

Scripture reference: Luke 14:25-35 (NKJV); Luke 14:26 (NLT, TPT, AMPC)

Praise Jesus. Well, I thought I was going to take off then in the praise session. Hallelujah. Thank you everybody. Thank you. Wow. I think that's a sign of things to come. In fact, I don't think so. I know it. I know it. Yeah. Praise the Lord. Before you sit down, I would like you to make a declaration with me and I'd like you to say this with me. My heart is receptive. My mind is receptive and I am ready for everything that God has for me. I am ready for everything that God has for us. In Jesus' name. Now before you sit you can just bounce someone or high-five them or just say, "I'm ready. Be ready. Be very ready. Don't just be ready, be very ready. You know and don't be afraid." Praise the Lord.

I'd like to just spend a few minutes on the beginning of our ministry this morning, just talking about this week. If I didn't believe in prayer, then I would have thought this week was a triumph to strategic politics because, you know, the MK party? Right? Where do they come from? Jacob Zuma and these cronies. MK, I don't know what the final result is, maybe somebody can help me, but I think they've walked away with a national number of about 13%. Is it 15%? Somewhere roundabout there. Julius Malema must feel like, "What must I do to get rid of this old man?" Right? I mean, he thought he was going to be the next biggest party after the DA, and Jacob Zuma and the MK come along and they just take a whole bunch of his voters. Of course, they took a lot of the ANC voters too.

So, we are headed for a true democracy. We are not just going to be a one-party state anymore. We are headed for a true democracy. And now politicians and government leaders have to work together to find the best solution for the reason they were elected, to serve us. Come on. I think our prayers have been working. It doesn't matter if it took from left field, right field, *doer en* gone field, MK party to come and upset the apple cart. God will use whatever vehicle He's got and He needs to use to bring out a result that would force people to come and say, "We need to serve the people, and we need to do things that are going to best suit our Country and the people of our Country than just one party." Amen. Hallelujah.

I happen to think that this week's results have been fantastic. Here's what I would like us to be praying for in the days and weeks ahead. Literally, I mean in the days ahead and we should be praying for this every day. I would like us to pray that the ANC and the Democratic Alliance would work together in a compromising way where they can leverage the best of both parties so that they could bring a great solution to South African people. Present a united governing front to the rest of the world that would change our currency evaluation and it will change the perception of the world that we are a true democracy. That we are not just a one-party state or a group of African people that like to fight each other and sometimes it's settled in the courts or civil war.

We don't have to be like all these other African countries where one party stays in power forever and the Military is there just to enforce it, or the Police, or the Secret Service. Right? So, I'm not preaching or advocating for one party here. I'm declaring that we need to pray right now. This unity government or this government of working together where they've got to form coalitions and work together. We have to pray in this week every day and I would like to suggest that we have a time of prayer every day from 6 o'clock to 6:30. I mean, in your homes, we can just make a time where we all set it together.

Maybe we'll have someone come here and do some recording or something. Maybe it'll be me or Pastor Sharon or one of the Pastors and let's pray every day this week from 6 o'clock to 6:30. We just pray for a God outcome for what's going to happen in the weeks ahead. Amen. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Well, I mean our Rand Dollar rate improved immediately and I trust that it will continue to do so. Hallelujah. I mean, you know, there could be lots of

reasons why it does and everybody speculates and everybody's got opinions. Economists are great at having opinions and so have politicians. And sometimes they're right, and sometimes they're very wrong. Thank you, Pastor Lynn. I was trying to be a politician up front here, but praise the Lord.

I believe that God's got good things for our country. I want to address for a minute. I want to address that I spoke earlier on in the year. I spoke about the fact that the world is going to be in crisis and chaos, but we as a people that are going to stay in the Word, we're going to stay in prayer that it will not touch us. Amen. I believe we are seeing crisis and chaos unfolding in the world everywhere. You talk about the Middle East crisis and chaos that is unfolding. We talk about democracy in America that, I don't know if you can call it a democracy anymore. But it is in crisis. It has chaos. So much in the world is in crisis, and I think there's more to come. I think there's more to come. But at the very least, I know that we're in the middle of it and we're not going to be surprised by it. God's going to show us a way out every time. Yes. Amen. You say what? Amen. [*Congregation responds with amen.*] Praise the Lord.

Okay. Are you ready? I'm going to say something to you this morning that you've heard from me many times, but this is the way I feel the Lord is leading me to bring the word to us today. And I believe it's time for us to respond spiritually to things that God has called us to, and it's going to require us to reach. For a long season now the Lord has been talking to us about crossover. And then He began to say, "It's crossover reset" and then Brother Jerry went home. And so, we know why the reset was supposed to happen and thank God that we are led as a ministry, we are led by the Spirit of God. We hear the voice of God and not anything is happening that surprises us. Right? I mean, surely you know, if you had said to me on the Monday when we heard that Brother Jerry had gone home to be with the Lord. If you had said to me that I wasn't surprised by it, I certainly was. But by that particular event.

But isn't it amazing that the Lord said on the Sunday before that we mustn't live with the dead? Right? And so, God was preparing us already. He saw something happening and He was speaking to us about things that were to come. Well, we didn't quite see it that way but amen. We are ready for the things that we need to be ready for.

