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Crossover First Fruits Part 8: The Way of Love

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Scripture References: Matthew 6:33 (KJ21), Matthew 6:33 (AMP), Ephesians 2:6 (CEV) Colossians 1:13-14 (BSB), 1 John 4:16-17 (BSB), 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (TLB), 1 Cor 14:1 (TLB), John 14:6 (TLB), Mark 4:13 (NKJV), Mark 4:14-20 (BSB), Ephesians 3:17 (NKJV), Galatians 5:22-23 (BSB), Luke 10:25-37 (KJV), John 13: 34-35 (NIV), Acts 22:17 (NLT) Acts 23:11 (NLT), Acts 16:6-10 (NLT), 1 Corinthians 16:5-11 (NLT), Proverbs 29:18 (KJV), Proverbs 29:18 (AMPC), Proverbs 29:18 (MSG), Proverbs 29:18 (NLT), Habakkuk 1:12-17 (NLT), Habakkuk 2:1-3-8 (NLT), Habakkuk 2:1-3 (KJV), Hebrews 10:35-39 NLT

Praise the Lord. It's a good thing to be in church. It's a good thing to be in church because God has called it and I'm so grateful for it. I'm so grateful. Truly. Hallelujah.

You know, Pastor Garth is going to come minister in a moment. I just want to say to you that if we talk about measuring success. You also have to bring into the conversation something that is of value. You know, because if you want to measure anything or you want to talk about success and or failure then you've got to talk about value. I fully recognize that what we are doing this weekend is we are taking something that's valuable and we are giving it to God.

I have never had a challenge with tithing, because when you start tithing early on in your life, it becomes part of what you do. Doesn't make it less valuable. It just becomes what you do. So, if you have the habit and the pattern, as I was talking earlier, the pattern, when you have a pattern, then the pattern continues. It doesn't diminish the value. It just makes it a pattern. And who knows what pattern God will establish here with us because we've given something of value. Hallelujah. That's a wonderful thing.

So for many years, I had a pattern. I had a pattern of, "Garth, don't do that." "But dad" Hiding "Garth what are you doing?" "Hm" Hiding. "Garth I want you to take responsibility." Hiding. I had a pattern. But the pattern paid off and now we have something of value amongst us. I'm delighted that the value comes to you this afternoon. Pastor Garth ministering to you from the pulpit. So, all of those patterns created value and now the value comes to you in the form of Pastor Garth. He wanted me to introduce him as the son that I love very much.

Pastor Garth: That is true. Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody. Is everybody awake? Just tap yourself on the forehead a little bit and say I'm awake. Praise the Lord. Father, thank you for this time that we have together. It's a real joy that we can be together and we can love You and we can hear Your words. Your words are the most valuable thing in our lives. We love your words. We follow your words. We appreciate your words. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for making the words of the Father real to us. And, Father, I pray that we all have ears to hear this afternoon, ears to hear and hearts to receive and to believe in Jesus' name. Praise the Lord.

So, I'm going to jump straight in if that's okay. I've got another message that like the last time is tightly packed like a sausage. You can all turn with me, please, to Matthew 6, verse 33, which we know well because it's been ministered a lot to us. Matthew 6, verse 33. ³³ **But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:33 KJ21)** The Amplified says, ³³ **But first and most importantly seek (aim at, strive after) His kingdom and His righteousness, and this is what's important its [His way of doing and being right—the attitude and character of God], and all these things will be given to you also. (Matthew 6:33 AMP)**

So, what's nice for me when I am given the opportunity, which I'm very grateful for, to minister is I get to recap a little bit for us as a people and just to locate us where we are all as a people. So, what has God been saying to us? We've been brought the message on

Seeking First the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness, His way of doing and being. We have been brought the message of *Crossing Over, Crossing over from death unto life*, Ephesians 2, verse 6. **6 God raised us from death to life with Christ Jesus, and he has given us a place beside Christ in heaven. (Ephesians 2:6 CEV)** This position indicates that we rule with Christ.

Pastor John has been ministering in morning moments on Colossians 1, verse 13. **13 He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:13-14 BSB)** Currently, Pastor John has been talking to us about the love of God from 1 John 4, verse 16. **16 And we have come to know and believe the love that God has for us. God is love; whoever abides in love abides in God, and God in him. 17 In this way, love has been perfected among us. (1 John 4:16-17 BSB)**

So, if I can locate us as a people, I would say this, “God is calling us to seek Him first, to seek His Kingdom, to seek His way of doing and being right so that we can all cross over together from the domain of darkness into the domain of light. And we do this by walking with Him in the way of love.” Would you say that’s accurate? Does that locate us as a people? Would you like me to say it again? So, God is calling us as a people to seek Him first, to seek His Kingdom, to seek His way of doing and being right so that we can all cross over together from the domain of darkness or you could say the domain of death into His domain of light and life. And we do this by walking with Him in the way of love.

So, that just happens to be the title of the message the Lord wants me to bring to you. The way of love. Praise the Lord! Glory to Jesus. So, 1 Corinthians 13 verses 1 to 3, if you can read along with me. 1 Corinthians 13 verses 1 to 3. **1 If I had the gift of being able to speak in other languages without learning them and could speak in every language there is in all of heaven and earth, but didn’t love others, I would only be making noise. 2 If I had the gift of prophecy and knew all about what is going to happen in the future, knew everything about everything, but didn’t love others, what good would it do? Even if I had the gift of faith so that I could speak to a mountain and make it move, I would still be worth nothing at all without love. 3 If I gave everything and I could just pause there for a moment. 3 If I gave everything, if I gave all my holidays and I gave all my money. 3 If I gave everything I have to poor people, and if I were burned alive for preaching the Gospel but didn’t love others, it would be of no value whatever. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3 TLB)**

Praise the Lord. And that’s what Pastor John got through saying yesterday morning. He said “If you’ve come here for flesh, if you’ve come here to impress one of us or just to tick a box or to be seen by people, you’ve missed the point.” God wants us here because we love Him and that’s His way of doing and being right. Otherwise, what we are doing is of no value whatsoever. Right? Isn’t that what Scripture says? Praise the Lord.

So, God has never changed and never will. James 1 verse 17, there is no variableness in God. There is no shadow of turning in Him. He wants our love. He wants us to love Him more than money. He wants us to love Him more than holidays. He wants us to love Him more than our careers. He wants us to love Him more than our families. He wants us to love Him more than our church. What do you mean by that Pastor G?

Go read 1 Corinthians 3 verses 4 to 9 where the disciples were saying, “Well I’m of Paul and I’m of Apollos.” And Paul was saying this is foolish. Is Jesus divided? Praise the Lord. He wants us to love Him more than our homes, more than our cars and more than any of our stuff. So, what happens when we love God and His ways more than any of these other things? We are blessed, we are blessed, we become fruitful. We multiply, we have authority,

we govern and subdue the earth. And God helps us put these things in their proper place like Pastor John has been saying, "In order." Praise the Lord.

So, what does it mean to seek? To seek means to go in search or quest of. To discover by searching or questioning. To look intently for something not immediately visible to the eye. So, 1 Corinthians 14 verse 1. **1 Let love be your greatest aim; (1 Corinthians 14:1 TLB)** Praise the Lord. How do we make love our greatest aim? Well, thank you for asking. This is a real question. How do I know that these things that I'm giving, like this weekend for instance, are from a place of love in my heart? How do we make this authentic before God? How do we make love our greatest aim?

