baby in the natural world? [Pastor John imitates a baby crying] Feed it. [Pastor John imitates a baby crying] Give it money. [Pastor John imitates a baby crying] Hug it. [Pastor John imitates a baby crying] Burp it. Right? But with all of the attention the baby gets, it's not supposed to stay a baby. It's supposed to grow up a little bit.

Then as it grows up a little bit, it bumps its toes and it bumps its knees and falls on its head, gets bruises and all kinds of things happen to the body. And then you find a different conversation coming from the parent. "Ag no man, that's not such a big scratch, it's just a scratch." "But that's bleeding. It's bleeding, it's sore." "Let me wipe it here, let me kiss it, it's okay. Go play again." It's a completely different kind of attention because you can't treat someone that's growing up now with the same way that you treat someone that's a baby.

And then, of course, when someone becomes a teenager, now you find they're able to reason. And so now they don't come and ask you to help them when they scratch a knee. They can find their own plaster. Right? But now you find other kinds of issues. "Can I go here? Can I do this? But my friends are doing this. I want to go there. I want to go here." "No." "You don't trust me." "No, I know what's not good for you." "You still don't trust me. If you loved me, you would let me go there." The conversation and the relationship is at a whole new level.

The problem with Christians is that we want God to intervene in everything in our lives like we are babies. But at the same time we want to have a reason-conversation with Him, "I want to do this. I want to do that. Don't stop me from doing this. I want my own way. I want my own friends. I want to do everything else." So, Christians get into this place where they say, "Don't tell me what to do." So, God the Father says, "My love will let you do it." But you might say, "My love?" How can His love let you do it? Well, because it is your choice. He knows pain is coming to you. He knows that there are difficult times ahead for you. He knows you are going to have confrontations. He knows things are not going to go as you planned. He knows this. But His love says, "I created you in My image, so I must let you. I must let you." Now, His grace is still there for you because anytime you want you can go back to the love and say, "I repent. Empower me. I receive my empowerment to make different choices." It doesn't matter at what portion of your life you do that. Whenever you do that, His love is there to pick you up, to dust you off, put you on a different path, and say, "Come, let's walk together. Whatever I can do to

restore, I will do whatever to restore. Those years that the locusts have eaten, I will restore them if you will walk with Me." Hallelujah.

That is the grace of God. That's not because the church is more tolerant. On the contrary, do you understand that those who wish to keep walking and keep living with God, and they keep moving along with God, you understand that their revelation of God is going to increase. The way that they live with God is going to improve. They are going to experience the favour of God because they're living in God. When they go to the Father and they say, "Father, what is it that I should do next?" He says, "Go here, do this. I want you to do that." They say, "Yes, Sir." And then people say, "But what about the plan that you have for your life?" What is a better plan for my life than the one He's got? "But, I don't like the fact that He is taking choices away from me." Well, go ahead. His love will say, "Go ahead. See where it gets you." "Oh, but that's not being very tolerant. God's not very tolerant." Doesn't need to be. He's judged all of your actions - good and bad - already in Jesus. The fact that you even know Him to ask Him is already His judgement working and brought you into a relationship with Him. The fact that you even know Him is His grace working for you. The fact that you even know Him is His love working for you. Hallelujah.

You know, many people have heard, people have heard Brother Jerry preach on the subject of favour. We've all heard many stories about Brother Jerry and how favour works for him. Fewer people get to hang around him to experience that favour. But when you have hung around someone that is just, favour keeps happening upon favour upon favour, then you have to say, "This is not a coincidence. Why is the favour of God upon him so much?" Well, maybe it's because he's following God's plan for his life. Brother Jerry doesn't follow his plan for his life. He follows God's plan for his life. So, God empowers him to see revelation and that revelation continues to bless his life.