So, I would like to tell you a story about a young man that had a dream. His dream was actually founded in the Word of God. His dream was to serve God all the days of his life. But he wanted to do so with a partner. With a partner that would love him, walk with him, fulfil him, satisfy him and be everything to him that he would want in a partner. At the time, his vision of what a partner could be was very limited because he was a young man. And there's no way that a young man can see into the future and see how his life would change as years go by and what a partner would look like going forward. So, when you're a young man wanting a partner, then you are limited in the way that you see a partner because you just don't know how your life is going to unfold and all the things that are going to make up your life and how that's going to change. And what a partnership becomes is very different to what a partnership starts out to be. Yes?

So, that young man was me. I was searching for the way to serve God all the days of my life and I asked God for a partner. And so, I met this beautiful lady sitting on the front here. She is the love of my life. She's my sweetheart. This week, we've been talking to each other about all the names that we've called each other over all of the years. I'm not going to say half of them to you. It's none of your business. And I wouldn't want you to use anything against me going forward.

But, you know, we both agreed even this week as we were talking to each other, we both agreed about this, that if I had not had the Word of God spoken to me the way it was spoken to me, the Bible, in its true powerful form. We have agreed this week again. There is no question about it. We put it at a 90% chance that we would not be here. We would have

divorced. We would have divorced. We didn't have the tools to make it. Neither of us had the tools to make it.

You know, there are wonderful families where children grow up in families and the value system of the family and the generations of family that have gone by, the value system is - divorce is not part of that family, it's not part of the equation. It's not a consideration. It's just - you have to work at it and it's not a consideration. Divorce is not an option. But if there things inside the families, in both families or one of the families that are very undermining to the future of that relationship. There is a very strong possibility that those weak points will come and seriously undermine it. The statistics are today that two-thirds of marriages end in divorce. Which is why the younger generation doesn't want to get married anymore because they see no use for it.

So, I was saying to Pastor Sharon this week that the Word of God in its purest form truly saved my life. This is true and pure, and part of the reason I'm telling you about this is because when you come to church and you hear me and Pastor Sharon and Pastor Christi and Pastor Garth or whoever ministers from the pulpit, you hear us talk about the Bible, and you hear us teach on the Word of God and the power of the Word of God. Week by week, we could have the influence of life undermine the power of the Word. We become used to hearing relevant, strong, useful messages, but we don't always come back to this point that it is truly the power of the Word that gave me my life.

Now I want to say it to you. No one taught me this; there was not a pastor, there was not a teacher, there wasn't a man that taught me this. I will say that because I grew up in the Word, my sense of reference was the Word. Okay? So, I had that going for me, that my reference was the Word. The other thing is that I love Jesus, I loved God and so, I wanted to do what He told me to do. So, when I married this girl and she fell pregnant a month after we got married, and that kind of changed a lot of things in our plans and so suddenly, I'm twenty-one years old and I have a wife that's expecting, and we don't have any resources. Nothing. So, I had to look to God, number one, how do I deal with this woman that's changing before my eyes? Her hormones have changed, there's a baby growing, our financial future is, lots of things that are insecure if you like. There's many things that I'm looking at and I'm wondering, "How am I going to do this?"

So, I've got someone who's really placing a demand on me, and I go to who? My friend from high school is going to tell me what? "Sheesh, John. You're on your own, *boet*." Yeah. My friends from the army that all they did was do rum and coke every night. They got answers for me, right? Oh, I could have gone to a psychologist. Thank God I didn't. They would have probably confused me more than anything else. You should listen to her about this. You should communicate your feelings. You should have, you should—you should talk more, sit long hours and listen. I mean, those are good things to do, but that wasn't what gave me life. What gave me life was that Jesus spoke to me out of the words of the Bible and He spoke into my spirit, and He said, "John, I want you to love Sharon as Christ loves the Church and give yourself to her." Give yourself to her, and everything after that that seemed unfair in our marriage, where it seemed like I was doing all the giving and I was doing all of the everything to start with. Everything was measured by that word. Now, everything that was a demand on me, I went back to the Word that said, "Give yourself to your wife as Christ gave Himself for the Church." In other words, He didn't love himself enough to say My will rather than the Father's will. Christ said, "It's always the Father's will." He never loved Himself at all enough to say, "I must tell the Father how I feel about stuff." He never even asked the Father for anything that He might need on the earth.

You know, this is an amazing thing. There is no prayer that I can find in the Bible where Jesus said, "Father, I need some money. Can You supply, please?" He took the authority that the Father gave Him, and He lived life with that authority, and everything was taken care of.

Right? It was absolutely everything between Him and the Father. It was all about Him submitting Himself to the Father. So, what was my guiding force? It was the Father's word to me; love her, love her and give yourself for her. I'm not talking about marriage this morning. I happen to be using our marriage as an example of something else the Lord wants me to say but I need you to understand this morning. How personal the Word of God is, how powerful the Word of God is and it's close to you every day of your life. It means everything, because of that word, what happened is, if a psychologist had helped me, then I have no power from the psychologist, I only have advice.

But when I would turn to Jesus for His advice, He gave me His word, and through His word, He released power to me to do the word that he gave me to do. His grace was sufficient for me to do what He told me to do. Even though there was no living example that I could see any man that was doing that, His power was released in His word to me to do it. Now I had good advice. I had the power to do the good advice. His grace was always there even when I couldn't do it to say, "I see that you are obeying Me, and these few times that you can't do it, I'm still gracing you and your momentum of obedience, and I will still be there to get you through it." This Word of God is the same Word of God that you and I need for everything. For everything.