So, these are four points you can write down. This is how the Holy Spirit said it to me like Pastor John was saying. He dropped this into my spirit and then gave me scripture to authenticate what He was saying to me. So, number one - seek it to know it. Seek it to know it. Number two - know it to sow it. Number three - sow it to grow it. Number four - grow it to sow it. And yes I know, there's sow it there twice. So, on the first point. Seek it to know it. Seek to know His love for yourself. You cannot have a relationship with God through me, through Pastor John, through Pastor Sharon, through Pastor Christi.

You must seek the Father through relationship with Jesus and with the Helper. You must seek the Father through relationship with Jesus with the Helper. Are you all alive this afternoon? Praise the Lord. So, John 14 verse 6. **6 Jesus told him, "I am the Way."** I am the Way. I am the Way. If Jesus was standing before you and He could put His hand on His chest and pat Himself He would say, I am the Way. So, how many of you would want to get to know Jesus because He is the Way? Praise the Lord. **6 ...No one can get to the Father except by means of Me. (John 14:6 TLB)** So, there is no other way to know the love of the Father than through Jesus and with Jesus. This means you have to know Him for yourself. Praise the Lord. This means you have to know Him for yourself. There's no other substitute than knowing Him for yourself. Praise the Lord.

So, earlier in the week, I had an opportunity to minister to the young people and to the staff here. And the Lord just dropped something in my heart while I was talking to them that He reminded me of just to mention it here again. And there's a message by somebody who is in our faith legacy. His name is Norvel Hayes and he ministered a message on Creating an Environment for the Holy Spirit to move. And one of the things that he talks about is from Matthew 16 which is, "Who do you say that I am?" And what you call Jesus is what He will become to you. What you call Jesus is what He will become to you. What you call Jesus is what He will become to you.

So, who do you need Him to be to you? Jesus, you're my healer. Jesus, you're my wisdom. Praise the Lord. So, who do you need Him to be to you? Jesus, you're my provider. And the reason I'm talking in a loud voice is because the way that I was speaking to the young people during the week is, the enemy will always resist you and he wants to keep you as quiet as possible. Preferably he would like to keep your mouth shut and keep you focused on your shame and on your nature, your self-nature, so that you will not speak, so he can keep your mouth shut. And you have to resist that. You have to push back like the two blind men when they were trying to tell them to be quiet and they shouted even louder.

So, you may start off saying, well Jesus you're my provider. Jesus, you're my provider. But something happens to you on the inside when you lift your voice a little bit louder. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. And some of you will even experience resistance to even putting up your hands. Well, what is that? Where does that come from? Maybe you're ashamed of your condition. Anyway let me not get into that. Let me keep going. So, what you call Jesus is what He will become to you. Jesus you're my

freedom. Praise the Lord. We'll get there. So, I've asked the team to prepare a short clip of Oral Roberts. If they can play it for me now and then I will talk about it.

Oral Roberts: Every night I woke up walking in my sleep stomping and crying and praying. One night my wife found me and she woke me and said, "Oral what are you doing in here?" I woke up and I looked at her, I said, "Honey I don't know." She took me back in the bedroom, we sat down on the side of the bed and she said, "Oral you've been doing this for several nights, something is wrong, what is it?" And I told her my dream. I've never told many people this dream but I'm going to tell it to you now. I dreamed in that dream that God opened my eyes and let me see as God sees and He showed me the human race. He brought the people by me by the multiplied millions and let me see them as they are. And this is what I saw.

I saw the vast majority of all people are sick and afflicted in some way. Either in soul, mind or body or all at the same time. And God let me hear the screaming cry of their tormented condition. He let me see the cancer, the tumour, the tuberculosis, the little afflicted children. He let me hear them scream in the night and that was the dream that woke me up and caused me to sob and pray as I was doing. Evelyn said "Oral what are you going to do?" I said "I don't know" and then God told me what to do. He said, "Take your Bible, your New Testament, take Matthew, Mark, Luke, John the book of Acts, the first five books in your New Testament. Read them through consecutively three different times upon your knees in one month and I'll show you Jesus."

I did that at various intervals. I would get on my knees, I would spread my Bible out and I would read Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the book of Acts three different times in 30 days. And at the end of that time God had shown me Jesus of Nazareth. He seemed to rise up from those pages, He seemed to stand up in my presence and He had a gentle hand on His wrist. He had a tenderness in His spirit, He was filled with love and compassion. And I saw Him reaching to the right and reaching to the left, healing the sick, loving little children. Reaching out His hands to the whole world, to heal them, to save them and to make them whole. He said, "Now, you be like that and you heal the people as He healed."

Pastor Garth: Praise the Lord. So, why did I want you to see this, Church? As you read scripture, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the book of Acts – stop, meditate - and His love will rise up out of the pages and become real to you. He will, He will, He will become real to you. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Know it to sow it. This is point two. Know it to sow it. Out of Mark 4:13. So, Jesus had just gotten through speaking about in the parable, the sower sowing the Word, and the different heart conditions. And the disciples come to Him afterwards, seeking, questioning, asking Jesus questions. What were You saying? What did You mean? And He responded by saying in verse 13. **"If you don't understand this parable, how then will you understand any parable?" (Mark 4:13 NKJV)**. So, what was He saying? He was saying if you don't understand the parable of sowing the Word of God, how then will you understand any parable? The Word of God must be sown. The Word of God must come out of our mouths.

When Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness, He didn't out-think the devil. He had to say out of his mouth, "Devil, it is written." Which means He had to know the will of God. Of course, He was the Word made flesh, but we have to know how to defend and be offensive with scripture. Right?

When we know God's love and His love abides in us, we begin to see as He sees. And the Holy Spirit just reminded me of something. It was probably two or three years ago now, where we had a prayer meeting. It was still in the Heritage Hall. And the Lord said to me

about listening to Pastor John's messages, that the words that he was giving Pastor John was like a salve, S-A-L-V-E, which is something you put on to bring healing.

So, it's important for you and I that we must begin to see the way that He sees. So, when we abide in His love when we know it, we abide in it, we begin to see. And here's the most important thing. We begin to see ourselves the way God sees us. Because right now, the way we see ourselves is distorted, unclear. And He wants us to see ourselves the way He sees us. Praise the Lord.

We begin to see where we are bound and how to be free. We begin to see our condition and how He wants us to be free. Then we must speak. Every word that He gives us is words of love, designed to make us free. So, when we allow the enemy to keep our mouths shut, and why do I keep doing this? It was another image that the Lord gave me, again in one of our prayer groups. He showed me like a vice, those olden day traps, maybe they still use them, that would grip the legs of animals. He showed me that over people's mouths, that because of their condition, because they were ashamed of their condition, they wouldn't open their mouths to speak the words of God. So, as we see our condition, and how to be free, we must speak. So, why does He want us free? So yes, we can be free ourselves, that would be a marvellous and wonderful thing. But He wants us to be free so that we can help others to become free. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Praise Jesus.

It was something Brother Dennis said to me when he visited us, maybe the first or second time, and I was still a young man. And he said to me, "If you love me, for my sake, you will become free so that I can be free." Praise the Lord. He wants us to be free so that we can be free ourselves, but so that we can help others to be free. This is the love that Pastor John is talking about, a Perfect Continuous State of Being. A Perfect Continuous State of Being. Freedom. Perfectly free. Continuously free.

