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Crossover Part 13: The Power of the CROSS-ing

Pastor John Bendixen (WTB)

Scripture reference: Deuteronomy 30:11-20 (NLT); Romans 4:16-25 (NLT); Romans 5:1-5 (NLT); 1 Corinthians 15:21-34 (NLT); 1 Corinthians 15:33-34 (KJV); 1 Corinthians 15:33-34 (TPT)

Pastor Sharon Bendixen:

Father, pray today now for this message that's coming through Pastor John, Your messenger. We're so expectant. Our hearts just receive Your Word, Lord, today. We know, Father, that Your anointing is upon Pastor John and within Pastor John, and he will speak what he hears You speak. He will say what he hears You say, and he will do what he sees You do. Thank You. He ministers in Your very presence, Father, in Your very sight. Hallelujah. The words that he speaks are spirit and life to us. We say together, "We receive and we believe the things spoken to us from You," in Jesus' name. Thank you, Pastor John.

Pastor John Bendixen:

Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Well, that's a glory thing. That's a glory thing. Thank you. Praise Jesus. Hallelujah. Before you sit down, just say, "I'm glad you're in church this morning," to somebody, and then to someone else and then you may be seated. Glory to God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Well, the world is a crazy place. Hello? The world is a crazy, crazy, crazy place. You know, when I was a lot younger, I had a really, very positive outlook on life. I was a very optimistic young man. I really expected God to be part of everything in my life. I also expected to have a great life. It was an expectation. It was something that I had then and I have now. I had a great hope. I had a great expectation. I had a lot of freedom in my heart to believe in the most positive way of life and to have a really good life.

I discovered in my journey, early on in my life that some things that you have an expectation for, some things that you have hope for, and some things that you really desire to have to make your life sweet are things you also have to work for. They're not just always something that gets given to you. You also have to work for them. And so, for example, I have always from when I was a teenager, I wanted to be married. I wanted to have a really sweet relationship with the person I was going to marry, and I had an idea of what that might look like. As a teenage young man, I had an idea of the kind of things that I would enjoy in marriage.

When I finally met this beautiful woman on the front row that has been my wife for so many years, I discovered that to have all the good things that I had desired, I had to work for it. I didn't have to work her, I had to work the Word of God, and the Word of God in my marriage changed me. It changed her, and it brought us to the kind of marriage that I dreamed I could have.

My vision of what marriage could be had moments that were really challenging. And the Lord gave me, you'll all remember, a long time ago the Lord gave me a message, *7 Active ingredients to living faith*. And one of those ingredients is, and I just called it number 6 at the time, *Living in the moment of God's protection*. And at the time I had this realization that any time that you are having a moment where your physical life is under threat, you have to trust God that in a moment of protection, that His protection is there in the moment that you can't foresee will happen to you. You just can't foresee that it would happen to you, and at the moment, you have to trust God that His protection is there in the moment.

In recent weeks, this phrase has become much more relevant to me in a different way that I didn't ever think would be as relevant to me. And, as I've observed and in last Sunday's message, I told you that I'm aware of how cultures are influencing the lifestyle of people, and how the cultures are influencing the way church is. And, that if the church is run by the

culture, we're going to be weak and really have no say in the community. So the church has got to be strong.

But a strong church is not a strong building. A strong church is not a good Sound and Song program. A strong church is not because you have Bible school or because you have things going and there's many things happening around you. That's not what makes a strong church. What makes a strong church, is the people in it. It's the people that are in the church that make a strong church. And so, if you want to weaken a church, then you need to weaken the people. And, so the obvious thing is if I can weaken; if one can be weakened in your faith towards God, if you can be weakened in your faith if you can be weakened in the way that you see things, then you yourself become a weakness that will infiltrate the church, and things will get blurred between what is out there in the whole world, every person living, every kind of way they want to live, versus what's in the church.

There's some American spokesman, I can't remember what kind of title he has, but he was a man in the government of some sort, made a very strong statement and said, and it was followed up with some other people that just followed a thread. And, apparently, the way that the birth rate of the Muslim people is going and the way that Muslim people are leaving Muslim countries to go to Western countries, the chances are that in the Western world, there's a very, very likelihood that if the trajectory continues, there would be more Muslims and Muslim faith living almost everywhere in the earth. It's quite interesting, isn't it? I wonder how that happened. Maybe it's because the church got weak. Maybe it's because the church got weak.

There's a group in America, they are a research organisation. It's called the Barna Institute, or the... yes the Barna Organization. And, they are an active research company, and recently they did research in the UK, United Kingdom, and they discovered through their research and the kind of questions that they asked over a broad sample of people, that only 4% of the people in the UK consider themselves to be Christians, 4%. If you think about it, this is the nation where the king ordered a group of people to translate the Bible from Latin to English, so that there would be an English Bible, hence, the English Bible is called the King James Version. This is the country where now 4% of those people call themselves Christians.

Between the 1700s or the early 1700 seventy to eighty percent of the Western world population called themselves Christian. Seventy to eighty percent in the early 1700s. In 2010 only eighteen percent of millennials called themselves Christian, this is research from the same Barna. Only eighteen percent called themselves Christian of millennials. In 2021 the research shows that only nine percent of generation Zee's, called themselves, Christian.