There is nothing in our lives that God's word cannot fix. That God's Word cannot provide the foundation to get it done. The Word of God is the ultimate source of truth. And that truth received by you and me is the truth that He releases power to us to do that truth. And even sometimes when we don't quite get there, His grace is still there, working for us because our hearts are towards obedience. Hallelujah.

So, I'm going to read you another story this morning. I will read you scripture from Luke chapter 14 in a minute, but I'm going to read you another story. This is from the book that was written by Kenneth Hagin's wife, Oretha Hagin and I'm going to read just a short part of the preface of this book. This book was published in 1999, or at least this version of it.

It says this, "Nearly 53 years ago when I married Kenneth E Hagin. I couldn't have imagined God would do all that he has done in our lives and our ministry. If we had known then everything the Lord wanted to do through us, we couldn't have accepted it. The challenge would have been too great. But as we obeyed God and followed Him and each step along the way, His plan for our lives began to unfold. There is a price to pay in order to do the perfect will of God. From the beginning of our lives together, Kenneth and I committed ourselves to do God's will and to pay the price no matter how great."

When they made that commitment, they had no idea what that would look like. When I made a commitment to God to love pastor Sharon as Christ loves the Church, I had no idea what that would look like. I had no idea from day to day living the demands that she would make on me, the words that she would speak in anger in the beginning of our relationship. Anger, strife, just harsh words, sometimes harsh actions, things that were extremely volatile in our relationship.

You know, we've spoken about this, there's many times when people look at our marriage now, and they say, "Wow, what a great marriage. It's like you almost have a perfect marriage." Thank you, I'll take that. But it didn't start there. It started with obedience to the one Word that God gave me, and as we had arguments and fights and, you know, at that time, she had an anger problem. She has talked about it. She doesn't have it anymore. She hasn't had it for many years, but the same Word of God that He gave me to love her was the same Word of God that He gave her to overcome her anger. If I didn't do what I do, God couldn't tell her to do what she needed to do because she wouldn't have been able to trust the love of God that was coming from me to her.

So, in the beginning when she would get angry at me and kick holes in doors, break cups. You see, some of you come from good homes and you couldn't imagine that happening in your house because you're just too controlled. Well, okay. You have other problems. You do. You have other problems. And some people may look at it and say, "Shame, shame, shame." No shame here. I knew how much she loved God when I married her. I didn't know all her weaknesses. I didn't know all the stuff that I was getting into. And 20 years down the line in your marriage, there are new things that come into your marriage you still don't know what you are getting into.

Don't look at me so squiff. Like, you don't know nothing about what I'm talking about. And 30 years down the line and 40 years down the line, there are still things you have to say, "I've got to do the Word here. I've got to do the Word here. It's the same Word that I was told then, I've got to do the same Word now it never changes. It's the same power that is released every day for me to get the same result.

So, there's no way that when you start a journey that you know what it's going to look like. You don't know. But you've got a Word to hang on to, and you've got a Word that can guide you, and you have the power to do that Word, and you've got grace when you can't do it, and you have just from choice, you haven't done it. You think there are times that she didn't rile me and I didn't react? You think I wasn't human? A young man who also wanted to get his shot in? Come on. After you got your shot in and you walk away, you say, "Oh, Jesus. I disobeyed Your Words, and I've allowed strife to get into my marriage, and I didn't love her before my own self in that argument." I've got to go and repent to God first.

Why must I repent to Him? "Sorry, Lord, I disobeyed Your Word. I now ask You to." Really, I didn't say it like this, but this is what happened. "I ask You to release Your power into what's next." And I would go to her and say, "Baby, I'm sorry." And she would say, "What are you going to be sorry for? I'm the one who's started the fight." "It doesn't matter. I'm sorry." "You don't need to be sorry." Then she would want to fight with me about the fact that I'm sorry. I kid you not. Because we're in a carnal moment. Right? You guys are so quiet, it's like if you say, "Yes," it's like you admitting in public that you also do that stuff, or you have done that stuff. Well, come with a program already this morning, because none of us sitting here are perfect in our flesh. We're perfect in spirit and we're getting perfect in our flesh. By His power, through His Word, with His grace. Amen.

You think that Kenneth and Oretha Hagin thought they were getting into that? Maybe they wouldn't have done it. She actually says so. Going to go to the back of the book here. *Kenneth and I didn't start out at the top in our faith walk. In fact, we started out in the ministry with nothing. We live by faith every day.* You know, this is so contrary to what we have in the world today. Most young people, or most people want to get married now, they want to have a degree first, and they want to have a house, and they want to have furniture, and they want to have a car. And they want to have everything because, actually, they say, "I need some security before I can provide a family." Huh? Like God can't do that for you, with you, together with you. Let me tell you we walk the faith walk together. We used our faith together and everything that we have in life, we did it together. It wasn't me that used my faith to get a house, to get a car, to get a degree, to get everything, and then say, "Hey, come and join me. By the way, I'm in control because I provided everything. So, okay, go get your stuff."

Do it together with the Word in faith. Is there anything wrong with that? Oh no, if you get married before you're 25, shoo, how many people do that and succeed? You know, most people get married 30 to 35 because they've experienced life. Yeah. More like they've experienced death, and now they're trying to live. Anyway. *So, we didn't start at the top in fact, we started in the ministry with nothing. We lived by faith every day. Kenneth and I bought our first house by faith. It was a small 3-bedroom frame house in Garland, Texas. It was a very nice house for that day. We had been renting the house, but then we bought it.*

Kenneth and I used our faith to get that house.