This love is designed to help us be free, stay free, and help others to be free. This is the very purpose of tithing and offering to God because we love Him and He wants us to be free. Praise the Lord. There's no ulterior motive here. God wants us to be free. Why? Because the love of money torments us. It produces fear because if you love money, what you have is never enough. That is the nature of the enemy. He keeps you chasing. He keeps you chasing because the fear is what's controlling you. What I'm chasing is not enough. It's not enough. It's not enough. And He wants us free of being tormented of that fear. Everybody see that? And also, He wants to love us in return and bless our lives so that we again can be a blessing and we can help others to be free. So, we must speak. This is all in reference to sowing. We must speak. Can I get an amen on that?

Okay, point number three. Sow it to grow it. So, sowing in the knowing. So, what's important here is that we know the love of God for ourselves. You're not just hearing my words and thinking, "Wow, those are nice words," or Pastor John's words or Pastor Sharon or Pastor Christi. Those are nice words. And in this moment, you can kind of sense His love. No, you have to take these words and go get to know His love for yourself. So, sowing in the knowing of His love changes the condition of your heart so that your heart yields more fruit. Praise the Lord.

So, Mark 4, verses 14 to 20, ¹⁴ **The farmer sower sows the word.** So, now Jesus is busy explaining to His disciples because they came to seek Him. They came to ask Him questions about what He was saying. So, He said, "Now, because you've come to ask, I'm going to reveal to you." So, ¹⁵ **Some are like the seeds along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.** ¹⁶ **Some are like the seeds sown on rocky ground. They hear the word and at once receive it with joy.** ¹⁷ **But they themselves have no root, and they remain for only a season.** Other translations say they spring up quickly. So, even looks good or looks pretty. ¹⁷

But they themselves have no root, and they remain for only a season. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.

So, any plant that doesn't have a root, what happens? It's very vulnerable to the elements sun, hail, wind, water. So, it's important that we have a root. So, ¹⁸ **others are like the seeds sown among the thorns. They hear the word, ¹⁹ but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰ Still others are like the seeds sown on good soil. So, this is the soil that we're talking about. They hear the word, receive it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.” (Mark 4:14-20 BSB)**

So, we can all locate our heart condition in these verses, right? We either have rocky soil and the word doesn't produce because we don't have a root, or our hearts are thorny because of worry or fear. Our trust in money, or our love for other things and as a result, we are unfruitful.

So, Ephesians 3 verse 17 is the prayer that Paul prays that, I pray that you are ¹⁷ **...rooted and grounded in love. (Ephesians 3:17 NKJV)** So, what happens when we are rooted and grounded in love? The seed produces 30, 60, and 100 fold. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. And if you go read that whole prayer, the whole purpose of that is that it would produce power in our lives. So, how do we see this power? How do we see the power of God in our lives? Galatians 5 verses 22 to 23. Can we put that one up so we can all see this together? Galatians 5 verses 22 to 23. It's one we know about well, but I want to speak just a little bit on all of them. ²² **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness,** or other translations say meekness or humility **and self-control. Against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23 BSB)** So, all of these fruit produce power in our lives, right? Praise the Lord.

So, here I just want to touch on it for a little bit. Love never fails. Yes. Praise the Lord. Love never fails. So, love is the force that never fails. Praise God. Joy is our strength. Praise the Lord. Peace produces wholeness and protects our hearts and minds. Patience keeps us stable and steady. Kindness is the force that moves you to help. Goodness is the force that leads men to repentance. Faithfulness produces confidence. Because the same word for faithfulness is the same Greek word for faith. So, faith or faithfulness produces confidence. Praise the Lord. So, gentleness or humility attracts the grace and favour of God. It's the force that attracts the favour and grace of God, which is according to James 4 verse 6.

Self-control. I was talking to the young people in the week and I was saying, wouldn't a lot of our problems be solved with this fruit, the fruit of self-control or discipline? If I only exercised more self-control in this, then this would happen. So, self-control produces discipline and restrains us when our flesh wants other things or wants to say other things. And with all this being said, love produces all of this in our life. So, when we make love our greatest aim, it produces gentleness. It produces humility. It produces joy. Praise the Lord. So, I wrote this just for myself, Jesus, you're my love! Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

So, number four, grow it to sow it. Grow it to sow it. Well, why have you mentioned sowing it again? God wants us to be seed bearers. He wants us to sow our seed. He wants us to sow our seed from our fruit everywhere. You know, God is a wonderful sense of humour and He often uses it with me, but this is one occasion where we can go everywhere and sow our wild oats. We can literally go everywhere and sow this kind of seed. But you can only become a seed bearer when you have fully matured, fully developed fruit. Just like a farmer harvesting their fruit and using the seed to replant.

That is what God desires for us. God designed us to be fruit growers and seed bearers. He wants us to sow seeds of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness, and self-control. Everywhere we go, starting in our own lives, then in our families, then in our church and our community, which includes our places of work. This is based on the model that the Lord gave to Pastor John. Personal leadership, public leadership, purpose leadership. Right? Praise the Lord. This is how our fruitfulness is multiplied and God has said to Pastor John, "He desires for us to multiply." This is how we multiply, church. So, people can taste our fruit and that's a wonderful thing. If we are developing and growing fruit, they can taste love that has been grown. They can taste faithfulness, they can taste patience, they can taste these fruit in our lives. That does not necessarily mean we are sowing into their lives.

By sowing the seeds of love, it means you have to go out of your way to love your neighbour. So, many times this will be revealed in mercy. So let's look at a scripture because I can hear your brain, some of you. Luke 10 verse 25 to 37. Can we put this one up as well, please? Luke 10 verse 25 to 37. The Parable of the Good Samaritan ²⁵ **And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him Jesus, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?** ²⁶ **He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?** ²⁷ **And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.** So, this person knows the law. He knows what the word of God says about loving. ²⁸ **And he Jesus said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.** ²⁹ **But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?** Thank you for laughing Pastor Lynn

³⁰ **And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.** ³¹ **And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: you would think the priest would know how to love and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.** ³² **And likewise a Levite, also a minister, you would think he would know how to love, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.** ³³ **But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him. (Luke 10:25-33 KJV)**

Do you remember what happened to Oral Roberts when the Lord brought those multitudes before him? He experienced the compassion of the Lord Jesus. Lord, may we all be awakened to Your compassion and Your mercy. And compassion came on him. ³⁴ **And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.** ³⁵ **And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.** ³⁶ **Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?** ³⁷ **And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, like He said to Oral Robert, Go, and do thou likewise. (Luke 10: 34-37 KJV)**

So, the love of God, when it becomes mature in us, will demonstrate itself in compassion and mercy. Can you all see this church? So, we can locate ourselves. If we use the word of God, which is what it's designed to do, to judge ourselves. How does this measure? How do we measure against this? I think we have some love development that is required of us. What do you think? Let's make love our greatest aim. So, last scripture and then I'm done. John 3 verse 34. Let's put that one up so we can all read it together. John 3 verse 34. Praise the Lord. ³⁴ **"A new command I give you this day: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another.** ³⁵ **By this, by this everyone all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."** (John 13:34-35, NIV) If you love one another, by this will all men know that we are disciples of the Lord Jesus.

Are we a church of disciples? Okay, I've got kind of half-hearted responses. Are we a church of disciples? Yes, we are a church of disciples. We are following the Lord Jesus. By this, the way we love one another will all men know that we are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord.