So there's a trend going on here and the trend is not good, isn't it? So generation Zee's born between 1999 and 2015. They are now labelled as the only generation to this point to be called post-Christian. There is no longer a majority of people that are being born in the earth that are called Christian people. Hello? This is quite an amazing statistic, don't you think? So what is actually happening in the world here is that there is a confrontation between what is recognized to have more authority, more significance and more influence over people's lives. Is that man's word or is it God's Word?

So, the only way you can describe the trend that is happening is you have to say that people generally are more interested in what mankind has to say, philosophically, governmentally with all manner of ways socially, all of these things, people are more interested in what man is saying, what man's voice is, what man's reasoning is rather than what God has to say. God has become a marginal voice. God's voice has become marginal. So, why did I start off by saying, that when I was a young man, I had a lot of hope, I had a lot of expectations and a lot of dreams I'm blessed to say that my dreams and the expectations that I had, I live in the fullness of them.

I live in the fullness and the wonderment of all of those things that I dreamed of. You know, if you talk to people and they say, "I have this dream," and typically, if you speak to young people, teenagers, young adults, and you talk to them about their desires about life, they are generally optimistic. They generally have a pretty good view of life, and they have hope, and they feel there's reason to live. And then you go 10, 15, 20 years down the line and you speak to people that were in a similar state just further down the line, and they'll turn around, and I'm going this way and they'll turn around, and they'll talk to the younger generation and you'll say, "Yes, but just wait a little bit. Life will knock your hopes and dreams into shape because what you're dreaming for life, can't be the real life. Because we've all been knocked in life. We've all had hardships in life. We all have had struggles in life, and life is not as you imagine and you hope it can be."

If you go back to the young people and they look at these older people that are saying, "Life will knock you down or knock you into shape", and you've got the younger people talking to the older people, the younger people will say, "Hey, I don't have to take your negativity on me. Don't bring your life hardships onto me. I want to live my life. Give me a chance. So, if I've got to so-called be knocked into shape, then let it be so. But don't tell me that I can't do it because you had some stuff happen." And so, now there are so many older people, and I'm not meaning older people, 40s, 50s, whatever - I'm not saying they're old yet - but, you know, they're older. Yeah. I can't say that because I'm not old. Amen.

If they look at people that are late 30s, 40s, they say, "You know, you kind of all the things that you expect out of life, life surely knocked you into shape." There's enough of those voices to have an impact on young people, and the young people would say, "No, no, no, I'm not interested." So what do young people do if they're going to find a solution? Well, they're turning to voices around them that are at the same age, the same level, and the same kind of category as them, and for the most part, this is a social media. That's where they're looking for answers. They're looking for answers in a social media. Why? Because they're looking for a social life.

What I'm about to tell you, I've told you many times before. Early on in the social media revolution if you like, I read a book, Digital Vertigo, and the whole premise of the man who wrote the book was, "I'm going to show how you... A: Obtain significance because you put, you post something." And he ended up writing the book Digital Vertigo and he actually went against his whole theory and he said, "I post or tweet or message, therefore," and he was going to say, "Therefore, I am." And then when he researched everything and wrote everything, he said, "I post or tweet or message, therefore, I am not." Because everybody thinks that on social media, they're unique, but everybody's doing the same thing. So, therefore, they are not but what everybody else influences them to become.

So, "Pastor John, but that's not me. I can, I can resist it. You know, I'm unique. I'm a unique person. I'm different to everybody else" That's what they all think. I'm different to everybody else, but, actually, I do what everybody else does. I'm here to say to you that I believe in the moment of God's protection. And I saw this. The Holy Spirit revealed to me that I need to and you need to believe God that all of us are living in the moment of God's protection when news comes to us, when media posts come to us when things happen around us that affect our mindset, our worldview, it challenges what God's Word says versus what man is saying.

You have to live in that moment of protection that you don't let that message enter your heart. I have to declare I'm living in the moment of God's protection because your lifestyle can become just a series of moments. Moments. What, when did you make a very big decision to buy a car that got you into trouble? It didn't take 10 weeks of thinking. It took the moment you chose to do it. The moment you switched into that thing, "I'm going to do it." That moment when you choose, that's just a moment. So you would say, "But I thought about it, and I went through all the numbers, and I did all of that stuff." I know maybe you did all of that, but still, it came down to a moment you chose. And the moment you choose that, your life's behaviour becomes in line with your moment of choosing.

So, I would like you to all agree with me that we live in the moment of God's protection. We live in the moment of God's protection. That we are protected to make wise choices, wise decisions, and live life in such a way that we don't take other people's failures and make them ours. Neither do we stifle hopes and dreams and expectations and even... even for ourselves, you and me, we need to be in a position where we, have a strong belief that God is making all things, turning all things to our certain good. Do you agree with it? Yes. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

I need to read to you from Deuteronomy chapter 30. I'm reading from the New Living Translation. This is still part of our crossover messages. Verse 11. ¹¹ **“This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, and it is not beyond your reach. ¹² It is not kept in heaven, so distant that you must ask, ‘Who will go up to heaven and bring it down so we can hear it and obey?’ ¹³ It is not kept beyond the sea, so far away that you must ask, ‘Who will cross the sea to bring it to us so we can hear it and obey?’ ¹⁴ No, the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it. ¹⁵ “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. ¹⁶ For I command you this day to love the LORD your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy. (Deuteronomy 30:11-16 NLT)**

This is a crossover moment for the people of God that He's talking to. This is their crossover. But He's giving His people a clear set of instructions. This is a time when you have to make choices to live in His blessing, live in His commands, live in His ways so that you can be blessed.