I remember I wanted new drapes for our new home, but when I said something to Kenneth about it, he said, I want you to listen to this, and we'll talk about this statement as the Holy Spirit leads us over the next few weeks, as I'm going to minister to you over the next few weeks. "Honey, I've already extended my faith as far as it will go right now. I can't believe for any more than I'm believing for right now. You'll just have to believe God for the drapes yourself." I did. And God provided us with drapes I wanted. Pastor Sharon did the same thing. Amen. Over the years, I've had many opportunities to learn how to use my own faith. Kenneth couldn't carry me with his faith forever, because God requires every one of us to grow in faith and stand in His Word for ourselves. God wants us to grow up and not remain spiritual babies. Amen.

So, I want to just tell you that there's an incident that happens in her life. She gets sick. And I'm going to just read to you a little bit. There's a few things I want to read to you out of this book. Are you all with me today? [Congregation answers; Yes.] Okay. *The doctor was alarmed by the results and he wanted me to see a specialist. I didn't want to go to a specialist. So after the test, I went home. I didn't tell my doctor whether I would go to the specialist or not. The children were grown at the time. Pat was married and Ken Junior had gone into the military service. Kenneth was away holding meetings. I was home alone. One afternoon, shortly after I'd gone to the doctor, the Lord spoke to my husband while he was in another town holding a meeting.*

Kenneth was lying across the bed, studying in the room where he was staying, and the Lord said, "Go call your wife and tell her to go to the specialist." Kenneth said, "Okay, Lord. I'll do that tonight." And the Lord said, "Go call her now." So, Kenneth got up and phoned me, and I immediately called my doctor to make an appointment for me to see the specialist. I immediately went to the specialist and he put me through test after test. The last test he gave me was a five-hour glucose tolerance test. Every hour, I had to drink glucose, a type of sugary syrup. It was supposed to make my blood sugar rise, but it didn't. Instead, mine went down. Every hour, it continued to go down.

After all the testing, I'm just skipping some things here getting to, after all the testing, the doctor told me I had hypoglycemia, which is called, also known as low blood sugar. He said to me, "You have the worst case I've ever seen." Later, he told my husband, "It was wise to have her come and see me when she did, because she got here just in time." So, before all this happened, we were holding a meeting in a church in South Texas. I'd gone to our room to rest one afternoon before the evening meeting. Kenneth went over to the church to pray. When he came back to the room, he woke me and said, "It's late. You'd better get up and get ready." "Okay" I answered him, still half asleep. But when he left the room, I didn't get up, I went back to sleep. Kenneth woke me up again, but I still didn't get up. The third time Kenneth tried to wake me, he had to get me out of bed and walk me around the room in order to wake me up.

The doctor told us that happened because I was lapsing into a coma due to low blood sugar. He said if Kenneth hadn't wakened me, I could have gone into a coma and never come out of it. So, she followed the doctor's instructions. She started to eat differently, but she still couldn't shake it. "Well", you might ask, "Well, Brother Hagin is a man of faith and he teaches healing. Couldn't he pray the prayer of faith for you?" "No, he couldn't." Baby Christians can often get healed by someone else's faith. But sooner or later, God wants them to stand on their own and they will have to use their own faith. You can't always ride on someone else's faith. The end of the story, she used her faith and she got healed.

Why am I reading to you about Oretha Hagin? Because everyone knows about Kenneth and all of his stories, but this is coming from his partner in life. You see, she was his partner, she

was his wife, she was the mother of the children. She formed those functions, but she was partner in life and partner in ministry. Even though she wasn't teaching and preaching, she was partner in ministry. That meant she still had to get to learn to use her faith. He couldn't use his faith for her forever.

Okay. Now I'm going to tell you that I have been preaching and teaching on this for some time. I'm not going to tell you the full extent of the dream, but a few weeks ago, I made mention of a dream that I had. And I want to just have you use your faith for this. Time will come, when I will start walking around in the service, and I'm just going to walk as the Holy Spirit leads me as I'm doing now. I'm just going to walk into the service, and I'm just going to be walking and doing this kind of preaching. And as I do this, the Holy Spirit showed me in that dream. I saw myself doing this in that dream. And as I do that, God showed me that the healing power of God is going to come on people in the service and the miracle power of God is going to start working in people, in your bodies, in your soul, in your places where you need healing. The healing power is going to be released into your lives, and God's healing power is going to work.

I'm saying this out loud because this is how God wanted me to do it, to tell you about it because this is how I'm going to do it. This is how He's going to do it. If God touches your body while I'm preaching, you may interrupt me. And I'll teach on that. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will have me lay hands on people. Sometimes, but mostly, it's going to happen in the course of the teaching of the Word. People are going to get healed. If you don't want to interrupt me in the service, you can come and tell me afterwards. But I'm expecting signs and wonders, healings, and miracles to happen. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus.

Now I'm going to read to you another part of this book. *Everything God did in our lives and ministry had its day of small beginning. During our first camp meeting in 1973, Kenneth said, by the unction of the Holy Spirit, "We're going to start a training centre." Later, Kenneth hadn't even realised what he had said. We had to play the tape back for him so he could hear it for himself.* But that's how Rhema got started. Came out of him by the spirit of God in a public meeting. *When Kenneth and I began Rhema Bible Training Centre in 1974, we had no idea it would grow in size like it has and what it is today.* At this time of writing, or release of this publication, Rhema Bible Training Centre had an annual intake of students of about 1 500 people - just for Bible study. This was not a university, this was a Bible Training Center.