So, God desires for us to seek it to know it, to know it to sow it, sow it to grow it, and grow it to sow it. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. One of the most marvelous ways that we can soften our hearts and we can plough up those hard areas of our hearts. Pastor Sharon teaches in *The Hardworking Farmer*, Judah shall plow. And what is Judah? It's to praise God. It's to give Him thanks. It's to worship Him. Praise God. What does that do for us? It magnifies and glorifies who He is, and that's got nothing to do with me. Because regardless of how I feel or my condition, that doesn't change the fact that God is faithful, and God is good, and His mercy endures forever. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus.

Brother Hagin talks, if you've heard any of his ministry, he'll often say how he would go behind the barn on his farm or on his property, and he would start out in the flesh just praising God, and he would even dance in the flesh. But what he would say is before you would know it, his coattails would be standing straight out. He would be dancing so hard in the Spirit and praising the Lord with such enthusiasm. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

So, sometimes, many times, we have to fake it till we make it. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. And you may start out in the flesh just saying, "Glory to God. You are wonderful. You are wonderful. You are wonderful." And then soon, it will begin to rise up in you that life that comes, like Pastor John was ministering about, you sow to the Spirit. You will from the Spirit reap life. And you praise the Lord for long enough, and you start to lift your voice a little bit louder. Guess what comes? Joy. Joy. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. You sow to the Spirit. You will from the Spirit reap life. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Jesus, You are our joy. Jesus, You are our life. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Glory to God. Glory to God.

I'm telling you, I was just in the back just now, and I was just listening to five minutes of Brother Hagin in one of his very last meetings that he had. And one of the things, again, that stood out to me was Brother Hagin stands up at the pulpit, and the people wouldn't be quiet. Brother Hagin didn't have to say to the people, "Come now, let's praise the Lord." It's like asking your children to give you, to say thank you to you when you've given them something. How much more valuable is it when they say, "Wow, thank you, Dad." And he would stand up at the pulpit, and they wouldn't be quiet. They would keep praising the Lord.

But why was that happening? It's because the Word of God was so alive in them. The love of God was so alive in them. They could barely help themselves. Their condition had been changed so much that there was no resistance to raising their hands and their voice. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus. The spirit man, stronger than the natural man, dominating the natural man. No, you will not keep me down. Glory to Jesus. I'm done. Praise the Lord. Glory to Jesus.

Ps John: Well, praise the Lord. He says he's done. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Well, okay then. Jesus is Lord. Jesus is Lord. I think one of the most marvellous things that can happen to all of us is when our spirit man, the place where God lives, Continuous Perfect State of Being lives in you, dominates your natural world and your natural man. And then from that moment onwards, your spirit man dominates, has dominion over your natural self. Then everything changes. Hallelujah. Thank you, Pastor G. Thank you. What an amazing clip. Where did you find that clip? Well, wherever you found it. Thank you. It was really wonderful

to see such an old clip from Oral Roberts. Right? What an anointing. How amazing was that to see that. Praise the Lord.

We're going to just break for five minutes so that I can get my microphone on and then we'll finish up for today. All right. Five minutes. Cool. See you in five.

30 March 2024

Crossover First Fruits Part 9

Pastor John Bendixen (WTB)

Pastor John: Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Ready. What do you think would happen if we all lived constantly, constantly living in a continuous perfect state of being? What do you think would happen if we were all living like that? The way Pastor Garth put it in the previous session was, if love was perfected in us, or we were walking in the love of God towards everybody. And that's how we constantly lived. Making sure that love doesn't fail in us so that our perspective of things and the way we live life was in a constant mode of maturing, having the way of God leading us. I wonder what would happen. It's quite a thought, isn't it?

I think we're headed there. I do. I think there are places in the Church of the Lord Jesus where we're headed there. And I think it's what God needs. God needs a group of people to be there in order for us to go further. I need my leather thing that's in there. Thank you [*Pastor Sharon hands Pastor John his leather journal*]. I thought there was something. So, if we got to that place, I think we would see quite a lot of change.

So, before we had a lunch break, Acts 22:17 in the New Living Translation, I read this verse to you, ¹⁷ **“After I returned to Jerusalem, I was praying in the Temple and fell into a trance. ¹⁸ I saw a vision of Jesus saying to me, ‘Hurry! Leave Jerusalem, for the people here won’t accept your testimony about me.’ (Acts 22:17 NLT)** That's quite something. I mean, there's two things that happened there. He's describing himself going into a trance. So, he's describing the thing that was happening to him, and then he describes what he saw because this thing was happening to him.

So, if I could explain it in a different way, and I'm trying to make you understand that these are two separate things that are happening, but they're happening together. And they both need to happen together at the same time, but they are two separate things that are happening together. So, if I might just use my current experience as an opportunity, I can be riding a mountain bike. But if I'm riding the mountain bike at the Cape Epic, they are two separate things, but they're happening together because I can ride my mountain bike anywhere. But if I'm riding it at the Cape Epic, they're two separate things, but they're happening together at the same time. So, you can be and Paul was obviously in a place where he understood that you can enter into the spirit realm. But then what you see in the spirit realm is something separate to being in the spirit realm. Yes.

Let me put it to you this way, there are times when I'm ministering here on the pulpit and I enter into the spirit realm and I'm not in a trance, but I see things by the spirit. And as I see things by the Spirit, God begins to do things by the Spirit. But I'm not in a trance, but I'm in the spirit. In this case, Paul was in a trance, so he was in a state where he was almost out of the body experience and he was seeing Jesus and Jesus was speaking to him. So, you must know that if this was an event that was happening, I mean, this is not the first time Paul saw Jesus, so he knew who Jesus was. But obviously, this is important for him to have. I saw a vision saying to me. I saw a vision of Jesus saying to me, so he was seeing Jesus, he was in a trance and he saw Jesus.

Then Jesus is speaking to him. I'm making this as a distinction because you'll see as we move along why I'm just elaborating this point a little bit. Chapter 23 of Acts, verse 11, again, the New Living Translation. ¹¹ **That night the Lord appeared to Paul and said, “Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well.” (Acts 23:11 NLT)** Now, can you see the language is different? **That night, the Lord appeared to Paul.** He didn't say he was in a trance. He was in a different condition, but the Lord appeared to him. **And said to him, Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well. (Acts 23:11 NLT)** These are two separate

events that have happened to Paul. They are very spiritual events and they are two events that have a definite impact on his future.

Now, I'm going to go back to my previous question that we were dealing with in the previous session. Success and failure are predictable. Success and failure are predictable. So, in the world system, they have a measurement and predictability of success. They also have a measurement and predictability of failure in the world system. In God's system, success and failure are predictable. And the two are different things and their measurement is different if you choose to measure it. If I say to you, God speaking to Paul says in a vision, in a trance-like vision, "Hurry, leave Jerusalem for the people here won't accept your testimony about Me." If he disobeys God, is he successful? No. If he disobeys God, he will be a failure. So, maybe he goes and he stands in front of the people and he starts preaching the gospel and they don't want to hear him. He's a failure because God said, "Hurry, leave Jerusalem." Right?

Some people might say, "Hey, but you know, you're called to do some preaching, Paul. You're actually abandoning a city to go somewhere else just because people are intimidating you." So, people that might see Paul leaving might say he's failed. Because they are measuring success and failure on a different level, but his obedience to God to leave Jerusalem would make him successful.

