

09 July 2023 Celebration and Relationships Part 3: Love And Stuff
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Scripture reference: Psalm 23:1&4 (NKJV); 1 Timothy 6:10 (TPT); 1 Timothy 6:6-10 (MSG); 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 & 8 & 13 (NKJV); 1 John 4:16-19 (AMPC); 1 John 4:18-19 (TPT), 1 John 4:16-18 (MSG); 1 Timothy 6:10 (TPT)

Pastor Sharon:

Father, today, blessed are our eyes for they see, blessed are our ears for they hear, Father, wondrous things from Your Word, today. Father, we thank You that You send a message through a messenger and You release Your power and we get completely set free, Father. Thank You that today, as Pastor John brings divine words of life, they are Spirit and they are Life to us and we receive them, we believe them, we receive them and we conceive them and they grow in our hearts, Lord. Thank You for Your anointing upon Pastor John and upon us. The Spirit of the Lord that is upon him and the Spirit of the Lord that is upon us. The Spirit of the Lord that is within him and the Spirit of the Lord that is within us. And together, in advance, we say for the Word that is coming now, we say amen, we say yes, yes, Lord, whatever You're going to say to us, we say yes, in Jesus' name, amen. Glory.

Pastor John:

Hallelujah. Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. Praise Jesus. I mean, that's such good stuff right there. You know, if you listen to the sound and song and you truly worship to the words that are being sung here, just those words that you declare as you sing it and as you worship, will change your life because they are Spirit-inspired words, they are words from the Word of God. They will change you. That's why we write songs. We don't just have worship in the beginning of the service to introduce me. You know, this is not a preamble to the main course. This is the main course already. Everything we do on a Sunday morning is a main course. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus. Thank you, thank you. Before you sit down, just tell somebody, "I'm glad you're here, I'm glad to see you, you look beautiful, you look handsome, I like the way you're dressed," whatever comes, you know. Praise the Lord.

The anointing of God is strong in this place. Our services that we do, our preparation before the Lord, we are here on Sundays, we are together as an Ecclesia, we gather together because we put our trust in the life of Christ. Yes? Amen. So, we are being freed up, we are being delivered, we are being resurrected into a new life and we are being brought into a place where we can see the life of Christ in each other and if we see the life of Christ in each other, we are raised up higher, we are brought to an elevated level of Christian life because we recognise Christ in each other. Amen.

It's a great, great joy to me and I was standing on the front there, the Holy Spirit is so strong upon me, upon my physical body this morning that my legs were shaking in the front there. They're still a little bit weak because the presence of God is on me. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. I wish to make a declaration and I sense that this morning, there will be many things that will come out of my spirit like that, but I wish to make a declaration that there are many voices out there in the world. None of them are without significance, the Word says. They're all trying to tell us what's best for our lives, all of those voices. But so is the Body of Christ. God is raising up voices in the church and our voices are significant. Whatever the significance of those

voices are, our voices have more significance because they're connected to the throne of God and they have an eternal sound. I believe and I declare that in the weeks even in the months ahead, voices are going to speak, vessels are going to bring their voices and they will speak and they will have a sound and they will declare the significance of our Lord, Jesus Christ. They will declare and speak into the Body of Christ and they will all help us grow. Who is going to speak? Whoever the Spirit of God rests upon to bring and to speak and to say. God will have his way. Hallelujah.

Over time and here I'm speaking more into the years to come, the significance of the voices will get stronger and louder. People will truly say, "See those young people, they are prophesying, they are speaking dreams and visions through prophecy and their dreams and their visions they are speaking and as they speak it they come to reality, they come to being, they come from the spirit realm into the natural realm." Mark this day, Mark this word. It's beginning to happen. It's beginning to happen. Hallelujah. Glory to God.

Psalms 23 says, **¹The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want (Psalm 23:1 NKJV)**. If the Lord is your shepherd, you shall not want. If the Lord is not your shepherd, you shall want. If the Lord is your shepherd, you shall not want, because He will lead you and He will guide you through all of your life, whether there is a moment where you've got to be eating green grass or be by still waters or maybe there's a moment in your life where you are going through a transition period and it feels like you're wandering through a death zone. **⁴...Though I may walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil (Psalm 23:1&4 NKJV)**. As Christians, there are times in our lives when we go through things where it feels like we can't see the light. We can't see the hope, because you're in a valley and valleys, by definition, cut out sunlight, a lot of the time. And so, when you're in that moment, you need to turn to Jesus and hold on to His staff, and hold on to what He says, because He will guide you, and He will lead you, and you shall not want. You shall not want. You shall not want. He will guide you and lead you and you shall not want. Hallelujah.

The love of God is the most powerful force in the universe. How do I know that? Because the Bible says, "God is love." He is love. God doesn't have love, He is love. He is the Creator of love and love is created by Him and Him in love and the two are One. They are not two separate things. He is love. And so, if we ever have to trust and depend on anything we need to trust on the love of God. Amen?

Last weekend we had a series of messages... I just want to make sure that I did in fact start my clock [*Pastor John setting his clock*]. I don't want to preach for half an hour and then start my clock and then... but you won't mind hey? [*Pastor John laughing*] Thank you, thank you. Okay, last week we talked about *Money with a Mission* and I would like to just transition into the love of God and the title of my message today is *Love and Stuff*. Love and stuff.