¹⁷ **“But if your heart turns away and you refuse to listen, and if you are drawn away to serve and worship other gods, ¹⁸ then I warn you now that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live a long, good life in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. ¹⁹ “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! ²⁰ You can make this choice by loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the Lord, you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” (Deuteronomy 30:17-20 NLT)**

Well, you know, that is generationally ours in Christ Jesus. God is a generational God. He's not just a single-generation being. He's a generational God. So, you and I, we are faced with this every day; I know this because I'm as human as you are and I have to face my humanity in the same way that you face your humanity. Even though I'm standing here and I'm ministering to you today as a minister of the Gospel, I have to face my humanity in the same way that you have to face your humanity. I don't have a superior force, more than you have, to deal with myself than you have to deal with yourself. We have the same God, the same Jesus, the same Word, the same Holy Spirit. The way I deal with my own humanity is the way you must deal with your humanity. We all have to deal with our humanity.

If you're a born-again Christian, and I assume most of you are, here, because we did an altar call beforehand and only one person came forward, that means the rest of you should be born again. If you're not, come up after the service so that we can get that taken care of, like we did before the service, before the message.

So, if you're born again, that means Jesus lives in your spirit. If He lives in your spirit then He's going to draw you to the everlasting life, the superior life that lives inside of you. He's not going to want you to live an inferior life. Come on. If you look at the world around you, how many of you look at all of the problems that are in the world and say, “I want the problems”? Uh, “I want all of the death and destruction”? How many of you wish that you were at the kibbutz where the Hamas terrorists went and killed all the Jews when it

happened? You don't want that stuff in your life. You wouldn't choose it, would you? What are the choices that you want to choose? Don't you want to choose life? Don't you want to choose hope? Don't you want to choose expectations? Don't you want to choose desires and dreams that lead to good things and blessings and wonderful things in life? Don't we want that? Ja, that's what we want. We don't want to, and we won't willingly choose something that is just bad. This is just our human nature I'm talking about. This is just... as a human, you don't want to choose poverty if you can choose to be wealthy. You don't want to choose sickness if you can be well. You don't want to choose hardships in life if you can live a more comfortable life, do you? No. None of us would willingly choose those things. So neither would the spirit of Christ that is in you, neither would He, neither would the spirit of Christ that's in you as a born-again believer, wouldn't lead you to make decisions that are for death, for poverty, for destruction.

I am blessed to be a father. I'm blessed to be a grandfather. There is no way, especially with my young grandchildren, there is no way that I would choose to have my grandchildren willingly experience hardships or difficulties or pain or sickness or disease or anything like that so that they can... for what for what purpose would I do that? Would any of you treat your kids like that? Give them sickness. Give them disease. Make them live on the streets in poverty when you live in a home in a nice house and eat anything you like and make them live outside. Would you do that? No. I think that if you did that, that you would probably be called on by social services, and you would have trouble with the government. So why do we think our heavenly Father would do that to us?

There's no way. He's gonna draw us into a good life. He's gonna draw us into the kind of life that He is. He does not know sickness. He does not know disease. He doesn't know any of that, so He wants to draw us to that. On the weekend of this... on the 16th and the 17th, I'm going to share something with you that is up till now, just been personal and powerful. But on that weekend, I'm going to make it public, something God has done for me personally. Hallelujah. Glory to God.

On the Saturday, I'm gonna share something with you. I believe it will be a blessing to you. If the Lord is willing, we will use that weekend to talk about a subject that... we'll see how the Lord leads us. But I believe that it's time for us as a church to stand tall. The Lord has been speaking to me personally about standing tall. "You have to stand tall so that everybody can see the stand that you're making for yourself. You've got to stand tall."

Romans chapter 4 verse 16 says, again I'm reading the New Living Translation. ¹⁶ **So the promise is received by faith. It is given as a free gift. And we are all certain to receive it, whether or not we live according to the law of Moses, if we have faith like Abraham's. For Abraham is the father of all who believe.** ¹⁷ **That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations." This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing (Romans 4:16-17 NLT).** Do you recognise what he's saying? ...**This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing. (Romans 4:16-17 NLT)**

Will you please just say this with me? "The dead back to life. New things out of nothing." Maybe you feel like there's an area of your life where there's nothing happening, there's nothing going on, there doesn't seem to be any possibility of anything happening for you. God specializes in creating something out of nothing. So, powerful is He in creating something out of nothing that it is equal to someone who raises the dead. So, that thing that is dead, it's impossible to bring back to life but God can. God can. Now part of what I'm sharing with you today is I believe God wants to breathe life into us. As we look forward into the future God wants to breathe life into us so that we don't have a mentality that we look at something and say, "Well, that's dead, and that cannot be resurrected." Be a hope, be a dream, be a thing that you always believed God would do for you, it hasn't happened, it's taken so many years, and now it can't happen because it hasn't happened. If you get into the syndrome of "It can't happen because it hasn't happened." Then it won't happen. But if you

get into the syndrome, in a mentality, an attitude that says, "Hold on a minute, if God can raise something from the dead then He can do what He needs to for me. If He can create something out of nothing, then He can do it for me."

