

Scripture reference: John 10:8-10 (NLT); John 10:10 (NKJV); John 10:10 (TPT); Psalm 37: 3-4 (NKJV); Psalms 37:4-7 (NKJV); Psalms 37:3-4 (TPT)

Pastor Sharon:

Father, we thank you for the work of the Holy Spirit that continues through the ministry of the Word of God. We're in agreement now that our heart receives, our heart believes, and we're in agreement now that Pastor John comes to minister to us, and that he says what he hears you saying. And we thank You that he will speak Your Word with all boldness, Lord as he ought to, he will bring this message to us today with all boldness, Father. And we thank You for Your presence upon us all, Your Holy Spirit within us all, Who helps us as we're on this journey with revelation for revolution. And we all say, amen. Thank you, Pastor John. We are ready to receive the Word.

Pastor John:

Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. What a wonderful day to be in the house of the Lord. Glory to God. Before you sit down, I want you just to turn to someone and say, "You must pay attention today", and then you may be seated.

Praise the Lord. Over the next couple of weeks, you'll be hearing some things in preparation for the 15th of September, and I'm looking forward to sharing the Word of the Lord with you.

I am in a very kind of, seeking, evaluating position before the Lord. So, if I stand before you this morning, and I have to share some of my reflections with you, I will ask you to follow a part of my journey as I ask you a question. And I'm only going to use one measure of my own life here, and it's one that is common to you. But it's how I can best share it with you so you can see where we're going here. Every one of us, while we are children, while we're growing up, we are influenced and affected by circumstances, our environment, social structure, and social order. We are affected by many things as we're growing up.

Sometimes, if you for example at a school you are around someone who frequently bullies you, for example, your life can become quite deeply impacted because no one else will stand up for you, and you are bullied, and you are humiliated, and you are, you know, ashamed, and many things happen to you. And so, if you are someone who's a bully or being bullied, then you might grow up with a certain mindset. What would your mindset be if you were growing up with someone who is being bullied or bullying you? You might grow up with a certain mindset.

Well, if it's something that's deeply impacted you, then you might grow up saying, well, whenever you see any kind of intimidation going on, you would react to it. Number one, you would push intimidation away from you. Wherever you saw intimidation, you'd probably come to the defense of the person who's being intimidated. Right? You might even be quite passionate with the cause, and you might find a cause in life where you can put your energy in, you could put some of your resources in, so that you can help people who have been impacted by bullies, or you can help them get a more balanced life because of the intimidation they experienced. Right?

Are you all with me today? Every one of us grows up with something. I'd like to suggest to you today that and I'm get the best way I can graphically explain this to you is if you're someone like, if you're ... I'm going to put a mouse, for example. If you're a mouse that's in a little box, and all you know is the size of a little box, you can't... it's got no visual outside. You're just stuck in a box. And all you want to do is get out of the box. Your whole mission, your whole dream, your whole thing, what could be outside of the box? Now you might

actually focus your whole everything, your energies, your resources, your everything to just be free of the box.

Right? What happens when you get out of the box? Let's say you get out of the box, and now suddenly you're in a big room, and this room is massive compared to your box. What you might do, if you're the mouse, you might run around in the room and you might run around the boards of the room and you might run under the bed of the room and you might run around. Wow. I'm free.

What have you just done? You've just climbed into a bigger box. Right? But man, am I free compared to the little box I've been in – ooh, ooh, look how much space I've got to run-in. Right? Until you've run around that place for a long time, and you find out it's just another bigger box. Now you start dreaming about being free of this box. One day, you get free of the box, and you find out, woah, there's a whole house. I can run upstairs and downstairs and everywhere else until you find out it's just another big box.

What do you do if you're the mouse? Well, what you really want to do is have someone who's capable of coming in and reaching into your little box and completely liberating you from all boxes. But you wouldn't know that because all you can see and all you're dreaming up is climbing out of one box to another box to another box. And it takes you time every time to understand that you're just in another box. Amen.

If you're a Christian, you give your life to Jesus, you have a real opportunity in life that Jesus is your Savior of all boxes. Now, He can come and save you from a small box, and you can be delivered to get into a big box. And you might think Jesus has delivered you because you're running around in a big box, only to find out that there's another, bigger box, and a bigger box, and you're always just stuck in a box. Don't you want the saving power of Jesus to deliver you from boxes and put you into a whole new world that He creates for you?