One Timothy 6 verse 10 in The Passion Translation says, **¹⁰Loving money is the first step toward all kinds of trouble**. You don't have to have money to love it. In fact, a lot of people, most people in the earth that love money don't have it. For sure the people that have it, most of them love it. Because they love what it can do for them and they have already experienced what lots of money can do for them. So you

love the choices and the options that money gives you. But, love of money brings... loving money is the first step toward all kinds of trouble. This is true, this is the Bible. **Some people run after it so much that they have given up their faith. Craving more money pushes them away from the faith into error, compounding misery in their lives! (1 Timothy 6:10 TPT)**

Well, you might look at very rich people and you say, "If that's what miserable looks like I'll have some of that." Because they have super yards and they have their own private jets, and they have a whole lot of stuff. I promise you you don't want that misery. Because they sacrifice all kinds of relationships to get it. They sacrifice all kinds of well-being and health to get it and then once they've got it, they are so full of stress and fear that they're going to lose it. Yah?

Let me give you an example. How many of you are soccer fans in here, or know a little bit about soccer? If you don't you probably know that Chelsea is an English premier league football club. No? Ok, just checking. Chelsea. Chelsea is also a district in London. Chelsea, it's a fairly affluent area in London. Chelsea, it's also a bun. You haven't eaten a Chelsea bun? Okay, just checking that you're with me this morning. Chelsea. Okay.

So, about I don't know about thirteen years ago fifteen years ago, I don't remember exactly a very rich Russian billionaire aligot decided he is going to buy Chelsea as a football club. So, he did. Worked out, I don't know how many hundreds of million and he bought Chelsea football club. He decided that he is going to invest a whole lot of money into Chelsea football club. Buy a lot of players, buy the right coaches and put it on the map. He did that and he put Chelsea on the map. For the first time in many years, they won one premier league title, they won a champions league, they won FA cups they won all of the great silverware up there in Europe, they won it. Hello?

Then one day, here's this billionaire with this very successful club now, and what he bought it for, and what the price could be is so big difference that his investment's really paying off. Until somewhere a guy decides that he's going to invade Ukraine. The president, whatever they call him, czar of Russia, decides that he's going to invade Ukraine. The world at large says anything Russia is bad. "Mr Roman Abramovich, you own Chelsea Club, it's now illegal for you to own Chelsea Football Club, you have to sell it." The FA league decided together with the British Government, can't have a Russian run one of our big shining light football club. Doesn't matter that he put it on the map, in recent years anyway. You, Russian, can't own it. Now all of the money that he was worth in the club, less than half. I don't know how little he sold the club for compared to what it was worth, because he's Russian. *[Pastor John speaks Russian]* да (yes). Нет (no). Нет (no), you can't own it, Нет (no). Да (yes).

I mean the guy had to sell the club. What did he have to do, what was he all about with all of his money, what was he doing wrong? He was Russian, that's what it was. He was Russian, so he had to sell the club. And of course, now, he's a persona non grata everywhere, because he's so famously Russian. And of course, you know, they also try to go after all the Russian oligarchs, all of their boats, all of their things to try and put economic pressure on them. Here's what I'm telling you, if you think money has a security, there's many things that can happen in the world that have nothing to

do with you. And like that, your circumstances can change. So if that's where your trust is, that's where your love will be. And if you love that, it's going to bring you all kinds of trouble. So why don't we rather love God?

The Message translation puts it this way, ⁶⁻⁸ **A devout life does bring wealth, but it's the rich simplicity of being yourself before God. Since we entered the world penniless and will leave it penniless, if we have bread on the table and shoes on our feet, that's enough (1 Timothy 6:6-7 MSG).** In other words, what the Apostle Paul says is, "I've learnt, whether I've got lots," and he doesn't mind having lots, "or whether I have nothing, my whole approach to life doesn't change, because I see my life through Jesus, and His love." ⁹⁻¹⁰ **But if it's only money these leaders are after, they'll self-destruct in no time. Lust for money brings trouble and nothing but trouble. Going down that path, some lose their footing in the faith completely and live to regret it bitterly ever after (1 Timothy 6:9-10 MSG).**

Ja, né. Sjoë. Sjoë. I would rather depend on the love of Jesus. I would rather depend on the love of Jesus. I know that all of you know this passage of scripture well. You've heard it many times. But it's because we know it so well we tend to not read it very often, because we know it so well. I'm going to read a portion of it this morning. ¹ **Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.** In other words, I can have eloquence, I can speak so well but if I don't have the love of God then, I'm just a noise. ² **And though I have the gift of prophesy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and though I have all faith,** I mean we preach faith, ² **though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.**

You know, we put faith as a very high value in our walk with God and to be sure it is of high value because there are things that faith and favor can get you that money can't. Our whole existence in Jesus because of faith. We have faith in the fact that Jesus died for us. Right? We didn't see Him died on the cross. We haven't seen Him with our eyes. We haven't touched Him with our hands yet He's living in us and we have faith for that and that's a powerful thing. Yes?

This scripture says, even though we have all faith, ² **...so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.** Hey, come on. Talk to me a little bit. Yeah. If I've got faith to bring in money anytime I need money, but I don't have love. I'm nothing. If I've got faith to move any obstacle that's preventing me to living the life that I want to live, but I've got no love, I'm nothing. Last weekend, we were talking in different ways, in different media forms. We were talking about the fact that the faith message really appeals to achievers, because achievers recognize that faith can get stuff. Stuff. Are you getting it? Stuff. Faith can get stuff and faith can get stuff. But if I'm going after stuff with faith, but I don't have love, the Bible says, I'm nothing.