Those that travelled with me and were with me on the motorcycle tour when we have an opportunity, perhaps they can share with you their own version of how they observed the favour of God working on us as we travelled. Wherever we travelled, there was just favour. My life has a lot of favour. There's a lot of favour that happens in my life. No, Brother Jerry says this many times, "I'm God's favourite but you can be a close second." I don't think I'm even a close second to him. I'm next to him. I have a great deal of favour. Why? Because I'm following His plan for my life. I'm not trying to follow my plan. If I had followed my plan, I'd mess it up. I'd mess it up. Thank God, I can trust Him. And even when I'm at my weakest, I can trust Him. Even when there are times - and if you don't ever have this in your life I'm going to call you a liar - even when you feel like there are times in your life where you say, "I don't want to have anything to do with God. I don't want to. I just feel bad. Stay away from me." He's right there with the Holy Spirit. His love is right there. His love is right there. His love is right there. It's a word away. It's a word away, "I love You, Jesus. Help me, Lord. I'm nowhere without You, God," and He's right there. That is His grace. That is His love. That's His power. I can tolerate a whole lot of that. Hallelujah.

He doesn't require, He doesn't expect you to go through a whole process of trying to unwind all of the stuff you did wrong. You can't do it. The mess you've already made, you can't fix it. You got to just start with Him right now and say, "From here, I go with You." That's the power of His grace, He says, "What took you so long? Now all those

years the locusts ate, I can start restoring them.” You know that scripture where it says; the harvester will overtake the sower? How do you think that's possible? It's only possible when you give yourself to God and He says, “I'm going to restore everything.” And then when the restoration keeps happening, keeps happening upon restoration before you know it, the harvest is overtaking your sowing because now you're reaping the harvest that was lost a long time ago. He's restoring it, restoring it, restoring it, restoring it, restoring it, restoring it, restoring it all the time, restoring. And now you're not just bumping into your future harvest, you're bumping into the harvest of gone by. That's grace. That's the love of God because He judged all of that in Jesus a long time ago. I must just accept that His mercy is extended towards me. Hallelujah. Glory to God.

In first Corinthians chapter two, verse six, it says, ⁶ **However, we speak wisdom, among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age.** I can't debate with you according to the wisdom of this age, according to people who want to self-empower, self-love, self-aggrandise, self-promote. I can't argue with you according to the ⁶ ... **wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing (1 Corinthians 2:6 NKJV).** All of the people that have got all of these agendas, they are coming to nothing because Jesus is Lord. Jesus is the One who died for us. Jesus is the One who has the final say over everything, Jesus. And if you have nothing else to say and you are so flat and so weak, you just say, “Jesus,” and all who call upon His name shall be saved. You just have to say the name of Jesus and power comes into. Hallelujah.

⁷ **But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God [c]ordained before the ages for our glory,** ⁸ **which none of the rulers of this age knew (1 Corinthians 2:7 NKJV);** those demon spirits, the rulers of the age, who thought they had God sorted, they thought that because they had conquered man, made in His image, that they had all the future mankinds under their control. They weren't so smart after all. Because had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory? How dumb can you be and still breathe? Well, maybe they weren't breathing. Maybe they're so dumb that they ... But you see, their whole process, those rulers, they tried to raise themselves up for their own agenda for their own life. Those spirits are still on the earth today. Those spirits are still on the earth today. And I tell you as a truth, if you watch somebody, if you watch someone's life that they speak words like they're a Christian but their life is not. You got to find out, you got to allow the grace of God and the love of God to show you how you should live with them. I really feel I've got to go there with the Lord right now. But many, over many, many years, people have said to me, “You are very gracious.” And I am a very kind person. I'm a soft and gentle person. You think? You could take advantage of my softness. You could take advantage of my kindness, people have. But the love of God that is shed abroad in my heart is also my protection. And so oftentimes it has happened that people have come up into my life and there I'm walking, there I'm walking, they're walking with me, they're walking with me and then suddenly, there's an issue and now they're no longer walking with me. And of course, in their view, it's always my fault. But I've learned to trust what the love of God does in my heart that if I'm always walking in love, then the love of God is a protective shield around me. And if people bounce in and out of my life, I have to allow the fact that maybe God knows, for their sake, they can't be around me. Maybe for my sake they shouldn't be around me.