Come on. For me, I recognised that as the Word of God began to become a revelation to me, I began to realize that I could be in a box. I wouldn't have phrased it this way when God set me free, but, when I married Pastor Sharon, I recognized and realized that if I started getting educated on how to communicate properly with my wife - how to have communications in such a way that our physical intimacy was an open conversation, our financial directives in our lives were an open, honest conversation - who's giving me this information?

Someone who lives in a box. Right? So, anybody that's coming to give me information, if they themselves live in a box, they're just transferring the box knowledge to me so that my box changes. I couldn't have said it to you this way, but when Jesus said to me, "John, I want you to love Sharon as Christ loves the church and give yourself to her and wash her with the water of the Word," what He was teaching me was, "I'm taking you out of all the boxes that could ever contain you, and I'm delivering you into a life of marriage that is beyond your wildest expectations." At the time, I didn't know that there were boxes that people would still try to put me in, which were just information boxes, knowledge-based boxes.

And so, you end up running your life by those boxes because they are the specialists. They are the know-it-alls. They are the people who have the education to tell you how big your box can be. So, I decided I was going to live the Word of God in my life. And believe me, everything I did when I started to love Pastor Sharon that way, everything inside of me began to scream, "I'm not sure that I can do this." In fact, on many occasions, I said to the Lord, "This is not fair. I'm the one who's doing all the work here. She's not doing the kind of work you told me to do." And every time, the Lord would answer me this way; He said, "John, I didn't tell you it would be fair. I just told you to obey Me." I didn't know at that time that He was taking me out of a box completely.

Hallelujah. And so, here I am 45 years later. Next year, we'll be married for 45 years, and I'm living in my dream. I'm living in a world that is completely delivered from anything the world says can be a good marriage. I'm not living in a good marriage; I'm living in a great marriage.

I cannot express to you the depth of my satisfaction. I cannot express to you the depth of my contentment. I cannot express to you the glory of the joy and the peace and the blessing that I live in with this woman. And it's not because God created her as my only soulmate. It's because we decided together, we would be each other's soulmates before God. He created her to be my perfect fit because I obeyed Him, not because I allowed someone else to tell me what box to live in. Amen?

Now I'm going to show you a video clip in a minute here. There was a time when I began to realize that I had been in a box. It was an education box. And the education box was that you know, I wanted my sons to have the best education because after all, aside from money and a house and other safety things that can change, what is the best advantage you can give your children in life other than a great education? This was when my boys were little, and they're both over 40 now. That's a long time ago. We endeavored to give them the best education to discover that the education institute is very, very flawed, notwithstanding my son's own choices that they made, and I can't blame all of their choices on an institution. Because it doesn't matter what institution you are part of, you still have to make your own choices. Right? And they made some bad choices. Nevertheless, it did not change the idea that I was understanding the institutions are so deeply flawed.

Now, just remember this. 35 years ago, there were not all of the 'woke-isms' that we have in schools now. And I'm just labeling it broadly and generally, so I don't have to go into all the details of it, right? All of that stuff wasn't there, but what God started to feel inside of me was, John, you need to have you need to pursue a different level of education. So, I started on a journey with different people in my life that came in and out of my life. And I would find passion in other people. And there was a guy that was at Rhema, and he was a very wealthy businessman, and him and I were good friends. It turned out that later on in life, he would phone me before very big board meetings, before big business decisions. He would call me.

You know, everybody's got to have, and everybody does have that one person they can turn to that they can trust, to give them advice that is beyond anybody else that's got an agenda. He found in me a trustworthy person. So, he would call me, and not because I had all the business answers for him, but because he knew I was a spiritual man, and he was seeking to find out things spiritually.

We also found a common passion, and this is the passion of education. Because of his wealth, and because his kids were little and busy growing up, he decided to buy a whole school, and he did. He bought an entire school, a primary school. He bought an entire school. What can I say? He had the money. I don't remember what he paid for it then, but I'm going to say maybe it was 20 million or something, I can't remember the exact number, but he bought an entire school with the soccer fields and the hockey fields. He bought the whole school.