So, even though we have a mission in life, a purpose in life and we live life with purpose. If we don't continuously access the love of God, to be our driving force, then we are in danger of becoming works orientated, faith and faith with works. That's what this scripture is saying. Have I read anything that's not in the Bible yet? This is all in the Bible. Here's what the scripture says, ³ **And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not**

love. it profits me nothing (1 Corinthians 13:1-3 NKJV). This scripture is saying, if I give all my stuff to the poor, which makes me really look good, and it makes other people think I look good. If I give all my stuff to the poor, but I don't have love then all my charitable works are nothing. I think this scripture rather puts into good context and really gives us a stabilising consideration for our lives. We have to be motivated, driven and established in love. Amen. Amen. Love is a big deal to God. Why? Because God is love.

Verse 8 says, ⁸ **Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail.** Joh, there's a lot of prophecies running around the earth right now. Hey? Have you noticed? It's like everybody's got a prophecy. Everybody's prophesying about world economics, about politics, about whose going to be president, about what's going to happen? Everybody's got a prophecy. But this scripture says, ⁸ **But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away (1 Corinthians 13:8 NKJV).** You know, that thing that we cherish so highly, knowledge that we spent our lives going to school for, university for? Pursuing knowledge on Google, Wikipedia, YouTube, we think anybody that's on YouTube is actually telling the truth or everything that you find on Google is going to be accurate because it's on Google and Wikipedia, or any other source you choose to access neh? Neh? That knowledge that we think is so great this scripture says it will vanish away. Wow.

Verse 13 says, ¹³ **And now abide faith, hope, love these three; these three abide, but the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13 NKJV).** So even though there are going to be three forces that are in God that will remain forever; faith, hope and love. The one that's going to be the greatest that's going to always remain will be love because you can't do away with God and God is love. Amen. Okay, hello everybody. Are you still with me? Hallelujah. I love you. Praise the Lord, even though I teach you faith, love is the strongest thing that we've got. Yeah. If you don't love me, I'm going to tell God on you. Even though I stand on your toes sometimes, I will tell God on you. He will fix your toes. Amen.

I need to read this passage of scripture for you in the Amplified Bible because the biggest impact that it had on my life was when I was reading the Amplified Bible. It's one John chapter 4 verse 16, and excuse me, if I read the Amplified, I'll leave some words out and I'll put some words in there as it enhances the scripture. ¹⁶ **And we know (understand, are conscious of) and believe (and we put) our faith in the love God cherishes for us. God is love and He who dwells and continues in love dwells and continues in God, and God dwells and continues in Him. ¹⁷ In this [union and communion with Him] love is brought to completion and attains perfection with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgment.** Watch this now. ¹⁷ **...because as He is, so are we in this world.** What is love do? This abiding in love, this dwelling in love, this communion in love enables us to be in the world as He was in the world. It allows us to be in the world as He is now. This is a powerful thing. I'm going to read it again. ¹⁷ **Because as He is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:16-17 AMPC).** As He is, so are we in this world. I ask you. How is Jesus right now? If I was in Heaven right now, I don't think I would even ask Him this question, because I wouldn't have a need to ask Him this question. Like we do. "Hello. How are you?" "I'm fine and how are you?" "I'm fine, thanks." "How was your day?" "It was pretty good. How was your day?" "Fine, thank you. Did you

sleep alright?" "Pretty good. Are you healthy?" "Yes, thank you. Is all well with you?" "Well with me, thank you." You know, we're so polite and courteous I wonder if we had to say, "No, I slept bad." I'm hungry, I'm you know. Don't talk to me. Arrr. You know we tend to live in a very polite way.

But if I was in the presence of Jesus right now, I wouldn't even have to ask Him that question. If I did, He would probably say to me, "What? Out of all the questions you could ask in the universe, that's the one you want to ask Me?" You know, it's like, "Can't you see? I'm sitting next to the Father." All of these beings are around the throne daily shouting, praising, glorifying the Most High God. Glory to the Lamb, holy is the Lamb. In the presence of all the beginning of life, the end of life, the beginning of love, the end of love, everything, everything. It's just there is no end to His glory, His Life, His Light and if you're in this presence you wouldn't even have to ask the question and if you're in His presence, you wouldn't even have to ask the question, "So what's next for me? What is the will of, what is Your will for me Jesus?" Jesus will look at you with great love in His eyes and you would just know. You would just know. You would just know.

Because in that moment of union and love with Him. It's like His love just draws you into your eternity. It draws you into all of the things you need to be in Him. You wouldn't even have to ask Him a question. You would just know all your answers are in Him. All of your joy is immediately fulfilled in Him. He is the beginning and the end. He's the Alpha and the Omega. He's the all of everything. He is love. How can you be in the presence of love and doubt anything? Hey? Oh Lord, I just want to ask you this question, "Is my retirement fund okay?" So out of all the questions you want to ask Me you want to check on your retirement fund. "Is my income going to be enough for the next thirty years, Lord?" "What, don't you know? Didn't you read My Bible? Didn't you read My words that I spoke while I was on the earth? Which ones would that be? If you love Me and you live in Me, you don't have to worry about what you can eat or drink or wear. I'll take care of that for you. I'll take care of it for you. I take care of it. Next question? Let's move along here. Next question. Do you have any more questions?"