After that camp meeting in 1973, Kenneth and I went to Indianapolis, where we attended one of Norville Hayes' meetings. After the meeting, a group of us were sitting around a table fellowshiping together. Kenneth was talking to someone else when suddenly, Norville tapped me on the shoulder. The Lord has just shown him in a vision of the Training Centre. "Oretha," Norville said, "I see the campus of the training center. It's big, beautiful campus with lots of students." When Norville said that, I froze. "Oh, no, Norville." I said, "We don't want that. We just want a small place to teach people who want to go into the ministry. Maybe 50 students." What Norville said really frightened me at first. I knew what an awesome responsibility it is to be a leader and an example to so many. I didn't want to ever present the wrong example to people or give them wrong advice. Some young Christians get their eyes on ministers so much that if a minister makes a wrong move, they fall away, and some of them never get back on track with the Lord. I wrestled with the thought of it all for a while, I had to get my will synchronised with God's will.

Hey, come on. We all know about syncing today. You sync your phone with your car. You sync your phone with your computer. You sync your apps over Wi-Fi with your computer. Syncing makes your phone work. Nowadays, you can't hardly live your life without a sync. Come on. How do you think you're going to get to the will of God if you don't sync your will with the will of God? It's all very well to hear Pastor Sharon and I talk about following God's

plan for your life, but God's plan for your life requires that you sync your will to the will of God.

At first, Kenneth didn't want to start a training centre either. But the Lord had been dealing with him about it for some time, and the time finally came with Kenneth when Kenneth had to do something about it. I also said, "Okay, Lord. I want to do Your will, not my own." And we obeyed God. When you're doing what God has told you to do and you're serving Him, it doesn't matter how tough the going gets. God is always faithful. Payday doesn't always come every Saturday night, but if you're faithful to God and His word, payday always comes. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

I really want to do a lot of this for you. Kenneth and I had a deep desire to serve God. He led us step by step as we obeyed Him. Each step we took in obedience brought us into new areas of blessings and victory. May seem as if we made many sacrifices in order to serve God in the ministry, but as the saying goes, "It really doesn't cost to obey God. It pays." It is a privilege to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in the ministry and to do His will, and I thank Him for giving us that privilege.

Now I just want to address this for a minute. In the same way that Kenneth and Oretha obeyed God to go into the ministry, so I obeyed God to go into the ministry. When I met this girl, before we got married, I would sit and tell her, I'd say, "Sharon, the way you know me now is not the way I will always be. There will come a time in our lives when I will have to leave earning a salary, and I will go into the full-time ministry because I'm called to be a Pastor and I'm called to preach." I was 20 years old when I told her that. Hallelujah.

Kenneth and I had never been apart before. When Kenneth went into the field ministry, it was difficult not seeing each other. There were times when I would have given just about anything to see him. Just to talk to him and say hello would have been so wonderful. We didn't make many phone calls in those days because we didn't have much money. He paid a price to preach the Gospel that we don't have to pay. But there is a price we are going to have to pay so that others can hear the gospel. And I'm going to talk to you about that in days and weeks ahead. Because someone always has to pay a price. Jesus had to pay our price. Kenneth Copeland, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, Jerry Savelle these men had to pay a price. Sharon and I, Lord knows, we have paid a price.

I had accepted the fact that Kenneth would have to be gone from me and the children, and I thought I totally consecrated myself to the will of God, but sometimes we wouldn't get to see Kenneth for 4 or 5 weeks at a time. One morning after the children had gone to school and I had begun to clean the house I cried to God in desperation. I complained. Would you all say this with me? "I complained." Lord, I just can't take this anymore. Later that morning, as I was washing the dishes, I heard a voice say, "I could take him where he would never come back." She writes in brackets. This didn't mean God would kill him, but our obedience would leave the door open for the enemy to come in and attack us. That startled me. And I went throughout the house searching for who said that. Then I decided it was just my imagination.

Sometimes when the Lord speaks to you, you might feel like it's your imagination. Just because your head gets involved. *I'd never said a word to Kenneth about this or about how I had complained. Being gone so much of the time was hard on him too. Kenneth knew God had called him to go on the road ministry and he had obeyed that call. But the time came when the price of leaving his family seemed too great, and Kenneth decided he could not continue to pay that price. Who decided? Kenneth. Because the price seemed too big. Kenneth had been out on the field for about 6 months, and I'd been at home with the children when we decided Kenneth should come off the road. Who decided? [Congregation replies, "They did."] We decided Kenneth should come off the road. Kenneth cancelled all of his*

meetings. Who cancelled them? [Congregation replies, "They did."] And decided to try out as pastor for a church in East Texas. Who decided? [Congregation replies, "They did."]

On Sunday morning, July 10, 1949, we visited that church. Kenneth attended the men's Sunday school class, and I attended the ladies' class because they're now looking to pastor the church. During Sunday school I suddenly became uneasy. I could hardly sit still. I sensed in my spirit that something was wrong. I wanted to leave the class to go see about Kenneth, but I didn't know where the men's classroom was located. I had already gathered my purse and my Bible to leave when the pastor came into our classroom and motioned for me. As I reached the door, he whispered, "Come to the parsonage immediately. Your husband has had a heart attack, and he's asking for you." This is Kenneth Hagin, who had never had a heart issue since God healed him when he was 17.