Part of what he was trying to do was, he was trying to do a new education system. He thought, "If I can control all the resources and the assets, then what we put into the school, I can control that." So, he asked me to be part of the project to build that. Only to discover that as he was drawing on resources to make this happen, all they were doing was, actually, building another school with a Christian label on it and having Christian prayer meetings in the morning and having Christian counseling available. For the rest, it was just another school with a Christian label on it.

Well, that wasn't what was in my heart. So, in the end, I had to ask him to release me from the project so I wouldn't be part of the advisory council and his advisor on the whole process because he was just building a bigger box. Are you with me?

As years went by, I began to talk about if Sharon and I had it over again, we would do homeschooling because that way, you're not trying to reimagine a system. You've got an opportunity to train your kids in a way that is so uniquely different and so powerful and so creative and so Godly that they would have the best advantage in life. Praise the Lord.

I'm going to show you a 10-minute clip, a podcast interview style that was done between Pastor Christi and Professor Norma Nel, this week. We have had to bring it down because it's a 24-minute interview. But this will just give you a taste. When you go out here, if you're on our mailing list, you will get a WhatsApp message that will give you the link to the whole 24-minutes, 25-minutes podcast so that you can get the whole thing. Professor Nel is known as professor emeritus at the Unisa University, and she spent a lot of her years in education.

Well, if I, and I did, some 20 years ago, I spoke quite openly that if we had an opportunity, we would homeschool our kids. Let me ask you, the people who have been with me all these years that heard that, let me ask you to reflect; how much of the other people's 'box thinking' was so entrenched in you that you could not see yourself doing anything else but leaving your kids in an institution? I made that mistake. I have to be honest with my mistakes otherwise I just keep living in a reality of my own dishonesty. And if I'm living in a reality of my own dishonesty then I've got nowhere to go. I keep living in my boxes. Right?

So, why is it, why is it that you couldn't - we couldn't necessarily see what the answers were? Well, partly it's because we were not ready for it. Our heart to be disciples of God's ways was not fully developed in us, so we were still the disciples of the boxes. We had this, we had this unbalanced view of "we'll live some as Christians and be disciples of God, and we'll live some disciples of the boxes because I just want to get out of this box. And if I can give my kids to live in an opportunity to live in a much bigger box than I lived in, I've already succeeded." And so, we just keep on helping our kids from generation to generation to live in bigger boxes. Why would we want to do that? Well, that's because we don't fully trust God yet. We had to be ready. All of these years, God has been preparing us as a ministry to be able to live outside of the boxes, and if you want to know what I'm saying to you this morning, the 15th of September will explain more to you. But essentially, 15th September will explain to you how we as a ministry are going to go forward; outside of the box. Hallelujah. And I'm trusting this ten-minute video clip will help you. Thank you, Professor Nel. Can we play that video, please?

Pastor Christi:

So, this is the big and wonderful question this morning; what triggered your interest to embark on this amazing research?

Professor Nel:

Throughout my academic career, my research projects were, actually it was a potpourri of projects because I was more diverse in my interests. I'm a specialist in inclusive education, but, you know, then I was – then there's a gap in research, and I would go for it. So, it ranged from teaching Mandarin as a Second Additional Language in South African schools to athletics in South Africa to inclusive education to many more other aspects in education and so to use the words of Pastor Sharon, she used the words, *convergence*, *confluence*, *congruence*, and that then arrived at faith-based homeschooling.

So, at the end of 2022, there was a buzzword here at the church, "homeschooling," and I thought to myself, "Well, that's interesting. That would be an interesting topic for research, and it also fits in with, and Heritage of Faith lends itself to that type of research because it's a

hot topic here at this place.” The Holy Spirit tugged at my heart, and I became interested and motivated, and I recognized the need for research and to contribute to the body of knowledge but without catering for social desirability.

I wasn't going to cater to the thirst for social desirability. So, at the end of 2022, as I said, that was at the end of 2022. Then, what I want to mention is that most of the homeschooling articles concentrate on the perception of the parents regarding homeschooling, however, my interest is the perceptions of the learners and their experiences of faith-based homeschooling.