Now, in Acts 23, ¹¹...**"Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well."** (Acts 23:11 NLT) Now, this is a word that comes to Paul that takes him on a journey. And the journey that Paul walks is actually quite a long way for him to get to Rome. And in the end, he actually dies in Rome. This journey led him to Rome to die in Rome. But I would not call that a failure either. Because God predicted that he would have to do that. So, his obedience to get to Rome and the way that he got to Rome, his willingness to go to Rome made him a success. But if anybody else was looking at him, they would have said, "You've failed, Paul."

So, anytime you obey God, success is predictable. It's not predictable by the measurement of human standards. But it is predictable. Come on. Obedience to God will always predictably lead you to success. The way other people see success or don't see success is irrelevant. It's only relevant because God sees it as successful. If other people know about it, too, then that's ok, but they don't have to.

So, now I'm going to share with you a third experience, Acts 16, verse 6. ⁶ **Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. (Acts 16:6 NLT)** Can I just ask you who prevented them from preaching the Gospel in those two places at that time? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit said, "Don't go there and don't preach there." "But he's called to preach to these very people." Timing's not right. You may not go there. So, is he successful if he doesn't go there? Of course, he is. He's obeying God. He's successful because he's not going there.

You know, if he listens to the Holy Spirit and he doesn't go there when he gets to heaven and he has a conversation with God, God is going to say, "Paul, I want to just show you if you had gone to those places, what might have happened to you. This is what would have happened to you. So, I had to stop you from going there. So, well done that you obeyed me because the timing was wrong, because this and this was happening in those cities at that time. And if you had gone there, it would have changed everything. Your whole course of destiny and places you should have gone, you wouldn't have gone. So, I had to stop you from going there because it would have changed everything. You wouldn't have gone to Rome. You wouldn't have done many things if you had gone there because those things were waiting for you."

So, ⁶ prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. ⁷ Then coming to the borders of Mysia, they headed north for the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there. (Acts 16:6-7 NLT) So, they got a plan. Come on. They've got a plan to go there. And they start going there. Then as they start going there, the Holy Spirit says, "Don't go there." Why did they even have a plan to go there? Because the calling of God was to those people. So, they planned to go to the people that God called them to go to. But couldn't he have heard God beforehand so that he didn't actually start going there? He should have made a plan so that the plan didn't include them going there. That would have saved a whole lot of resources if they just heard from God beforehand. Well, tell that to the Holy Spirit.

Why didn't the Holy Spirit tell Paul before he even left so he didn't waste those resources? And you thought it's only Pastor John that kind of changed his mind about things that have to happen in the church all the time. Huh? And bear in mind, those days when they started to go somewhere, they didn't put gas in the car, ride one hour and say, "I've wasted one hour of time." When they started to walk, they started to walk with a whole caravan of people. They had food on the caravan. They had water on the caravan. They had all kinds of places.... they had protection that they needed to take with them. They had resources and they had a whole plan to go to a place.

So, why didn't the Holy Spirit tell them before they left so that they didn't have to go through all of that? One day when I get to heaven, I'll ask the Holy Spirit. Okay, let's take the worst-case scenario Paul was hard of hearing. So? What? In the end, he still obeyed God. Right?

You know, if we don't get so caught up with the human order of life that says everything's got to be a plan, everything's got to be working according to the plan, and everything's got to have resources allocated to the plan. And everything has got to be in the order of the way things work. Otherwise, it just doesn't feel right because the order is wrong. If we just take a different stance and say, "Maybe the order is God's order, and let's just wait and see what God says." Maybe He changes our plans. Go this way. Go that way. Let's do this. Let's do that.

Is there any harm in that? I'd go so far as to say, "God can change our plans anytime." Don't you think? Wouldn't you want God to change your plans anytime? Well, if you just keep making plans all the time, and God has got no input to it, you'll end up in places you shouldn't be. And then you'll encounter things you shouldn't encounter. You'll have battles you shouldn't have to fight. You'll have temptations that you shouldn't have to have and worry about.

So, God is always out for our best. So, ⁷ ... but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there. ⁸ So instead, now they've got a plan. ⁸ So instead, they went on through Mysia to the seaport of Troas. Acts 16:7-8 (NLT) Can you see what the Bible says there? So instead. So instead. Obviously, something was going on. So, hey, God's called me to the ministry. So, the Holy Spirit is saying, "Don't go there, don't go there." So, I'm going to go here now. But now. Well, you know, he's just going there. The Holy Spirit has said what not to do, but He hasn't yet told him exactly what to do. But he's not stopping. He's still going.

Come on, come on. Hallelujah. ⁸ So instead, they went on through Mysia to the seaport of Troas. ⁹ That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" ¹⁰ So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there. Acts 16:8-10 (NLT) Come on. There was a calling. There was a commission by God. They obeyed the calling and the commission by God, and they

started going. God said, "Don't go." The Holy Spirit said, "Don't go there." "Okay, then we move on to the next place." "Don't go there." "Okay, we're going to move on to the next place." "Good decision." "Let's go there." While you're going there, a vision appears. "Come to Macedonia." Wonderful. Now we know where God really wants us to be. "Ah, Lord, why didn't you let this guy come and speak to us before we left anyway so we could have gone straight from there to Macedonia?"

Do you have the answer for that? Anybody want to tell me what the answer is? Anybody got an answer for why the Lord didn't do it that way? Who can know what the mind of God is? All I know is that he started moving, started going. "I got a calling. I got a commission." But didn't he waste resources all that time? And God says, "I don't care about resources. I got plenty. I got plenty. Just move. I need you to move because I'm not going to talk to you until you start going to the place more or less where I'm going. But I'm going to lead you as you go." Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

What's happening to us this weekend with first fruits? Why are we doing this? We're giving first fruits. What's the value of it? I can't tell you. What are we going to get from it? I don't know but we are moving. We are obeying. We are giving. It is quite possible that in our giving, God gives us a vision. Maybe there's a calling that comes our way that He makes something clear to us and says, "Thank you for doing this. Now I can tell you what I wanted to tell you, but I couldn't tell you before you did this." And by the way, you couldn't have got here if you didn't get through December and January and February until you got here. Now I can tell you something. And you needed to keep hearing about the Continuous Perfect State of Being, because if you don't get the message about the Continuous Perfect State of Being that is continuously perfect towards you, that's living in you, that will change everything around you. You couldn't have got what you are getting now.

So, I'm waiting for God to show us many things, visions, trances, any kind of things, anyway that He wants to show it to us. Let Him bring it because we are being obedient. We are being obedient. Hallelujah. I have an expectation that as we flow in the Spirit, that our spiritual flow, our spiritual life, the way that we are going about things, these things are going to bear fruit. It's making a pull on God. The Holy Spirit had to keep talking to Paul. "Don't go there, Paul." Why? Because he was going. "I can't let you go there, Paul. Time is not right. Things will happen to you there. I can't let you go there. Don't go there, Paul. Not that place either. Okay, wait here, because there's a vision coming." So what happened? What happened? You all know what happened. They went to Macedonia. Who does Paul meet first time?

So, you know, I haven't got time to read it to you today. I've got other things I have to say to you. But, when he gets to Macedonia, he goes down to where things are happening at the river and he meets a lady called Lydia. She takes him to a group of people and they have a prayer meeting together. That prayer meeting becomes the first church of the Philippians in the town of Philippi, in the place of Macedonia. Before Paul died, he said, "They are the people that partnered with me through all of my troubles, through all of my issues. They were the ones that were partners with me. When others didn't partner with me, the Macedonian-Philippian church partnered with me." And he wrote that famous scripture in 4, verse 19, Philippians. "And my God shall meet all your needs according to His riches in glory." He was writing that to the Philippian church because they were the ones that he could write that to, because they were the ones that partnered with him through everything.