My heart raced and my mind was in a panic as I made my way to the parsonage. All I could think was, "Dear God, it's all my fault for grumbling and complaining about Kenneth being gone so much." I know I helped bring this on. I rushed to Kenneth, and when I got there, he was close to death. In fact, when some of the men had sent for me, they couldn't detect a pulse. I saw Kenneth lying there on the bed. His face was as white as a sheet, and there was cold, clammy sweat on his brow. I put my hand on his heart, but I couldn't feel a heartbeat. I began to cry, and I fell down beside the bed and began to silently repent to God. I told the Lord, "Forgive me for grumbling and complaining because Kenneth has been gone so much. I know it was You who spoke to me in an audible voice that morning while I was washing dishes. I cried and complained to You, and You said, "I could take him where he would never come back." "Forgive me, Lord." I continued, "Just spare his life. Just let us keep him. I will never grumble and complain again. I don't care where he goes or how long he stays away doing what You've called him to do."

I found out later that Kenneth had already repented for disobeying, but he still thought he was going to die. Can you tell me what the power of what was happening here? The power was in their agreement. So, they both had to repent because the power was in their agreement to disobey God. When we had both repented and consecrated ourselves anew to the Lord, Kenneth was instantly healed. He got up off that bed and danced all across the path on each floor. Safe to say they had a party at church that night. Hallelujah. I need ten more minutes. Are you having an impartation of the Spirit right now?

Luke chapter 14 verse 25 says, ²⁵ **Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them,** ²⁶ **"If anyone comes to Me and does not hold on a minute. I think you need to just because I've checked this in many, many, many translations, and I will read it to you, perhaps next week. ²⁶ "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷ And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. ²⁸ For which of you intending to build a tower does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it - ²⁹ lest after he has laid the foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰ saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish?' ³¹ Or what king going to make war against another king does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. ³³ So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has, can not be My disciple." ³⁴ "Salt is good; but if the salt lost its flavour, how shall it be seasoned? ³⁵ It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Luke 14:25-35 NKJV)**

I'm going to read you the other things quickly. The New Living Translation says, ²⁶ **If you want to be My disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else - your father and**

mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters - yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be My disciple (Luke 14:26 NLT). The Passion Translation says, ²⁶ **When you follow Me as My disciple, you must put aside your father, your mother, your wife, your sisters, your brothers - yes, you will even seem as though you hate your own life. This is the price you'll pay to be considered one of My followers (Luke 14:26 TPT).** The Amplified Bible says it like this. ²⁶ **If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his [own] father and mother [in the sense of difference to or relative disregard for them in comparison with his attitude toward God] and [likewise] his wife and children and brothers and sisters - [yes] and even his own life also - he cannot be My disciple (Luke 14:26 AMPC).**

So, what is this scripture telling us? Is this the same Word of God that says, "Children, you must honour your parents so that you may have a long life?" Yes. It's the same scripture. These things, they are not against each other. What the scripture is saying; You've got to love God so much that if it comes between obeying God's Word and keeping the peace with mom and dad, and brother and sister, and wife, husband, you have to obey God. God must be the standard of every choice you make, otherwise, all the other choices will always be more important than God's choice for you. Okay, I've been ministering about this now this morning. And I really suggest that in Message Moments this afternoon you come and share, you come and be part of it, you come and see what God's got going for us in the next couple of weeks.

I want to say this to you that it's time for me and you, for us to respond to what God's calling us to do. I've been going through an extensive timeline, and I was before the Lord about whether I should share the timeline with you this morning. Of our lives, and our ministry and our time together. And so, as the weeks go by, I will share some of that with you. Because there are significant messages that the Lord has had us preach that seemed like it was going to cost us all a lot, but we've hit payday. I'm going to give you an example that is relevant to all of us, not just to parents with children or the children that obeyed God. But you remember when the Lord said, "I want you to sow an irrational honour seed to Brother Jerry." And we ministered on that, and it just didn't make sense, it didn't make sense for us to do what we did.

But God, through that irrational honour seed God established a principle of honour in our lives, our ministry, in our ministry, in our relationship with Brother Jerry, and it established the testimony of honour in the whole world. Because everybody in the whole world knows about the honour that I and we have given to Brother Jerry. They talk about it. They know about it. They have accepted it. It's a standard. In the same way that Brother Jerry's honour for Brother Copeland is worldwide known, and vice versa. Right? But it had to start with obedience to the Word of God.

Do you remember what the obedience was of the Word of God to Brother Jerry, about honour with Brother Copeland? This is what the Lord said to him, He said, "Jerry, your future in ministry is not going to be dependent on how you deal with the anointing that is on Brother Copeland's life, it's going to be how you deal with the familiarity of his humanity that is going to determine how you're going to live your life, and the effect of your ministry." Because when I'm standing here on a Sunday and there is an anointing and the ministry and the message is coming out with power, it's all easy to accept what I'm saying. But when you see me in everyday life and you see my natural man, and you become familiar with my natural habits, it may be easier for you to say, "There's not much difference between him and me. I mean, he's just a man like me." And to be sure, I am. I eat like you. I go to the toilet like you. I shower like you. I've got to get up in the morning the same way that you have to get up in the morning and my breath is morning breath, just like yours. Right?