"Ah, praise You, I worship You." "That's it. Now you're getting it." "I worship You. I love You. I glorify You. You are amazing. You are the Lord, the Alpha, the beginning, the everything of my life from my morning till my night time. When I wake up in the night there You are for me. When I wake up in the morning You are there for me. When I'm every day, when I'm walking through something that I feel is bad, You are there for me. When I'm on my high, You are there for me. When I'm anywhere, You are there for me. Wow." "You want to doubt, why? Child? Why do you want to doubt?" I'm not just preaching, I'm telling you what the Bible says.

Shall I keep reading? ¹⁸ **There is no fear in love**, say what? There is no fear in love. If you've got fear of something, you don't know the love of God yet. ¹⁸ **There is no fear in love [dread does not exist], but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! (1 John 4:18 AMP)** You wake up in the night. "H-u-u-u, how am I going to get through? How am I going to get enough money?" Terror flee, love be. Hey, that is pretty cool. Terror flee, love be. Terror flee, love be. Come on. Hallelujah.

I know where the terror begins. The terror begins in your head because your mind goes to places that it shouldn't go. And then your mind starts to take over what your spirit man is trying to tell you. "Don't worry. Don't worry. Don't worry. Trust God, live in Him." ¹⁸ **...For fear brings with it the thought of punishment**, yah if you don't do the right stuff somewhere along the line you are going to be punished for not having enough and we work all our lives to prevent a punish moment. In case we've missed God and we are in fear that we will reach a punish moment where we haven't done the right thing and then we will not have enough and we won't know how to get enough. So we see that as a punish moment and so because we see it like that we don't walk in the love of God. Praise the Lord. ¹⁸ **...and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection].**¹⁹ **We love Him, because He first loved us (1 John 4:18-19 AMPC).**

I just want to read to you in two different translations. The Passion Translation says verse 18, ¹⁸ **Love never brings fear, for fear is always related to punishment.** So God is never ever going to make you feel that He is going to punish you. The love of God will never do that. ¹⁸ **..... But love's perfection drives the fear of punishment far from our hearts. Whoever walks constantly afraid of punishment has not reached love's perfection.** ¹⁹ **Our love for others is our grateful response to the love God first demonstrated to us (1 John 4:18-19 TPT).**

I really like the way the Message Translation puts it. ¹⁶ **...We know it so well, we've embraced it heart and soul, this love that comes from God. To Love, to Be Loved** ¹⁷⁻¹⁸ **God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us.**¹⁷⁻¹⁸ **God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day - our standing in the world is identical with Christ's (1 John 4:16-18 MSG).** Our standing in the world is identical to Christ.

So, what did Jesus do when He had a financial need? Anybody want to just remember that for a minute? I've got a financial need, tax. The taxman. That dreaded government body called the taxman. So, I mean in Jesus day they just imposed taxes according to the region's demands for money and the tax collectors there. So Jesus goes from one region to another region, He gets there and He doesn't know that there is a tax. When He arrives there they tell Him you have to pay a tax. It is a new tax. So He says, "No problem, pay My taxes. Peter, go fishing. Catch a fish, in the belly is a coin and bring it, pay the taxes."

You see Jesus was never afraid that the Father would never meet His need. Do you think Jesus really knew what the Father would do for Him? Do you think that Jesus knew that He knew, that He knew, that there would never be a situation on earth that He could get into trouble with a local government, that Father hasn't already provided Him with an answer. So when He got there, He didn't have to worry whether Him and Peter had enough of cash on them. They didn't take their ATM bank card with them, or their Master Card, right? He just went. When He got there, there was a need waiting for Him and then the Father said, "Hey, Son that I love, I said I would never fail you, I would never leave You, I have already put a coin in a fish way ahead of time, just in the event that something like this might happen. I already had a fish swallow a coin and before you even got to this moment in time, I

foresaw and foreordained it, everyone of Your needs are met. I choose this way for You to meet the need because Peter knows how to go fishing." "Go catch a fish." "Yes sir." "Peter go fishing," "yes Sir." I can imagine Peter going there, "All right, I have seen this before. Do I take one fishing rod or do I take a net?" This time he wasn't questioning Jesus, right? He just went fishing.

This way, love has the run of the house... There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life - fear of death, fear of judgment - is one not yet fully formed in love. (1John 4:17-18 MSG) Wow. Truly the love of God is the beginning and the end of everything. You guys are looking at me like a bullfrog in a hailstorm. That is what Kenneth Hagin used to say, "He is looking at me like a bullfrog in a hailstorm." I don't know what that looks like, I don't know that Kenneth Hagin ever watched a bullfrog in a hailstorm, but I can imagine he would take cover somewhere, you know. But, praise the Lord, Hallelujah.

This was the biggest revelation in my life as a young man, because I had two children. My youngest son was just a little baby, and we had no money for rent, and we had no food in the house, and we were really, really at the mercy of other people. I didn't have anybody that I could turn to and I am very glad for that, because I needed to turn to Jesus. This scripture that I was reading to you today, I started reading the book of John, from one John chapter 1, I started reading that book and when I got to John chapter 3 and John chapter 4, the Holy Spirit began to speak to me.