If you don't believe that, you can't have what you don't believe. So, if I go back to young people who say, "I don't want to believe in your failures that you've experienced, older people. I want to believe in a in a good future for me." You might look at them, the older person might look at them and say, "Hold on a minute. I've been there. I know life doesn't turn out." That means you've experienced some deaths in your life, dreams that have died. Assignment things that have not come to pass. Maybe money that you thought you would be able to make that you didn't. Things that have happened that have been out of your reach. Hold on. Come on now.

And you say, "Well, I've had to let all of that go. And I've had to live in the reality of my current situation. And I've learned that I have to just be satisfied with what I've currently got, because my time has passed, or I made too many mistakes so that I can't have what God wants for me." If you keep thinking that and you keep saying that, then that's what's going to be. But if you say, "No, God can make something out of nothing." And I say, "Wait a minute", it's the same as something that was dead that gets resurrected. That's the God that is in me that's speaking to me that says, "Come on. Do something."

So, I want to be a little, I want to be a little bit specific here, and I want to say that just because everybody on the earth is doing something doesn't make it right. Yeah. Just because there's a lot of stuff going on in the world that seems to be the order of things doesn't make it good. All around the world, there are many things that are happening. There are political things that are happening. There are governmental things. There are economic things. There are social things, And there's a lot of big voices out there. And then you've got very real things that are happening out there that people want to control the destiny of mankind. They do.

If you don't think this is true, try and see if you can disband the World Economic Forum. What do you why do you think the World Economic Forum was started? I challenge you to go and find the website and go and see what their charter is. Just go and read what the charter is. The charter says something like this, "Average people can't make the right choices for themselves. Someone has to. And these average people elect governments, and those elected governments are only short-term. So, we as the World Economic will harness all the economic resources in the world, so that we can tell governments what the people need, and the people will then live under one government which is the World Economic Way of Ruling." It's on their website. It's part of their charter. I'm just using my words to state it. These people meet every year in Davos, and they're having all kinds of conversations about how they can run the world.

The biggest factor for them in recent times was COVID and I think his name is Klaus Schwab, he stood up and said, he was the first guy to say, "This is the great reset. We are going to use all of this to grab all of the information of all of the people so that we've got a data resource that if we have all of this data information, we can control people around the world." Pastor John, that sounds like a rather dark and gloomy perspective of life. I'd say, it's not mine but it's real, happening in the world right now. And there are choices being made by very wealthy people that are investing things, and you sit and watch, we all sit and watch news and information comes to you that this is like this and this is like that and so the information, as it comes to you, it's coming from what you would normally consider a reliable source but it's only something information that's coming to you because they want to put the information out there. Who's they? It doesn't matter if it's the collective they or if it's a single group of people, you have to choose life. You have to choose to obey God and His word and not something else. Amen.

Abraham is spoken of like this, in verse 18. **¹⁸ Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping — believing that he would become the father of many nations.**

For God said to him, “That's how many descendants you will have.” (Romans 4:18 NLT) So you will recall that Abraham and Sarah couldn't have children even when they were young and healthy and then God came and told him when he was 90 years old that he was going to have children. And they both said, “How is this possible? We're too old. We couldn't have kids when we were young. Now we're too old. How's this possible?” And God specializes in making something out of nothing. He specializes in resurrecting life where there was death. So Abraham is called our father of faith because when there seemed to be no reason for hope, he still hoped. Hallelujah.

We have to be a group of people who are fully committed to our hope in God. Not our hope in the system to carry us, not our hope in other people that have strong enough, not our hope in countries, or in continents that can provide for us. We have to hope in God.

The King James version says it like this. ¹⁸ **Who against hope believed in hope That he might became the father of many nations (Romans 4:18 KJV).** Verse 19 says, ¹⁹ **And Abraham's face did not weaken, even though, at about a 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah's womb.** ²⁰ **Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, in this, he brought glory to God (Romans 4:19-20 NLT).**

Well, if you go and read Abraham's life story, you will see that his humanity constantly got the better of him. Huh? Why do you think he went and slept with Sarah's maidservant? Why do you think Sarah said, “Why don't... I can't have kids, so take my maid, my servant, and sleep with her so that this promise of God can get fulfilled.” Well, we all know what happened as a result of that. Ishmael was born, and we still have trouble with Ishmael in the world. But still, he was willing to do things to show that he believed God more than any of his humanity interfered with his future.

I meant to say this to you today. You and I, have to deal with our humanity. We do. You can't say my humanity is not part of who I am, it is. But at the same time, we have to hope and believe that the spirit of Christ that is in us is big enough and strong enough that he can resurrect us beyond our humanity. Can make us stronger than our natural man self. If I don't believe that, then I might as well not preach this.