I wonder, you know, how many people do you think want to be travelling around the world with Brother Jerry? Huh? A lot. But God knows my heart, how much I honour him, how I love Brother Jerry. When He searches the deep things of the heart, only He can see things in the heart that man can't see. So then He says, "Okay, I see your heart, John, I see what Brother Jerry needs. I see what the assignment, your assignment together can bring into the earth, so I will bring this closer and I will permit this. I will encourage this. I will let it grow." This didn't just happen by accident. I can tell you, there are many people that have come in and out of Brother Jerry's life. They've rushed in and bounced out. I'll say partly because they had an agenda. Sometimes they didn't have the stamina to stay with the high standard of life that Brother Jerry holds as integrous. Amen. All I can say is, I'm glad that I have followed the love that God has put in my heart. And even this last week, I had a conversation with Brother Joe, on the phone, they just got back from Australia. And he called me and he was just talking to me about things that occurred on the trip and where they were at. So Brother Joe, what's the purpose of the call? He's just having a love connection with me. He just wanted to tell me what happened on the tour, on their trip. He wanted to hear what's going on with all the people? How did they enjoy it? How did we get back? Just having a conversation. It is a conversation that is based on a relationship that is based on love. It is based on honour. It is based on, I am not reasoning on what God wants me to do or not do, based on my own mindset. You remember those of you who were around me then. I was very vulnerable with you when the Lord, I really felt in my heart I needed to go and spend time with Brother Jerry for five weeks. And the male in me, the called, anointed one in me, said, "What am I going to do?" Because there was no agenda. There was no opportunity. I didn't expect to go there to go on any ministry with him or do anything. I just went there to hang around him whenever I could. Do you know, when your life is a very structured and planned life, do you know how difficult that is? If you are living your life from hour to hour, from day to day, from week to week, from month to month and you have got plans and now you say, "I am going to go five weeks to America with no plan." Do you know how difficult that is?

I am competing with a dove. I only just became aware of it now. Shuush! We must find some way that we can fix this.

But praise the Lord. When I went there, God started to make His agenda and His plan and everything that He wanted to come out of that. He made it clear and plain and it was based on love and honour and obedience to God's plan. Because in the natural that was ridiculous. And then the next year, the Lord said, "Go do it again. But this time, do it for seven weeks." And I was even vulnerable with you then on how I had to confront my own self-nature because I was dealing with reason, my own reality, and the relevance of what this will mean to my life. But I had to step out of that reason and walk in the redemption of God. I had to walk in a revelation that God has given me, and it has created a revolution in our ministry. Hasn't it? I will say, it is not just because I did that, that is just one of many things. But God, if you make one step, and another step, and another step in the plan of God, you can not get to the end of the road, you know, in our natural world, in our reason, and our relevance, we want to see the end of the road before we start on the road. In faith, God says, "Faith does not work like that, *boetie*." Faith says, one step, then you get the next step, then you get the next step, then you get the next step. So what does planning

have to do with it? I don't mind planning. But if your plan becomes your purpose, then you can't get into the provision of God. Your plan should just be a loose framework for how you live your time. But you can't make your plan, your provision. Your plan has got to be about His purpose and about His plan and you must be able to shift it, [Pastor John snap his fingers], like that. But sometimes it might cost you money. So what. "But I booked the weekend, I can't get my money back." Yeah, but that's because you planned it. "Yeah, but I prayed before I did it." Does that mean God can't change it? "Well, maybe you should have talked to me before I planned it." Maybe you weren't listening because you wanted that plan. And when you're busy making a plan; I want to go here, I want to go there, I want to do this, you can't almost hear from God because you want. Huh? And so, that's like, not baby stuff, it's not teenage stuff, but it's somewhere in between. "I want what I want! I want to go where I want to go when I want to go! And so, Lord, get in line with my plan." Okay? And then things start not going quite the way that you hoped they would go. Huh? *Fluit-fluit, my storie is uit.*