He said to me, He said, "John, I will never let you down. My love in you is guaranteed. If you ever fear, turn to My love and it will cast out your fear. I will never let you down. I will never ever let you down if you just love Me and if you trust Me. I will never let you down and wherever you feel like I'm letting you down, it's because My love has not yet been perfected in you. Now you know what to do from this moment onwards, You need to be in My presence so My love can grow strong in you. If you have a love problem it's because you have a presence problem." Yes? Because if you're in the presence of God then you will experience the fullness of His love. If you're not in the presence of God then you're going to experience the terror of the world and the day and the things that come by, the Bible says the terrors by night and the terrors by day. You will experience that because it will come to your mind, it will come in your soul and you will feel terror and fear and you will feel like you're not gonna make it.

When that happens, it's not a matter of if it's going to happen, it's going to happen. You might say, "Pastor John, you're declaring something over us." No, I know how the devil works and I know how he comes after everyone of us. It's the same devil. It starts with a thought in your mind. It starts with something there [*Pastor John pointing to his head*] and then it becomes perhaps an emotion, and then it becomes words that come out of your mouth and then it becomes actions that are formed and you are now walking away from the love of God and you're responding to the terror. So, the Lord spoke to me, I was in my early twenties, two children. The Lord spoke to me, He said, "John, if you will always turn to Me and in My presence and in My love, then I will never let you down. I will never leave you, I will never forsake you and you can trust in My love, because My love is perfect. It's perfect."

That's why over all of the years, whenever I am in a place where, like we did last week and the week before, I said to you, "Remember when I'm gonna talk about money, that I'm a shepherd." Then we talked about money, now I'm talking about love because I know how the devil works. My dependance is on the love of God. It's not on whether people have money or they don't have money. My dependance is on the love of God. He loves me, so if He is asking me to give of my substance, it's not because He needs rands. Even people who live in America don't need rands. Ask these guys in the front here, one of their dollars can buy nineteen of ours. What do they want to do with rands? Pounds, euros, swiss francs, any of those things. What do they want with South African rands? Yes? What does God want with my rands or your rands? If He is asking us to part with our rands, if you've got dollars, your dollars, your euros, your pounds, whatever it is. If God's asking you to part with it, it's not because He is trying to get your money, He is trying to reveal His love to you.

It's not like He is even, the reason He wants to get goods to you, is because He wants to reveal His love to you. He wants to meet your needs and that's all but He wants you to see His love in meeting your needs. He wants you to appreciate and recognize who He is. That's why the Bible says, "It's His goodness that leads us to repentance. Because He is trying to show His love to you." When He comes along and He says, "Come, walk with Me. Come, walk with Me. Let's sow some seed here, let's give our money here. Let's do this here, let's give your time. Let's give your energy, let's give your..." He is saying, "You can't give Me enough that I can't return it to you, because it is all based on love. Show Me your love with your life and I'll show you My love with My life."

So, that's why if you show Him your love with your life, He comes with His life and His love and He just overwhelms everything that you are. There's not enough that you can give Him, that you can outgive Him. There's not enough that you can say, "Ah this is a hard thing for me to do." I mean, you might feel that, but then I say, "Just get back into His love. Just get back into His love." You know, I have had a wonderful walk with God in my life about the love of God, and you all know this if you have been with me any length of time, because that is how I got the revelation.

Love is a continuous, present, perfect state of being. Continuous or present. Continuous, perfect state of being. Remember how I went through, "Ahh, ahh, show me what love is, what love is." Then He gave me these words: Continuous, it's continuous and it's perfect and it's the continuous perfect state of being and when I recognised it's a continuous perfect state of being. I remembered, but that's God. And God was like, "Duh John, I know where you're going with this, and why you want to unravel this love thing." So it is a continuous perfect state of being and that's God. So, if you want to know what God's love is, it's God. And so, God is there and He is continuous and He is perfect, and He is always in a state of being, for you. So, there is no state of being that I am in that He is not with me in it. The only difference is that I might fluctuate in my being and He doesn't. He says, "I don't care where you're at, John, hello, I Am still here, the same as I was yesterday, is the same I am today, is the same I will be for you tomorrow. Yesterday I loved you, so much, I gave My Son for you. Today I love you so much, I'm giving My Son to you and tomorrow I love you so much you will have all of My Son that you can handle." Well, that's a Person, exactly. Everything is provided for you in the Person of Jesus Christ in your Saviour,

in your Lord and everything you want to give Him He will give it back to you and meet all your needs in the meantime.

So, the accumulation of my money is what? How important? Ahh. So, if God wants to say to you, "I want you to sow some things, sow some stuff." Energy, gifts, talents, money, whatever it is. He is not actually looking to take anything away from you. He is looking to reveal Himself to you. He is looking to show you how great and how loving He is because you can't see all of His love until you show Him you're prepared to love Him. If you're not prepared to give it, then what are you showing Him you love more?

We've all been there, you know where I am coming from by now. If you can't be honest before God, you can't walk in faith. Because if you're not honest with God, you have this, you have this façade before God which is so, you know, deceptive. You deceive yourself. But if you think that God doesn't know everything about you. So, if I think, you know, "Well God, I'm going to give my tithes to the church, and this is what I determine my tithe is." What do you think I know about that? Huh? I don't know. If you say that's your tithe, I don't know. I don't know where all your money comes from. Don't look at me with that tone of voice. Hey? I don't know where your money comes from. I don't know how much money you get. I don't know what your tithe is. I don't know what your offerings are. I don't care. I mean, I care that you have good things in your life, but I don't care if you give eight percent or you give twelve percent. Do you know what I am saying? I mean, I am not looking for it. Who do you think is watching? Uh.