I might might as well not be a preacher, because if I don't believe that God is bigger than myself, then I'm lost. Then why preach at all? Why even have a church if I don't believe God is bigger than myself? I'm preaching really good this morning. I'm preaching better than you're saying amen this morning. Amen [*Congregation says*]. That's better. Amen.

So and because of Abraham's faith, sorry verse 21. ²¹ **He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises (Romans 4:21 NLT).** There's a starting point for you and me. Let's live in His promises rather than our humanity. “Ah, but my humanity keeps me from promises.” No, if you believe in His promises, don't worry about the humanity the power of the Holy Spirit will help you overcome it. Our problem as a church is we're trying to deal with our humanness before we let God's spirituality be strong in us. Whereas if we focus on being spiritual, the spiritual will take care of the human. Amen. Hallelujah.

²² **And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous.** ²³ **And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded** ²⁴ **for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.** ²⁵ **He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God. (Romans 4:22-25 NLT).** Praise the Lord. Hallelujah.

I am the righteousness of Christ not because I'm that good. Not because I've got so control over my humanity that I'm better than everyone else. So, therefore, now I have the label, ‘Oh, righteous one’. If you want to call me, “Mister Holiness, okay”. But I'm not that because I'm special. I'm that because Christ's life is in me. I've given my life to Jesus. I'm born again, I

have His life in me - now I'm called the righteousness of Christ. This is a way that I can live. This is a way that I can live. The thing that keeps stopping me from living like that is my humanity.

And so my humanity connects with everybody in the world. And all of this humanity is going on, and my humanity connects with them. And then I have to let Jesus be strong in my heart. But, actually, this overwhelming humanity keeps getting in my face and getting in me all the time. And, actually, my heart is calling me to Jesus, but humanity is holding me back. But my heart is calling me to Jesus, but humanity is calling me back. We gotta get to a point where our belief is stronger than the humanity that we live with, including ourselves.

So, I read Romans chapter 4, and I'm now reading going on to Romans chapter 5 verse 1. ¹ **“Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith.” (Romans 5:1 NLT)** Hello? We have been made right in God's sight by faith. Whose sight is he talking about, please? God's sight. So that means God is seeing. He's seeing you. And what does He see about you? Rightness. Righteousness. Why? Because He's not seeing you just as you. He's seeing you as saved by Jesus.

So, when He looks at you, He looks through this filter that sees Jesus before it sees your humanity. You know, if you put on sunglasses and you walk out in the sun, why are you doing that? It's because you want to have a filter. Yes? You want to have a filter. So, you want to filter the harsh light so that you can walk around. I mean, I know some of us wear glasses just to be cool. You don't really care about the sun filter, you know? You notice there's some people that want to wear sunglasses indoors. Such a weird thing for me. I get on an aeroplane. I was flying back from London and standing in line, and these people were inside in the the airport, you know? And here's this young couple, cool-looking, kind of funky dressed young couple, you know, and they both got their shades on. Looking at and I'm saying, “Shades in the airport?” So, I think, well, okay, you know, maybe they had a heavy night or a long day or whatever, you know. Surely, when they get on the plane, these guys, walk on the plane. I mean, I separated from it from where my seat was to where their seat was, but from the... till the moment they were on the plane, they were still wearing their shades. It's not because they need sunglasses. They need a cool factor.

If you've got sunglasses, it's because you want to filter something. Well, guess what filter Jesus wanted the Heavenly Father wanted to have when He looked at you? He didn't want to look at you, with all of your nonsense, all of your humanness, all of your humanity. He always only wanted to see something that would be good and pleasing for Him to see about you. So, He put Jesus in the front of the way He sees you. When He sees you, He sees you through Jesus. So, He only sees you as right, because Jesus was all right in His eyes. So, you know, you can't get away from God. Every time He looks at you, it doesn't matter how bad your behaviour is in your humanity. I know some people don't agree with this doctrine, and I'm not preaching a hyper-grace doctrine, but this is a spiritual fact - God doesn't see your humanity, He sees Jesus before He sees your humanity. And in that case, you're all righteous in His eyes.

Now you just have to make a choice to live in it and live in the fullness of it. The choice is yours and mine. It's not His anymore. He's done the job. Jesus died, raised Him from the dead, filtered forever. For all people everywhere, filter. When the devil comes and tries to bring an accusation before God about you, He says, “I don't see them. I only see a filter. I only see Jesus. I see the blood. I see His dying. I see Jesus I see Jesus. What's your accusation? I don't see him. I only see right. “You're not looking properly, Father.” “ No, God.” Devil talking to God. “You're not looking properly.” “Yes. I am, I'm looking properly. I only see Jesus.” That's why He died; Jesus, Jesus. So, you and me, we gotta look at our hopes, our dreams, our future, the same way. Don't look at the reality of humanity. Look at Jesus. My hopes, my future, my economy stuff, all of this stuff - Jesus. Let Jesus be your filter. Everything changes. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus.

Watch what he says here. ² **Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege.** Yes. You have privilege. It's not deserved because of how good you are. It's just because He sees Jesus in you. ... **undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory. (Romans 5:2 NLT)** Stand tall. You know, I confidently look forward to sharing God's glory. I can stand tall because Jesus, He's my Lord.