There is a human natural side to me, but that doesn't change the fact that God has chosen

this vessel to be an instrument to bring the living message through the Word of God to you, but also the living message in my example. But that doesn't mean to say you can't find fault with me. Sometimes the finding fault with me is not because I'm at fault. It's because people want to find fault with me because they don't want to obey the Word of God that is presented to them. Amen?

So over years, mostly what's happened is that people that have become prominent in the body of Christ have chosen to surround themselves with professionally paid workers. Come on. Just work with me for a minute. Okay? Because they needed to run a ministry and so, the ministry that is being run has to be run by an accountant, by a bookkeeper, by someone who answers the telephone, people that can get paid to do a job. And so, if you need to run a ministry like you run an organisation, you need to pay people. That doesn't mean to say that the people receive you as a messenger from God. It just means you pay their salary. What happens when you have many people around you like that, and they don't identify with your calling? What do you think is going to happen? They're going to have a professional relationship with you. Right? That doesn't mean to say they receive you.

So, if they had reason to disagree with you, they'd just resign and leave. They might have good things to say or bad things to say. I'm going to give you an example of something like that that happened. I think it was 2014, maybe? 2012, maybe? It could be longer ago than that. But there was a senator in America, his name was and he's still a senator in America, Senator Grassley. And Senator Grassley was asked to see a couple of people. And these people were employees, some of them management employees, in Kenneth Copeland Ministries. And these people had been let go by Kenneth Copeland for spiritual reasons.

They went with a professional complaint to the senate and said, "By the way, what we're telling you about Kenneth Copeland Ministries is the tip of the iceberg because all these ministries; Benny Hinn, Joyce Meyer, Creflo Dollar, and a whole lot of them, they're all doing the same thing." So, on the basis of these informants - whistle-blowers - Senator Grassley started a committee, and the committee was set up to investigate these ministries. A professional employment that turned against a man that's spiritually called. In the end, Brother Copeland just stood his ground according to state law or federal law and on the Bible. What Brother Copeland basically said to the senator was, "I'm not giving you what you're asking for because everything you're asking for is covered in the laws that the IRS, Receiver of Revenue can ask for. If they want to launch an investigation into our ministry, they are welcome."

So, he sent his son at that time - his son, John Copeland, was the general manager of his ministry - he sent him to go and stand with a camera crew on the Senate stairs of Washington, wherever that is. Congress, he went and stood on the stairs of Congress and he held up his letter to the IRS saying, "If you want to come and audit our books, you're welcome. But we are not going to do what Senator Grassley asked for because the way to go about this is for the IRS to come and investigate us and inspect whether we are doing anything incorrect." Because of the stand that he made, spiritually, and I mean him, others of the ministries I've just named didn't go about it that way. But Brother Copeland made that stand. That time I was still a non-executive director of the ministry in South Africa. I know the details well. He made a stand. As a result of that, it was like suddenly, one day, they announced they're putting the whole investigation on hold, and nothing ever came from it.

Sometimes, as you pay the price, God will vindicate you. Sometimes when you are busy going through that kind of thing, it doesn't look like anything good, but only bad is going to come but God. All things are subject to change. That's what Brother Jerry always taught us; all things are subject to change. So, I say to you, God is requiring from me and you, us people, He's requiring a response. And the response that He's requiring from us is to reach for the things that God is calling us to do. So, I want you to know that I've been very quiet.

I've been very careful, and I'm still going to be very careful about what I do next, because I am aware that in my father's going, my own emotions have been significantly impacted. You know, more than I would have expected.

But I said to Sharon sometimes, is it any wonder, you know, for 28 years, God has been speaking to me about Brother Jerry. For 28 years, God began to speak to me more than 28 years ago now. February, January of this year would have been 28 years, when God started to speak to me about serving Brother Jerry. For 28 years, He's been speaking to me about serving Brother Jerry. For 28 years, I've been honouring His word of God to me to serve Brother Jerry. Now, 28 years is a long time. Now, this may or may not make sense to you if I say this to you. Maybe it will, but, you know, I'll say it anyway, however you receive it.

Sometimes, a spiritual person in your life can mean more to you than your own family. You could have a closer relationship with someone in the spirit than you have with someone who's your blood family. In fact, I would say that if you choose to truly follow God, and your family doesn't, the chances are that you will have a closer relationship with people in the spirit than you will have your own family. Because they won't understand you. So, they might make a pull on you, but we are family. *Ons is familie*, like that's the highest standard of relationship that exists on the earth, is family.

I want to tell you that it's not. Well, certainly, what I read in the Bible and my own experience based on the way I have followed Jesus, spiritual relationships can be more powerful and more significant and more eternal than natural relationships. And so, we have a journey to walk together, Church, us. I've said this to you many times, and I'm closing with this here. I've said this to you many times. I'm in awe of you. I think the world of you. I appreciate you. And I love you all very, very much. Because, you know, when Sharon and I chose to do the word of God in our lives, we didn't do that because we were expecting to lead other people doing this.

We did it because what we read in the Bible was going to save our lives. And as I read in the Bible, love her. I loved her. It saved my life. When I read in the Bible, sow a seed when I didn't have a seed to sow and speak the word of God, it saved my life. Where I was destined to be poor and have no significance financially God changed my life and I became comfortable, thank you. Reaching for more wealth. Amen. The word of God is the substance and the foundation of everything that others would look at and say, "But you are successful, Pastor John." "Thank you. I receive that. It's the Word. It's the Word." And I am in awe of you because you are the people that God had in mind when He called us. Because He said, "John and Sharon, I want you to go and live what you have learned. Go and live it and teach it."