You say, "But, but, but it's just money, why would He watch my money?" He is not watching your money, He is watching your heart. So you think I can quibble with God about R500 here or R1000 there, or whatever it is that is important to you? You think that I can negotiate with God that it is gonna be okay? He knows what's going on in your heart. So, you know I can tell you this, that if you negotiate with God about your tithe, then you don't know the love of God yet and it is not yet perfected in you, because you think that you need to negotiate with Him so that you can keep more. That you are now revealing that your trust is in the more that you keep rather than in the ones give away. So you might fool your wife, you might fool your husband, you might fool your accountant, you might fool me. It is easy to fool me with money. I am not looking to see what you give. It is quiet in this Presbyterian Church today.

Because ultimately it is between you and God and if you want terror to exist in your heart and trust for money to be existing in your heart then you are going to be negotiating with God about how much you should be giving. But if you are not negotiating with God and you are saying. "Lord, how much do You want me to give? This month, the next six months, next year?" Whatever, however the cycle of your income works. Then God is going to say, "Okay, now your heart is in the right place. Your heart is in the right place." Then when the Pastor gets up and preaches messages like this, then this becomes a liberating message, not a judging message. This becomes a message where you start to say, "Let's press into God."

Now remember I am bringing balance and I am gonna close with this today. Remember this, that I have always preached this. If you don't have faith to tithe, don't. Keep your tithe for yourself. Because you need it more than me. If your tithe is

an act of paying your debt, keep it. If your tithe is an insurance policy, keep it. Because tithe is not a law. Tithe is a relationship. That is why Abraham gave tithe. Oh people get so bent out of shape and they want to bring all kinds of law teaching about; he fought the wars of armies and God bless him with that and so that wasn't really a tithe. I mean so many people have so much to say about the Abraham tithe. It was a simple thing. "The Lord has blessed me and I am not gonna give anybody else the credit for blessing me."

Melgizadek here is ten percent of all and the king that came he says, "I don't want any of your stuff, keep it." He knew his walk with God was what God did in everything he got. That is why Jesus could turn to all the Pharisees in Matthew 23 and He could say to them, "You got to tithe, your guys are so picky on tithing on cumin and this and that. You got to do those things but the greater and weightier matters of the law you left them. I am done." Love your neighbour, do the things God tells you to do. The book of Hebrews says, "Here on earth men receive tithes but in Heaven it is the Father that receives them. I am just a natural vessel because He doesn't need rands. But your heart is in the rands or the dollars or whatever. Your heart will be determine what those things can get you."

So, if you want God to be involved in anything you need in the future, love Him. Abide in Him, give your life to Him. Worship Him, praise Him and when you think fear is coming upon you, you say, "No fear! No! I do not receive fear. Terror, leave my heart, leave my life. I am going to go after God, I am going to put Him first place." When you begin to speak like that immediately it begins to bring relief because Jesus gets involved in your words. He gets in, His anointing, His presence, His life comes upon your words that says, "No, no, no. I am not gonna be in fear, I am not gonna in terror. I am not gonna let that thing get me. I'm gonna live in God. I'm gonna love Him, I'm gonna worship Him. Oh, devil you bring in this thought to my mind, let me just go give some of my time, I don't have money left because of the end of the month. I'm gonna go give some of my time what can I do?"

Let me come to the church just wash the dishes for the Mixchangers. I promise you some of this young man they leave the dishes unwashed, they will love you for it. I regularly see WhatsApp messages with photographs on it, "Whose dishes are these? Why are they left overnight." I got their attention, did you hear? Their energy level just came up, they know what I'm talking about. Jah! So, if you've got nothing to give. You say, "Hey listen, I know lunch time is a critical time and they leave the dishes after lunch time or I'm gonna come four o'clock or three o'clock in the afternoon, I will just come and serve and wash their dishes." Joh, but that is beneath me." Well ok, if you say so. But maybe that's just the opportunity for you to show you love God by loving someone else. I'm using a simple example, but this is how it works.

Do you know, do you know, that my whole walk with God and who I am connected to know is because of an instruction God gave me. First instruction He gave me was, "Phone your Pastor and tell him you gonna serve Brother Jerry." So, my Pastor said, "No problem." I took weeks a leave out of my annual leave as working in the company and drove Brother Jerry around for the week. That was in February of 1996. That year I think Sharon and I were married for fifteen years, I think. In July we went to Brother Copeland's Birmingham Conference in England, you see we were

not wanting to take leave to go to the Hawaii or Mauritius or the Maldives, we were pursuing God, we were showing God, we loved Him. We loved Him.

So, to celebrate our anniversary we went to England, go to Brother Copeland Believers Conference. It was fifteen, because I remember there was people behind us, they looked at us and they saw us smoothing over each other and they said, "Oh, you must be newly weds." We said, "No, we have been married fifteen years." They couldn't believe it. They said, "No one acts like this when they have been married fifteen years." Well we now been married 43 years, we still act like that. Jah. We much worse. (*Congregation laughing*). We love each other much more now. Anyway, I am moving right along.