He's got me covered, it doesn't matter how bad I am, Jesus got me covered. You know, sometimes if you're a younger child and you do something wrong on the playground and somebody wants to have a go at you, and then you got a bigger brother, and a bigger brother comes or a bigger sister comes and says, "Don't touch. Touch him or her - you touch me." Say, "Yeah, yeah that." Well, that's the way God is. That's the way Jesus is for us. Whenever the devil wants to come and bully you about your past or about your incompetence as a human, you say, "No, no no - speak to the hand. Speak to Jesus. He's the one who paid for me. Don't bring your rubbish to me. I stand tall here." You wanna cancel this? Come. Come. Come. Come. Just make sure You're behind me. Right? Come.

Jesus is right behind you. When the enemy of God sees, I think I can have a go to him, Jesus comes up and says, "Wait. Don't touch. Don't touch." The only way he can touch you is if you say, "Jesus, shush I got this covered by myself. I can handle it. Come. Come." And then one big smack in the face. "Jesus, where were you?" "You told Me to stand back. You got it covered because you are the big boy." Then you find out quickly how your humanity really does let you down. Because you think you got it covered. You think you got it all sussed in life.

"Leave it to me. I've got it. I'm the boytjie." [*Pastor John speaks in a deep voice and hits his chest with his hands.*] Come on. [*Pastor John laughs.*] Have a little bit of fun with me here. Like, you know, "I'm the man. I'm the man. Do you want some of this? Come get some of this. I'll show you who I am." [*Pastor John acting mean and brave*] Yeah. Brave, hey, and then the devil comes after you, dish, [*Pastor John punches with his fist*] gives you a bloody nose, sore eye. "Jesus. Jesus." [*Pastor John calls Jesus in a crying voice*] Yeah. Come on. We've all been there. We've all said we can do this life on our own stuff, and then we find out, actually, we're not that great at it. Even the people who think they're great at it, they've just undermined their greatness because they think they're great.

What is that? Do you think the devil doesn't stoke your pride? Come on. Think a bit more of yourself. You really are great. Come on. Come on. Think more great. Think more great. Think more about how great you are. More great. More great. Come on. Think, think, think how great you are. You're good. Come on. Look how much money you've made. Look how much influence you have. Look at your political connections, your power base. Look. Come on. Come on. Think of yourself. Come on. You can do it. Come on. Who can stand in your way? Look at what you got. You're the boytjie. Yeah. [*Pastor John acting to be very persuasive*] He's got you. Hook line and sinker. He's got you because you think you're that great. Now it's really quiet in here.

So, we can verse 3, ³ **We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance.** Yeah. Most people, most Christians want to have a life that's got no problems and no issues because that's what they really think. That if I can have a life that's got no problems, then I'll be okay. No. The Bible says here that these trials and problems help us endure, ⁴ **And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.** ⁵ **And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. (Romans 5:3-5 NLT).** Praise the Lord. This is really good news. This is really good news.

The Lord might have Pastor Sharon and or I, address this perhaps before we all, people tend to go on leave. But, I will say that in the beginning, we were reading about blessings and curses. And there are people, and there is a situation where you might feel like there is

a curse that is following your life. Jesus dealt with it. His Blood dealt with it once and for all. There should never be any curse that follows you. But there are some people that have a curse in their life, and they don't know it. They are living under the burden of curses.

I've preached this many times, and I don't wanna preach on it today too much, but there will be some different ways that we might be able to talk about this. And I just wanna touch on it briefly, but I believe this with all my heart. That if my father is an alcoholic, there is a possibility that, that generational curse of watching someone drink all the time, then being able to drink with my father because that makes the relationship with my father at the beginning in the early times. Then I take on the behaviour pattern, which is generational behavior pattern, which comes to me, and I don't even know that I'm learning a behaviour which is cursing my future. Yeah.

This word that I'm preaching today overcomes that. It breaks the power of that, but you have to choose to break the power of it. A lot of people get to feel like what they're living is normal, and so they don't think that, actually, this is and they just think this is a natural problem I've got to deal with. But, actually, there is something that you can do to say, "No, I'm going to make sure that I'm not living in the past." Amen.

So, finally, I'm going to just read you this passage of scripture from 1st Corinthians. Come on. You're enjoying this today. You don't even realize I've been preaching for like, 45, 50 minutes already. Ha. Praise the Lord.

²¹ So you see, just as death came into, 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verse 21. ²¹ So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. ²² Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. (1 Corinthians 15:21-22 NLT). I have news for you. My body's going to die, and yours will too. It doesn't matter if you're 19. I know you don't think that your body will die when you're 19, but it will, eventually, get wrinkles. And, eventually, it will leave you behind. It can't go with you into heaven. It has to stay here until the time God glorifies our bodies.

²² Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. ²³ But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back. Verse 24. ²⁴ After that the end will come, when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power. ²⁵ For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. ²⁶ And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For the Scriptures say, "God has put all things under his authority." [e] (Of course, when it says "all things are under his authority," that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.) ²⁸ Then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God's authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere. (1 Corinthians 15:22-28 NLT). I want you to see this.

Jesus Has authority and He is Supreme over everything, everywhere. How did He get it? Because He submitted everything that He had to the Father. So, then the Father gave Him all the authority that He had. Obviously, the one who gives you authority, cannot have a higher authority than the one who gives you authority.