So, in the end, was that all a waste? In the end, it was successful, but if you start measuring success halfway through what God's got planned, "Oh, no, this thing's not working." As Pastor Christi said earlier on in her preaching, "There are many people that God has called to us that are no longer with us, because it didn't turn out for them the way that they wanted it to turn out." Hallelujah.

There were many other churches that Paul went to, many other places that Paul went to, and none of them partnered with him the way the Philippian church did. I wonder if that's because a woman was involved. Sometimes women have a spiritual grasp of things and sometimes the men have a value system that prevents them from doing things. Not always, but sometimes, and then that's where the woman becomes the helper. They're going to knock the men over the head with a rolling pin. Wake up. Like my son said, "Wakker word boetie." (wake up brother)

So, I want you just to see that there is a vision. A vision came to him in the form of a man that just appeared to him. Another time, Paul, the Lord appeared to him in a spiritual appearance, but not necessarily in a trance or in a sleep, and the other vision was in a trance. So, there's no question about it that Paul was given direction through some very specific visions that he had. Are you all with me? 1 Corinthians chapter 16, verse 5, Paul says, ⁵ **I'm coming to visit you after I have been to Macedonia**, he's writing to the Corinthian church. **I'm coming to visit you after I've been to Macedonia, where I am planning to travel through Macedonia.** ⁶ **Perhaps I will stay a while with you**, at Corinth, **possibly all winter, and then you can send me on my way to my next destination.** ⁷ **This time, I don't want to make just a short visit and then go right on. I want to come and stay a while, if the Lord will let me.** ⁸ **If the Lord will let me. In the meantime, I will be staying here at Ephesus until the Festival of Pentecost.** ⁹ **There is a wide open door**, a great and effective door, the new King James says, **a wide open door for a great work here, although many oppose me.**

Now, remember, the first trance vision that Paul had, Jesus said to him, "Get out of Jerusalem, because the people won't receive from you." In other words, danger, Paul, your life's in danger. Get out of here. This time around, he's saying, "I'm staying at Ephesus because there's a great open door, even though people oppose me." Which measurement of success is the right one? All of them. All of them, because they're all with God involved. **For a great work here, although many oppose me.** Verse 10. ¹⁰ **When Timothy comes**, listen up now. Listen up. Listen up. ¹⁰ **When Timothy comes, don't intimidate him.** What? Paul's got to write to a church in Corinth and say, **when Timothy comes, don't intimidate him.** Why do you think he would have had to write that to them?

Because, their pattern was to intimidate people. If you read all about the Corinthian church, they thought themselves the hottest thing since sliced bread, and they intimidated any and all of the apostles, prophets or teachers or anybody that came their way with their opulence, with their intelligence, with their debating capabilities, and they just believed that they were the best operators in the gifts of the Holy Spirit than any other place. That's why Paul had to write to them and say, "When you are coming together to have the supper, you must have... and when you come together to have fellowship and you are operating in the gifts of the Spirit, let it be in order by one or two or by three." Because they were completely in disorder and they were all trying to operate in the gifts of the Spirit out of order, trying to do better than everybody else. So, he writes to them and he says, ¹⁰ ... **don't intimidate Timothy. He is doing the Lord's work, just as I am. (1 Corinthians 16:10 NLT)** He's connecting Timothy directly to his calling.

If any of you thought, that you're having a meeting with Pastor Christi, and because you're meeting with her, you're not meeting with me, you're wrong. Every time you meet with her, you meet with me. Every time you meet with Pastor Garth, you meet with me. And if you meet with Pastor Melusi, you're meeting with me. Even though we are different in actual personality and delegated authority. And with Pastor Sharon, you're meeting with me. And by the way, and just by the way, you're also meeting with Brother Jerry, because he's my apostle, and he backs me.

And so, just by the way, if you don't receive from her, or from me, or from Pastor Sharon, or Pastor Garth, you're also rejecting the Holy Spirit. "Well, what if they're wrong?" Moses was wrong, too, but God backed him publicly. Whatever he had to deal with Moses, he dealt with him privately. The consequences of being wrong for me or for Christi or anybody else for being wrong, God will deal with us privately. And the consequences will be severe, which is why I, we, all of us feel very, very, very sure of this fact that we better be careful what we say. We better be careful what we say. We better be thoughtful, prayerful, full of the Holy Spirit. We better be. Because if we are giving counsel, then we must be careful. Amen. Hallelujah.

¹⁰ **When Timothy comes, don't intimidate him. He is doing the Lord's work, just as I am.** ¹¹ **Don't let anyone treat him with contempt. Send him on his way with your blessing when he returns to me. I expect him to come with the other believers. (1 Corinthians 16:10-11 NLT)** I want to include this here because I want you to understand that as Paul is journeying in his ministry, there are people that are joining him, and every time they're joining him, he's got things that they have to do. And sometimes they'll be in his presence and sometimes they'll be away from him and they'll be doing the Lord's work, but they're always connected to him in ministry.

That's why when the Philippian church sent support to Paul... When the Philippians sent it to him, even though they were not with the gift, he received it as though they were there with him. So, he could say, "And my God will meet all your needs according to His riches in glory. My God, the God that always supplies me." Okay. Who's the God that he's talking about? The Continuous Perfect State of Being, that has all of everything, all the time, that God that has always met Paul's needs. But you might say to me today... I don't want to spend too much time here, but I just feel led that I've got to say this quickly.

You know, Paul didn't always have lots of money and lots of stuff. That's true. But God told him before he went into the ministry that, "You will suffer many things for My name's sake." He told him ahead of time, "You're going to go and suffer some stuff, Paul. It's necessary that someone does the suffering so that others can come into the Kingdom." It was necessary for Jesus to come in the flesh and die so that the rest of us could be the next born. It was necessary for Paul to go through suffering so all of us could come into the Kingdom. Gentiles without hope could have hope. It was necessary for Paul to do that. And God told him before he went into that, which is why he could write, he said, "I have learned in every situation to be content. When I've got very little, I'm content. When I've got a whole lot, I'm content." Because his connection to God's provision wasn't whether he had a little or whether he had much, he just knew that wherever he was, God was watching over him. In the same way, "Don't go there Paul, leave Jerusalem now, Paul." God was leading him all the way. Hey?

Now I'm going to address something that I'm believing that you will receive the spirit of it because it could be a little contentious. But that's not new to us as a ministry. Is it? We like to shoot holy cows here. There is a scripture that is used everywhere. And it goes like this, Proverbs 29 verse 18,¹⁸ **Where there is no vision, the people perish (Proverbs 29:18 KJV).** Right? So, we know better in this church because the Amplified Bible says in Proverbs 29 verse 18, ¹⁸ **Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish; but he who keeps the law [of God, which includes that of man]—blessed (happy, fortunate, and enviable) is he (Proverbs 29:18 AMPC).**

So, this scripture is not talking about a written mission statement and a vision for an organisation. This is talking about a vision of knowing who God is. The Message Translation says, ¹⁸ **If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed (Proverbs 29:18 MSG).** So, this is not about having a corporate vision, a corporate mission statement, this is about knowing or not knowing what God is showing. Come on. Are you all with me still? The New

Living Translation says, ¹⁸ **When people do not accept divine guidance, they run wild. But whoever obeys the law is joyful (Proverbs 29:18 NLT).**

Okay. So, Apostle Paul, he's walking along the road, he's got a corporate vision statement. He's walking along the road, he's got a corporate vision. The corporate vision comes out of the Torah, it comes out of the Sanhedrin. Any cult must be wiped out. Anybody that raises up any kind of thing and says their god, other than the Jehovah God, they must be killed. Paul says, "I'll fulfil that vision." A mission statement. Yes? So, he goes and he's on a mission and he's very good at implementing the mission statement, the set corporate vision; destroy all cults.