I found out that Brother Copeland was gonna be there in November that year to do his first international Believers Conference that he had in nine years in South Africa and the Lord said phone Copeland Ministries and tell them you wanna serve them. So, I phoned the director of Kenneth Copeland Ministries I spoke to him, his name was Steve, I knew him from Rhema and I said, "Steve, the Lord told me I must phone you and tell you I must serve Brother Copeland and serve in his conference." I said to him, I said, "Steve I want you to know that you should not take my position in the corporate world as an indication of where I must serve. I would like to serve wherever you instruct me. On the car park, in the toilets, in the bookshop as an usher wherever you want to put me, that's where I will serve." Because by then I was already a senior manager, senior executive in Hewlett Packard. There's my; (*Ps John's alarm gong off*) I can't have you being distracted by fleshing light, just now you will think it's a disco. Hallelujah.

So, he said, "Thank you John, appreciate it. We will consider how we will use you." So they called me back three weeks later. "Please can we have a dinner with you?" They invited Sharon and I to have a barbeque at their house. Braai-vleis. Have a braaivleis at their house. So Steve said to me, "We want you and Sharon to serve Brother Kenneth and Gloria and Brother Jerry and Creflo and all those guys. We want you to be their personal aids." I said, "Steve, I don't want that job, that is your job. I mean you are the Director of Kenneth Copeland Ministries. This is, this is, they haven't been here for such a long time, this is your moment to connect with Brother Copeland and to do stuff like that." He said, "No John, you don't understand, God has instructed us to put you there." I said, "Really?" He said, "I don't have a choice in this matter. If you asked me to do something different, I will be disobeying God." I said, "Then I accept." We accept. So we took leave again. We spend our leave ministering to Kenneth and Gloria and Creflo and Jerry, Jesse and the whole bunch of them. Move into the hotel, anything they ever needed, anytime day of night, for the next ten days, at that time, we served them.

While I am in the Pastor's lounge, nowadays it's called the Green Room. But while I was in the Pastor's lounge, The Lord said to me, "You are connected to Jerry Savelle." The next, that night, you all know the story, felt like I was pregnant. What I think a woman feels like when she's pregnant. I told Sharon this is the closest I will ever felt like what a woman must feel like being pregnant. Cause I got to get this out, otherwise I feel like I die! The next day I went and speak to Brother Jerry, and he just asked me one question, "America or South Africa?" I said, "Well, I will go to America

if I have to, but I am called to South Africa.” From that moment till this time, I am walking down a path with that man, with his ministry.

God orchestrated it. God orchestrated it. I didn’t question whether he is going to pay me. We never even had a conversation about salary, until we, I left the corporate world and we were months and months and months into the equation. Hallo? My trust wasn’t in how much he could pay me or not. My trust is in God called me. Hallo. You see, from that day when I was a young man, in my twenties, God spoke to me and He said, “John if you will trust me, I will never let you down. If you have any issue, it will be a love-issue, stay secure in My Love. Stay in My Love. If you have any issues, go back to love. Because perfect love casts out all of your fear. If you have anything, go back to love.”

But here is the thing, I loved this girl, she is the love of my life in this natural earth. But you know, if I stay away from her and I keep doing my own thing, it doesn't matter how much love there is between us, we are going to go apart. Yes? You know, I've gotta have a day-by-day relationship with her. So, because it is that close, we stay that close. It is the same thing with God. If I get all caught up in all of the “*helte-skelte*” of life and I, that is more important to me, that is more important to me, that is more important to me. Guess what? It will be more important to you. But if you put Jesus first place, then He just draws you in with His Love. Amen.

I want, I wanted just tell, when I got home yesterday, Pastor Sharon couldn't wait, she wanted me to watch something with her that really impacted her, and as it impacted her, it impacted me, you know. It is a story about this man - and I'm not going to give the details of it - but I just want to tell you it is a story about this man that ... He is a Jew. He wanted nothing to do with his family that was an Orthodox Jew, he wanted nothing to do with it. He married a model and he had his own life. They got married and off he was. But someone spoke into his life, right before he got married and said, “You should go on honeymoon to Israel.” This guy knew nothing about Israel or his connection as a Jew, “You should go and have a honeymoon in Israel.” And so he was riding on public transport and this lady just out of the blue came to speak to him and say, “You should go to Israel.”

So, the way he puts it, “I’m not the sharpest pencil,” you know, “in the pile,” he said. “But I’m also not the dumbest block either,” something like that. “I’m not the biggest bowling ball,” I think he said. I didn’t quite catch everything that he said on that but he was trying to say, “I got the message.” They go to Israel and they are busy driving. Last day in Israel by chance they decide to hire a car and go drive up to a particular place in Israel. He tells the story, as he walked he got out of the car and he was on a particular mountain. As he started walking on this mountain, he said it was like the earth disappeared around him. He didn’t even know where he was but the clouds began to separate and he stood there and he was like in a trans. The clouds separated and Jesus came out of the clouds to him and appeared to him. Jesus came and stood right by him and Jesus came and pushed Himself right into his being. He says, “All I could see was love.” Love. What did he say? [*Pastor John asks Pastor Sharon*]

Pastor Sharon:
No, he said, “Then He spoke to me.”

Pastor John:

“And then he spoke to me. He said, “I want you to serve Me, I want you to follow Me. I want you to give me your life.” Right?

Pastor Sharon:

He said He pushed Himself into him and said one thing, “I love you.”

Pastor John:

“I love you. I love you.” Yes. When He said, “I love you,” he immediately gave his life to Love. He said, “You can’t resist love like that.” He just immediately gave himself to love. His wife was not having his experience. His wife was standing, watching him in a trans with tears running down his face. He didn’t even know she was there but she was watching the encounter that he was having and in that moment she gave her life to Jesus. When he came out of the trans they were both born again. So, from that day to this, he goes around the world preaching and teaching and sharing the love of Jesus.