²⁹ If the dead will not be raised, what point is there in people being baptized for those who are dead? Why do it unless the dead will someday rise again? ³⁰ And why should we ourselves risk our lives hour by hour? ³¹ For I swear, dear brothers and sisters, I make an oath, that I face death daily. (1 Corinthians 15:29-31 NLT) This is the apostle Paul saying, "I face death daily."

If you talk about a man who was living in the moment of God's protection and God's will day to day, moment by moment. This was the Apostle Paul. **³¹ ...This is as certain as my pride**

in what Christ Jesus our Lord has done in you.³² **And what value was there in fighting wild beasts - those people of Ephesus - if there will be no resurrection from the dead? And if there is no resurrection, "Let's feast and drink, for tomorrow we die!" (1 Corinthians 15: 31-32 NLT)** This is the heart of our salvation. This is the heart of everything we preach. If we do not believe that Jesus was raised from the dead by the Heavenly Father, and lives today, then we do not have a belief.

Then we cannot call ourselves Christians. And there is no reason for Christianity. Right? I would go so far as to say, that if we don't believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, there is no other religion. Because all other religious voices out there are merely ceremonies, rituals, and practices. Because the god that they say is their god is dead. Therefore, what is the point of having a religion if your god is dead? But if your God is alive, then there's a point in having a religion because He's alive. You can have a personal relationship with Him. The whole point of what Paul is saying is, "Why do I go through all this trouble? Why am I putting myself out there all this time, if God is dead? If Jesus was not raised from the dead?"

So, verse 33 says, "³³ **Don't be fooled by those who say such things**". (1 Corinthians 15:33 NLT) Don't be fooled by people who are constantly questioning the value of Christianity, the value of your walk with God, and the value of the resurrected Christ. Can you see that? Can you see that if you're hanging around people who are always questioning your faith, why would you wanna hang around those people? You might have to work with them, but it doesn't mean you have to hang around them. I'm still preaching good even though you're quiet.

For this is what the scripture says, "³³ **Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for "bad company corrupts good character."** Bad company corrupts good character. "³⁴ **Think carefully about what is right, and stop sinning.**" Think carefully about what is right, and stop sinning "**For to your shame I say that some of you don't know God at all.**" (1 Corinthians 15:33-34 NLT) Is it possible that you can be a Christian and not know God? Of course, you can. You can have Jesus as your Lord and Savior, but you want nothing to do with God or know about Him or to live with Him or for Him. But you can say, "I'm a Christian."

I'm going to just read that passage of scripture with, for you out of the King James. I'm gonna read it out of a few versions, and then I'll close. ³³ **Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.** Evil conversations, evil communications corrupt. Can I just stop there? Evil conversations, evil communications, corrupt. It will corrupt your character. It will corrupt your manners. It will corrupt the way you see things.

³⁴ **Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame. (1 Corinthians 15:33-34 KJV).** I'm going to just read those few verses from The Passion Translation. ³² **Tell me, why did I fight "wild beasts" in Ephesus if my hope is in this life only?** I mean, he's making a proper legal argument here. Why do I have to put myself out there as this person who is constantly being persecuted for what I believe, if my belief is not really a belief at all. So, ³² **...why did I fight "wild beasts" in Ephesus if my hope is in this life only? What was the point of that? If the dead do not rise, then let's party all night, for tomorrow we die! (1 Corinthians 15:33-34 TPT)**

I mean, I think that's a good thought. So, don't look at the people in the world. Come on, now. I know I'm nearly at the end of my message, but come on now. Don't look at people in the world that party all night, and they start partying at 8, 9, 10 o'clock at night, and they party until 5 o'clock in the morning, then they come home, and then by 11 o'clock, they got another beer in their hands. They just had 3 or 4 hours of sleep, and they are having a long weekend of just party, party, party.

The reason they want to party is because tomorrow they die; because they've got nothing else to live for but the party. They're looking for everything that they can to help them live for the party. "I need money to have a party. I need political clout to have a party. I need, some kind of... I just want to have a party."

This is what Paul is saying. He says, "What's the point of living life if I can't party all day long when I know I'm going to die tomorrow?" So, I don't look at people in the world and say, "Shame on them." I feel sorry for them because they don't have Jesus. But the only thing that they know is to party. So, let them party, but don't let their partying touch me. I don't need to party like they do because I know what I'm living for. Hallelujah.

So, if I think, "Oh, that's the good life that they're living. Look at the good life because they party, party. They make life. They're happy all the time." You don't see them when they're coming down from the downer. You don't see them when depression gets a hold of them. You don't see them when they are when they're having all manner of issues in their physical health. All you see is [*starts in a singing voice*] Party time, let's party. And they just wanna show the good life because, because they want everybody to think they're having the same good life that they're having and they don't know. Uh, but then they go home and they feel all bad, and they struggle with themselves for the next week and, and then they slept with this person or they slept with that one, and it's in marriage, and it's out of marriage, and they got all these things going on and, and-oh, life becomes a mess, but let's party. Don't let that stuff influence my party time. Ja neh?