So, if you read the Bible, you will find that when Stephen was stoned, he was holding everybody's coats, watching people stone Stephen because it was part of his corporate vision statement. His corporate job that he was doing was doing the work of all of the Sanhedrin, the synagogue, all of the people that came out of the leadership of Israel. Wipe out these people that say, "Jesus is Lord." Wipe them out. Paul says, "I'm your man. I'm going to go do it. I've got a corporate vision. I know how to implement corporate vision. I know how to fulfil a mission statement." I'm using this language on purpose. Okay. On the way Jesus appears to him in a blinding light and He says, "Paul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" "Who are You, Lord?" "I am He that you are persecuting." "What do you want me to do, Lord?" "Go to Jerusalem, stay in this house. I'll come and meet with you there." What happened to his mission statement? What happened to his corporate vision? Changed in a moment because he encountered Jesus.

So, three days, he's blind and a man by the name of Ananias comes in, and he's a little bit afraid of Paul because he knows who he is. In fact, if you read it, he has this whole conversation with God because he doesn't want to go lay hands on him. But God sends someone like these men that I had up here the other day to lay hands on you. It wasn't because he was one of the apostles or one of the big disciples or anything like that. God just sent a disciple to go and lay hands on Paul. So, he was very cautious, he says, "Brother Paul, Brother Paul, Brother Saul, I'm here, I'm here. I'm here to come and lay hands on you. Because the Lord said I must come lay hands on you, to receive your sight." And he was quite concerned and then he finds out now Saul's not going to kill him right away. So, he ends up taking his arm and leading him off to go and meet the apostles. Pastor Lynn, have I told that story more or less accurately? Thank you. Thank you.

So, what happened to his big corporate vision that he had written line upon line? Go with these horses. When you get to Jerusalem, go with these people. If you've got to go to Damascus, go with these people. If you go there, when you get to that, these guys from that synagogue, they'll provide for you because we need to wipe these guys out. He meets Jesus on the way, changes the whole story. Now he goes out on his own into a faraway place so that he can go and encounter God and he can get a vision from God. That same Paul, that same Paul is the one that now is going into Asia because he was laid hands upon. And the Holy Spirit said, "Separate unto me Paul and Barnabas for the work of the ministry." Commission, sent one. And off he goes. So, those scriptures that I read to you about him getting a vision, being in a trance, meeting with God, a Macedonia man coming, this was all because he was going someplace. He was on a God-ordained vision. A God-ordained mission.

So, you know, I'm wanting us to be careful that we don't have such a big grand mission statement that we don't have God in our mission statement. Because if you had asked Paul beforehand and said to him, "Now, Paul, where are you going to go?" "Well, you know, the apostle sent me to Asia. And so, I've got to go to Asia. And so, I have a broad vision. I have a broad mission statement where I've got to go." "And so what happened on the way to those places that you couldn't go there?" "Well, the Lord changed His mind." "Well, did the

Lord change His mind or did you change your mind or how did this thing work?" "Well, I don't know, but the Holy Spirit didn't let me go where I thought I was going to go." "So, then what happened?" "Well, then I ended up having a vision from a Macedonian man. Then I went up to Macedonia and I met a whole group of people there. Wow. Did we have revival there." "So how big was revival?" "Well, there were a couple of people there. They got saved. People got filled with the Holy Spirit and, you know, the church grew. My time came to an end and we moved on." "So that's your whole vision statement?" "Yeah. That's it. I've got to go where the Holy Spirit tells me to go. Got to go with the Holy Spirit tells me to go."

So, how does that all workout? How does that plan work out for you when you're running a business? If your business plan doesn't include changing as the Holy Spirit leads you, then you're going to plan the Holy Spirit right out of your business. And then you're firmly in charge of it, and if you're in charge of it, He's got nothing to say about it. Hey?

If you had told me two years ago that we would be putting in an offer for a farm, I would have said, "You're crazy. Why do we want a farm?" But it seems good to the Holy Spirit and to all of us. And so we're going there. And who knows what we will find there? Amen.

I need to read you a passage of Scripture from the Habakkuk. Habakkuk chapter one, verse 12, **¹² O LORD my God, my Holy One, you who are eternal - surely you do not plan to wipe us out?** This is now a minor prophet. ¹² ...**surely you do not plan to wipe us out? O LORD, our Rock, you have sent these Babylonians to correct us, to punish us for our many sins. ¹³ But you are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil. Will you wink at their treachery? Should you be silent while the wicked swallow up people more righteous than they?** So, this is a prophet talking to God. ¹⁴ **Are we only fish to be caught and killed? Are we only sea creatures that have no leader? ¹⁵ Must we be strung up on their hooks and caught in their nets while they rejoice and celebrate? ¹⁶ Then they will worship their nets and burn incense in front of them. "These nets are the gods who have made us rich!" they will claim. ¹⁷ Will you let them get away with this forever? Will they succeed forever in their heartless conquests? (Habakkuk 1:12 -17 NLT).**

¹ I will climb up to my watchtower and stand at my guardpost. There I will wait to see what the LORD says and how he] will answer my complaint. Habakkuk is complaining to the Lord about the condition of Israel. **² Then the LORD said to me, "Write my answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others.** Other version says, write the vision down. This version says, ² ... **"Write my answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others. ³ This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed (Habakkuk 2:1-3 NLT).** Can you please put up just verses one to three in the New King James Version or the King James Version? Can you put up for me the King James Version? Chapter two, verses one to three, **¹ I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. ² And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. ³ For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry (Habakkuk 2:1-3 KJV).**

How many of you have heard this scripture? How many times have you heard this scripture? Many times. What is the context of when you've heard the scripture? Almost always about writing down a vision. If you don't read the Bible properly, then you're going to use the scripture out of context. I've read you two scriptures that are constantly used out of context. The other one is if you don't have a vision, people perish and this vision is, write down the vision plainly, wait and make sure in time it will come to pass. But actually what this was about is that there was a prophet complaining to God about the condition of God's people.

And He said, "Now I'm going to answer you because you have asked Me and you're going to have a fulfilment but not for this time. But write it down so that when it comes time that people need to know it, they will be able to read it plainly."

Why, Pastor John, are you talking about it like this? Because the Church, the Ecclesia that we are supposed to be, has imported management techniques and vision statements and mission statements and run their whole organisation by them. And by doing so, we push the Holy Spirit out and say, if it doesn't fit the plan, it doesn't belong in the plan. So, we need to be listening to the Holy Spirit more than having a great vision plan.