You know, the love of Jesus is irresistible, it is irresistible. If you have a challenge with the way and where you are living and what you’re doing in life, you’ve got to dive into love - His continuous state of being, perfect state of being, that’s Who Jesus is. It’s perfect for you. Perfect. Perfect. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus.

I’ll tell you what; the body of Christ doesn’t have a love... I’m going to rephrase and put it this way; the body of Christ has a church problem, not a love problem. The body of Christ has a performance problem, not a love problem. The body of Christ has a judgement problem, not a love problem. The body of Christ has an evaluation of each other problem, not a love problem. The body of Christ is so caught up in itself that it has a self-problem, not a love problem. If you get caught up in the love of God then none of those things matter anymore, because His love is so beautiful, His love is so amazing, it causes you to wake up in the morning and say, “I love You, Lord. I love You, Lord. I am grateful, I am thankful.” Hallelujah. Glory to God.

Won't you all stand with me? Praise Jesus. Love. Love. The love of God is perfect. The love of God is perfect. The love of God is perfect. The love of God is perfect. The love of God is perfect. The love of Jesus cast out all fear. It cast out all, all of the terrors that might come in your life. His love will just push it away. Just push it away. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus.

So, you know, if people want to know what is going on with the young people in the ministry, they have got a, they have been infected by the love of God. And if you want to know what people’s words do, that talk about their future without factoring in the love of God? They are speaking to their own future terror. Because if you don’t do what the world system says is the best thing for you to do, the terror of that can overwhelm you. But if you are totally committed to the love of God, there is nothing that He won’t do to care for you. Yeah. Praise the Lord. Praise Jesus.

So Sunelle, how much of your Accounting Degree helped you with the love of God? Zero. Belinda, how much of your Legal Degree helped you with the love of God?

Izeko, nothing. You young people out here, all of your good results that you have achieved at school, does any of it tell you of how great God's love is. All of the performances and the achievements that you have had? Huh? Nothing. In fact, is it true and fair to say that all of the stuff that suddenly you had all of this potential waiting for you to happen? It was all designed to take you away from God. Isn't it right? If you are pursuing that your Ace if you are pursuing God, the church has got an agenda to steal your life. Who follows God with all your life? *(Pastor John gestures that he can't hear, to the side of the MixChangers). (They answered) We do. (Pastor John gives a thumbs up).*

So all of you guys out there, how much of your corporate jobs, your bosses that pay your salary, how much have they shown you the love of God? Let me give you a salary because I love God and I am really interested in how you love God. Anybody of the corporate world? In fact, I will tell you what they will do, "Perform boy. Deliver. Key performance index. Right?" Measure, measure. Time, time. Are you delivering? Have you got it? Have you got it? Are you up to standard, otherwise, we are going to eat you for breakfast. Sounds like the love of God to me. No. That system out there has no idea what the love of God is. How are they ever going to help you in their system know the love of God? The only one that can know the love of God is the way that you choose to love God. Amen.

Right hand, on heart. I know you wanted to go, praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. You can do that too, praise the Lord. Praise the Lord and then put it on your heart. Just make this declaration with me: *Jesus, You are my Lord. You are my Saviour. Thank you for loving me. Because You love me, I love You. I ask You, Lord, to reveal to me the greatness of Your love. And wherever I'm imperfect, I ask You to perfect Your love in me. In Jesus' name. Hallelujah.*

You know, if you believe that prayer, and you believe it in your heart, and you just confessed that out of your mouth, the Holy Spirit comes and says "I'll answer it for you. And I'm about to come and rest upon you and I'm about to rise up big inside of you and I'll show you my love." Hallelujah.

I just want to pray over you. I want to declare that you are blessed going out and coming in. No weapon formed against you will prosper. He gives His angels charge over you. The Word and the blood of Jesus surrounds you and protects you so that you are safe in the hands of Jesus, everywhere you go, every day. In Jesus' name. I declare that God's healing power comes upon you. That His life consumes all sickness and disease in you and brings you to health and strength. I declare that everything that you have need of He has already orchestrating it so that He provides all of your needs in Jesus' name. Do you agree with this prayer today? Say amen. Hallelujah. Glory to God.

I want you to stretch your hands out to Eric and Nicky. We're just going to pray over them as a congregation and we're going to say, Lord, we bless them. We bless them. We bless them. We ask you, Father, that as they travel, You will protect them. They'll travel in safety and in peace. The joy of the Lord will be their strength, Father. Will be their strength. Will be their strength. All that You need to reveal to them, you will reveal it to them. All of that great love fills them as they travel and as they go back to America. Hallelujah. In Jesus' name.

So, I task you, Eric and Nicky, on behalf of this congregation, please go and give Brother Jerry, Miss Carolyn, Joe and Joyce, Justin and Annette, give them our love. So, please go hug them. Some of them are not so good with hugs, but put hugs around them. Just hug them and say, this is from Heritage of Faith South Africa. Amen.

Drew, you're here, brother. There's some initiations that he has not yet met the standard of, that we have to make sure that he's got it. Because we check that out now. Now we know what the drill is, you know. We love Drew, don't we? Jah, amen. So, praise the Lord. Thank you for coming to church. Those that are participating in the criterium, get your cycling legs ready. Otherwise, enjoy lunch and message moments this afternoon at five o'clock. Amen. Bye.