Even when we were in our church more than 20 years ago at Rhema, I went to my Pastor and I said to him, "Pastor Ray, I believe the Lord wants me to do this teaching. Would you permit me to do it in the church on faith, finance, and family?" He said, "Yes, John. You can have..." What was that hall, Pastor Lynn? [*Pastor Lynn replying fellowship hall 3*] Fellowship, hall 3. "You can have fellowship hall 3. It can seat 200 or 300 people. You can have that fellowship hall 3. We'll put it in the monthly newsletter, and you and Sharon can go and teach on faith, finance, and family."

So, we did. Before I even was a Pastor. I've always been a Pastor and a Shepherd. Family sitting at the back there, Forgey's and Prinsloo's they got to know me from those meetings. Yeah. They came to those... am I right, Herma? That's where we actually met you. Right? I think. More or less. That was a long time ago. Praise the Lord. Faith, finance, and family. I think what we have lived in our lives is faith, finance, and family. And it's amazing to me that you all are here. And to a large extent, what's happened is that God has been speaking and revealing Himself to us and to you in all these times.

But we can't camp here. We can't camp here. Because my father is gone. My father is gone. He has chosen to be in heaven with the Heavenly Father. And now, because my father is gone, it's time for us to respond to what the Father in heaven wants us to do next. And I can't... whatever we're going to do, we're going to do it together. Yes? We are going to do it together. This is God's will that whatever we do, we do it together, amen. So, right now, I'm evaluating the price. I'm looking at the price. I'm counting the cost. It's not the cost of money. This is not the cost that I'm counting. The cost is what wars are we going to fight? What decisions are we going to make? Will we leave anybody behind? I don't want to. I want us all to go forward. Together. That I would not be doing the right thing if I wasn't counting the costs spiritually first, and then recognising, okay, we've crossed that hurdle now. Now it's time for us to see what are the other costs involved. Amen?

I trust that this word has been powerful and that you are ready to receive the word of God as it has been spoken to you today. Amen. Praise the Lord. I'll tell you that the reason I'm counting the cost is because, you know, when the Lord spoke to Kenneth Hagin and said, "Start a Bible school," they couldn't imagine that it was going to be that big. And there's no way that I can see the full scope of what God is going to do next. But the part that I can see, I've got to say, "Let's count the cost, first." Amen.

You receive the word of the Lord for you this morning? To us this morning? Amen. Can we take up an offering? Amen. So, let me just say this. I did say this to you previously. This is one of the things that the Lord said to me. He said, "John, if you don't do it for yourself, will you do it for the next generation?" So, I leave you with this question. Will you do this with me for the next generation? At least. Because I'll tell you, if we don't fight and pay the price for things, then the next generation's going to have to pay... to fight that fight. They will have other fights that they've got to fight because you can't live life and not take on wars.

We can't shield our kids, spiritually or otherwise, from battles they've got to fight. That's how you grow. Even if it's the battle of your own mind, the battle of your own emotions, the battle of your circumstances. Either way, it's time for us to go forward, amen. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. Hallelujah.

I certainly don't want to be in a place that anything that I'm doing is going to compromise my wife or compromise my health or compromise you or us. Yeah? We've really worked hard to get here. We're a church that the Lord Jesus can look at and say, "I've got a people I can work with." So, we've got to just be bold and courageous, but do the right thing at the same time. No fear in counting the cost. No fear in there. Wisdom, I would say. No fear. What do you say? Amen. Can you bring up the offering, please? You may all stand with me, please.

I thank you, Lord, for everybody that sows, puts in tithes and offerings and sows seed. Every bit of financial seed that is ever sown, any day, any place, anywhere in this ministry, anywhere where the compassion of God moves and people give to the poor, I pray, Father, that every seed that is sown, You oversee and watch over that harvest and that You cause that harvest to come back to Your people in abundance, Father. That windows of Heaven are open and blessing and blessing and blessing and blessing without stopping continues to flow into their lives, in Jesus' name. Hallelujah. Amen. Amen.

Before I preached this morning, I asked you if you would be willing and ready and receptive. And I thank you for being open-hearted about it and allowing your minds to be focused. I'd like you to agree with me - just put your hand on your heart and say; Lord, I receive Your Word to me. I will do everything to obey You. Where I need Your grace, I receive it. Where I need Your strength, I receive it. Thank you, Lord, for this moment that we can all be together

in one accord, in assignment for You. Thank you for giving us purpose. Thank you for giving us Your life. In Jesus' name. Amen. Hallelujah.

I pray that you are blessed going out and you are blessed coming in. Every day you wake up, you go into your life and you are blessed. No weapon formed against you will prosper, in Jesus' name. Hallelujah. There might be weapons that are formed, but they won't prosper because there are always angels taking care of you, watching over you as you go in your house and come out of your house. Nothing missing, nothing broken in your lives - financially, spiritually, emotionally, relationally. Nothing missing, nothing broken, in Jesus' name. In Jesus' name! Hallelujah.

Thank you for coming to church. Please come back to message moments. What else have I forgotten? I've done everything? Praise the Lord! Bye.