And I must let that spirit tell me what my future looks like. Of course, they have nothing else to live for but the party. I've got Jesus. I have a personal relationship with Jesus. He guides me. He leads me. He talks to me. He's with me. He's protecting me. He's helping me. His word is constantly giving me ways to live life better, live life in increase, and live life with blessing because I choose it. I choose the blessings, not the curses. I choose to live life his way.

³³ So stop fooling yourselves. Evil companions will corrupt good morals and character. ³⁴ Come back to your right senses and awaken to what is right. Repent from your sinful ways. For some have no knowledge of God's wonderful love. You should be ashamed that you make me write this way to you! (1 Corinthians 15:33-34 TPT).

Why do you think he had to write this way to them? Because they were thinking like that. So, I don't bring the heavies on you today. I bring the blessings of God to you today. Praise the Lord. And so you all know that when I was a teenager, I had aspirations of what a good life would be. I wanna tell you that this beautiful girl [*points at Pastor Sharon*] has been a good life to me. For all of these forty-three years, she has been a good life to me. We live in joy. We live in peace. We live in unity. We live in the fruit of the Spirit of God. Why? Because we made a choice that we are not gonna see each other with all the rubbish that the world wants to bring into a relationship. We said, on the contrary, I'm gonna see you through the eyes of Jesus. I want you to see me through the eyes of Jesus. When we see each other that way, we have filters that help us and because the filters help us, we find out that where there is strife, all manner of evil abounds. So I've gotta just obey the word; keep strife out. A Jesus filter. Keep strife out.

Most people say, "You don't have a real relationship until you have a real good fight." I don't agree with that. If you've got God's filters, you don't have to fight. "But we have and we do." I see. I hear. "We have and we do." Well, if you have and you do, then you do. I prefer to say, "I have, but I don't." There is something in the past, but I choose not to do it again. And, then you do it again. That's not my choice. This is the moment. Thank God I've got a filter of the blood. Thank God I've got a filter of righteousness in Jesus. Because I don't have to stay with, "I did it again and I did it again." Every time I say, "I'm not gonna do it again. I'm gonna see her the way Christ sees me. I'm gonna see her as the way Christ sees her, and Christ sees me. And in Him, we don't have to fight."

We have an agreement space - It's the Word of God. It's the love of God. It's the future that God has for us. And so I'm happy about this. I'm very happy about this that young people that are in our church, that are in our ministry have a foundation that they can go forward and have the same kind of relationship in their lives. And people say, "Well, Pastor John,

how can I get what you got?" Jesus filters. Word of God filters. Hallelujah. If you wanna have the Word of God in your life, that's what bless you. It will bless you. It will bless you. So, if you want all of those bad marriages that are ending up in divorce, if that's the norm that you say, "I gotta bring that into my relationship." Well, then you're gonna sit with the same possible outcomes.

I don't see Jesus divorcing God the Father, do you? Or the Holy Spirit divorcing Jesus and the Father. Do you? That kind of divorce, that kind of separation doesn't exist in Them. So, why should I let that be a possibility where we have a division in us? No. I'm not gonna be divided that way. I'm gonna live according to the Word of God. Amen. Amen. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Did you get something out of that today?

I pray that the Lord will bless you and keep you, and He will make His face shine upon you, and He will give you peace. Hallelujah. Won't you stand with me, please? Glory to God. The reason I talk about my relationship with Pastor Sharon as frequently as I do, is because it is the most, relevant and most, virtual thing that I live in with my life. She's there for me always, all the time. She's a living relationship for me. And so I have to live my life in God with her all the time. All the time. So, I can live like that with God in a marriage, in a relationship, and I can have Him influence everything we do, every decision. Everything, God influences it. And so, I know that, economically, people have to face their financial outcomes as well. And that's something that I'm happy to preach about it because God must let us have, He must live with us in our economic situations. Amen. Praise the Lord. So, I know we're 2 weeks away from going on, everybody's going on leave.

And, as a ministry, we're shutting down our offices on the 14th of December. But we have 2 more weekends worth of services, and I believe God has got something very important to say to us. So, that when we get into the new year, we are ready and prepared for what God has for us in the new year. Amen. So, please, I'm asking you do not let your mindset be... It's already December, schools have already started closing, and I've got to shut down for the year because this is my time. Just give us a little bit of extra time in the next 2 weeks so that we can be ready for next year. Amen.

Will you put your hand on your heart and just agree this with me. Say, Lord, I give my life to You, I live for You, I receive Your blessing in every area of my life in Jesus' Name. I'm free from my humanity and I walk as a spiritual person in Jesus' Name. Amen.

I pray that as you go about your day today, you go about your week this week, you will have filters of the grace of God, the love of God, and the blessing of God. And I urge you to make choices as you move, you will make choices for Spirit-led life, not for your natural habits that have brought you into certain places.

Be free, walk strong, walk tall, and be the person that God has made you to be in Jesus' Name. I declare the protection of God on you every moment, every moment, every moment. Both physical protection and mind protection and emotion protection that you live in the moment of God's protection in Jesus' name. No weapon formed against you will prosper. If some of you are already travelling, I pray that the angels have charge over you, and you are protected in your going out, and you're coming back in Jesus' Name. And you all say Amen. Amen. Thank you for coming to church. Bye.