I finish with this scripture, verse nine, ⁹ **But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."** (1 Corinthians 2:9 NKJV) It's not even entered into your heart, or into your mind the things that God has planned for you, who love Him, that God has planned for those who love Him. What does that mean? That means the plan that you are making; tell Him you're going to just put all your natural plans aside for a period of time, and you're just going to give Him time. Going to give Him first place. That would be a test of whether you think you're doing God's plan or not. Just say, "I'm not going to make any plans, all I'm going to do, no plans. I'm going to make no plans. I'm just going to, day by day pray, day by day pray, day by day get in the Word, day by day. I'm not going to make any plans." And just see where that leads you for a period of time. What do you say, Church? Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

I don't know about you but I want some of those plans that haven't entered my mind or even entered into my heart, I want some of those plans that God has prepared for me, I want them to come to pass in my life. How do I get there? I've got to just throw myself in His love. I've got to walk in God's reality. I've got to seek Him first. I've got to seek Him first. I've got to follow hard after God, not after things. Well, you might ask the question, "Pastor John, but you know, I've got a real life to live. I've got to make a living. I've got to do things." God knows that. God knows that but He also knows when you give your heart to Him that it's a condition of heart, it's not a condition of time. You see, performance says; time. Heart says; I'm all in. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

I'll tell you what. You see people's lives that are blessed by God, you'll see that their hearts are all in. Hallelujah. I feel like I've got to just say this. Wealth is not a measure of God's blessing because there are many, many wealthy people in the world that refuse to have anything to do with God. Neither does the accumulation of possessions have any measure of whether people are following God. Wealth, possessions, fame, all manner of things is not a measure of whether people are blessed by God. In fact, Jesus was quite clear about it. It's more difficult for people that have got lots of talent, lots of money, lots of things, to enter the Kingdom of God

because they self-glorify, they self-glorify and because they self-glorify, they cannot glorify God because it's all about self.

I count on the love of God, I depend on the love of God, I live in the love of God, I am nothing without the love of God. You and I have no future without the love of God. We are just normal, ordinary people with no place to go, nothing going for us. No matter how smart you are, you got it because God gave it to you anyway. So without Him, you're nothing. It doesn't matter how good you are, you couldn't be so good if it wasn't for God who gave it to you anyway. So, rather don't glorify yourself, rather glorify God. Hallelujah. Won't you stand with me, please? Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus.

I want to make sure that everybody that is in this service, today, has had an opportunity to put Jesus as first in their hearts. So, will you all pray this prayer with me, please? And say; Jesus, come and live in my heart. I give my life to You. I believe that You are the Son of God and from this day forward, I am Your child and I live for You, in Jesus' name. Hallelujah. That is a powerful prayer. If you mix that prayer with faith, in a moment you've transitioned from being an ordinary person into being a born-again believer and there's nothing ordinary about a born-again believer. Hallelujah.

And now, I want you to pray with me this prayer and say; Jesus, I want Your plan for my life. I thank You for Your love. I thank You for Your grace that gives me the ability to walk in that plan and I ask You to make all those things that You have planned for me to come to pass in my life, in Jesus' name. Amen.

And I ask You, Father, by the Holy Spirit, that all of the years that the locusts have stolen from all of our lives, all of the things that the enemy has come and shut us out of from the plan of God, I ask You to restore it now. I ask You to renew us and bring us into that new place of blessing, that new place of increase, that new place of abundance, that new place of peace. We are looking forward, Father, to seeing all of what You have for us. I pray that Your protection rests upon Your people. No weapon formed against them will prosper. Every road they drive on, every office they walk into, every house they enter, every place they leave, Your angels are standing there with them, Your angels go with them, every thought that they have, I plead the blood of Jesus over those thoughts, in the name of Jesus. And I thank You, Lord, that we stand as a strong people, we stand as a victorious people, we stand as a people moving forward into the things that You have planned for us.

Do you all agree with that prayer? Say; Amen. Come for Message Moments this afternoon. If you don't know how to handle a QR code, someone outside there will show you how to use it on your phone. Amen. Bless you, everybody. Thanks for coming.