I tell you, what is happening here this weekend is a remarkable miracle. It is. It is. This is Easter weekend and you're all in town. Wow. Not only are you just in town, you're in church. And the weather outside is pretty good. It's ideal for a picnic or a trip to the Kruger or a jol on the jet ski or a ride on a bicycle somewhere up a mountain and back or a motorbike with a helmet. All of the above. Yes? This has been our custom. This has been our custom. And yet the Lord said, "Hey, I want you guys, give me your holiday because I want to make it a holy day. Because there's something I want to do." And so, where are we going with this? God is going to show us something amazing because we are giving him something amazing. Truly, we are. And God will be in debt to no man. No man. Hallelujah.

So, Pastor John is this, where do you see the future of this thing going? Well, let's just get through this weekend and we will see. Let's see what the Holy Spirit says, let's see how the Holy Spirit leads us next month, next week, let's see what happens. Let's not try and answer everything ahead of time so that we can make another big plan.

I need to just keep reading. ³ **This vision is for a future time. It describes the end and it will be fulfilled and if it is slow in coming, wait patiently for it will surely take place, it will not be delayed.** ⁴ **"Look at the proud."** This is God talking to him now, this is God answering the prophet, ⁴ **"Look at the proud, they trust in themselves and their lives are crooked but the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God."** The prophet is asking God, "Look at all these heathens, they're devouring us, they using us like fish on hooks, they using us as trophies, their nets are gods to them and they worshipping the gods of their nets that they've brought all of these people and all of this wealth into their hands and you wink at it and you ignore it and you...and he was complaining to God and God says, "Now okay, you write this vision down and you're going to remember this because when the time comes people are going to remember what I'm telling you now."

⁴ **Look at the proud. They trust in themselves and their lives are crooked but the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God.** ⁵ **Wealth is treacherous and the arrogant are never at rest. They open their mouths as wide as the grave and like death, they are never satisfied. In their greed they have gathered up many nations and swallowed many peoples.** ⁶ **But soon their captives will taunt them. They will mock them saying, "What sorrow awaits you thieves? Now you will get what you deserve! You've become rich by extortion and how much longer can this go on?"** ⁷ **Suddenly, your debtor will take action. They will turn on you and take all you have while you stand trembling and helpless.** ⁸ **Because you have plundered many nations, now all the survivors will plunder you. You committed murder throughout the countryside and filled the towns with violence (Habakkuk 2:3-8 NLT).**

And I can read on but I'm going to leave it there. God is drawing a line in the sand. The time will come when you say, "These people that are getting away with everything," judgment is coming. Write it down so when people run by and they see all these things happening, they'll know that I said it, God said it and they won't have to wonder about it, even as they're hurrying on with their lives, they'll be able to quickly read that this is God's judgment.

Doesn't that scripture now make a whole lot more sense to you? Because we as a people, we might say, "You know what hey, church is okay, church is okay. It's okay to go to church to have good worship. It's okay to go to church to have a good message. It's okay for church to have its place in our lives but don't let the church interfere with everything else. Because, you know, the church doesn't have a very good history of actually representing a very good side of life because actually church has always been weak. Church has always had, it's like, you know, it's the pathetic people that go to church and, you know, all these people are tithing all the time and they're giving offerings and do you see any results about it?"

Does that sound like the prophet Habakkuk was speaking to God? Yes? And so, we have this idea, don't let church come and tell us what we have to do with our everyday lives; where God is saying, "Hey, I'm the Continuous, Perfect Being, Continuous, Perfect State of Being. I am Him. I AM." The way God says it in the Old Testament is, I AM, Continuous, Perfect State. I AM Jehovah. I AM all of His names. I AM. I AM and everything that's happening in the world, none of it's going to go, none of it's going to go just swept under the rug. The way the prophet Habakkuk put it was, you wink at them, that's okay. Don't worry. I'm not going to do anything. I mean, that's a bit arrogant, don't you think? But obviously, the prophet Habakkuk was feeling pretty mad about this to God because of the condition of what was happening to God's people.

I want to just put into order that as we go forward, as we go forward as a ministry, we will have some things that we write down and there are things that we have written as our vision. We have a vision to buy a farm. We have a vision to have a mission school. We have a vision to do certain things. We have a vision for things. I want to tell you upfront, God can change everything, anything at any time.

And if He's leading us this way, we'll keep going, we'll keep going and if He says, "Wait," okay we'll wait. Why must you wait? I don't know, but I'm waiting. Why am I waiting? Let's see. Maybe we're waiting for someone to come in a vision, come and tell us something. You might say to me, "But, Pastor John, you know, this seems like a fairly haphazard way of leading an organization." Okay, so you want more structure? You want bigger plans? Or do you want us to cooperatively work together as a group and say let's find out what the will of the Holy Spirit is?

So, we will make plans. And we'll make plans to go to this town in Galatia and if the Holy Spirit says don't do it then okay. Well, then we'll move on to the next thing and if the Holy Spirit says don't do that, we say okay. And then I'm asking you to please don't *gooi* a rock at me. Hey? Because it will be easy for you to throw stones. Easy, it's easy. If you're a very organized person and so much of our life has to be organized because there's so much stuff that's going on, I understand organization, I understand the plan. I understand all of that, but if we don't have a plan to let the Holy Spirit in, then we're also planning to fail. You know that old saying, "If you don't have a plan, you plan to fail." Right? Well, if you don't have a plan to let the Holy Spirit have His final say in your plan, then you're planning to fail anyway. Even though you have a great plan. "Well, but at least I'm in charge of my plan." Well, good luck with that.

Praise the Lord. Okay, okay. For another day, another time, because I'm out of time now. Can I just finish this scripture? ³⁵ **So**, Hebrews 10 verse 35, ³⁵ **So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you!** ³⁶ **Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.** ³⁷ **"For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay.** ³⁸ **And my righteous ones will live by faith. But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away."** ³⁹ **But we are not like those who turn away from God to their own destruction. We are the faithful ones, whose souls will be saved. (Hebrews 10:35-39 NLT)**

We are the faithful ones. We are the faithful ones. So, I commend you today and say you are the faithful ones. Well done. Well done, faithful ones, for being here. We have another session this evening at 6 o'clock. You ready for it? Hallelujah. Wow. All I can say is wow. I don't think we've ever had a conference like this, you know. We've never had a conference like this. This is truly a first fruits conference. Truly, this is the first of us doing anything like this. Praise the Lord.

Pastor Sharon and I have been in conferences like in America where we have two services in the morning, two services in the afternoon and an evening service and most of them were with Kenneth Hagin or Kenneth Copeland. And when Kenneth Hagin got to flowing in the Spirit then who knows what time the evening service would end. And when Kenneth Copeland gets to preaching, who knows when the evening service is going to end. A lot of times we've been in many, many conferences where you literally go there at 9 o'clock in the morning and you go and have lunch like we did and you go out in the afternoon for 2 hours and then instead of going between 6 o'clock and 7:15 tonight, you go all the way to 10 o'clock and then you repeat the next day. 9 o'clock the next morning you're back in church. For seven days.

I think we've got some growing to do here. Hey? We've got some growing to do here. Hallelujah. We can stretch a bit. We can stretch a little bit. Ja, we can. Praise the Lord. Thank you. Thank you for being here this afternoon and I'll see you this evening at 6 o'clock. Amen.

So the reason we're not having sound and song all the time, we could have had some of the musicians here, but we felt that we should just keep it simple, keep it tight like we have. Plans, purposes and pursuits, exactly, Pastor Lynn. Alright, bye *julle almal. Totsiens, julle almal. Goeiedag, goeienaand, goeie lewe.*