According to research, particularly Brian Ray's research, he found that there are more and more parents opting for homeschooling. Why? Well, Covid-19 was part of the reason. Because parents had to tutor their own children, and they then could see the type of quality that these children were getting. I was interested more in the lived experiences of the homeschooler and also then what made sense for them, of their faith-based homeschooling experiences. In other words, you know, how did it impact their lives?

Pastor Christi:

Did you encounter any resistance during this research process? Was it on the same level as your previous research? How did you find that?

Professor Nel:

You know, the devil comes to kill, steal, and destroy, and of course, there was the onslaught of the devil which was very dramatic and overwhelming; it was like being in the lion's den, like Daniel. You know, there were reviewers and the comments that they made really slandered me. They would say, for example, "Put on your research hat and take off your faith-based hat." But that was the hidden agenda here. I kept my faith-based hat on despite their comments.

Pastor Christi:

Professor Nel, if we can ask you today, please just name some of your significant findings. What stood out for you when you did this research?

Professor Nel:

First of all, what really made an impact on me was how confident these faith-based homeschoolers are. They are just so confident and it's just amazing to see what they can do. How well their gifts and their talents have been developed, that was due to good time management, there was time for academics, there was time for extramural activities, there was time to socialise with others, and the like. They are goal oriented, they have their foot in the message, they stand on the scriptures and they live in God's ways. The Bible is the core curriculum, and the parent is the primary educator. They really are God-driven, they are not performance-driven.

Something that really stood out and I would like to underline it was, the family ties and bonds were high on the priority list, this is lost when our children go to institutionalised schools. Without posing a question regarding iXchange, every single participant spontaneously spoke about their positive experiences in the iXchange program and this necessitated me to add a footnote regarding iXchange and Heritage of Faith's Christian worldview. As I say, iXchange featured everywhere in their responses, you know. And, that's why, as I say, it necessitated that I had to expound on the concept, iXchange.

Pastor Christi:

That is wonderful.

Professor Nel:

Then, to me, they've proved that all the labeling and the stereotypes regarding homeschooling for example, "Oh, these homeschoolers, you know, they're not socially well adapted. They overprotected." And yet I found that this is redundant. This is not acceptable. I don't accept it. It's a fallacy. And, that they are equally or even better adapted and capable and equipped to hold their own in the world out there. For example, it was also mentioned in previous articles that homeschooling is inferior to education in private and public schools-education. On the contrary, and, this is what research has shown previously, is that these learners are well-adapted when they go to university. Their grades are comparable to other university students.

Pastor Christi:
Absolutely. Absolutely.

Professor Nel:
Yeah. I really feel that more research is needed using mixed methods. When I mean mixed methods, I'm talking about qualitative research, that includes observations and interviews and that type of thing. And then, quantitative research, that includes statistics. The one substantiating the other and vice versa. I feel that that should be done. For example, you know, the grades of homeschoolers and comparing it with the grades of learners in other schools.

And then one positive side is, and that I'd like to mention, is that the editor of the journal said that this type of research is absolutely crucial in South Africa. And really, what she was really saying, she's blessing this article.

Pastor Christi:
That is wonderful.

Professor Nel:
And not in so many words, but that's what I understood.
And like one critical reader said, "Now I know what homeschooling is all about."

Pastor Christi:
That is so wonderful, and we need more of that research. We definitely, I agree with you. That's why we are so grateful for what you did here. Just the last question. Professor Nel, would you like to share anything else with us today?

Professor Nel:
I'd really just to underline this - that it's important in research to ensure trustworthiness. That is; credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability of the article, and this article met all that criteria. Last but not least, I'd like to thank Pastor John and his team, for making this venue available, for allowing me to work with the participants, and, you know, for the unwavering support and assistance that I received from people here in the Ecclesia.

And then I'd also like to mention my colleague, Professor Soezin Krog. She's sort of, you know, she's very good at assisting with technology and interview transcriptions and that type - like technical editing. So, I'd like to thank her for that as well.

My question is, what does the research mean for Heritage of Faith Ministries? I give all the glory to God. I was a vessel in God's hands. And, Pastor Christi, I thank you, and I enjoyed being part of this interview with you, because it was good to vent what I am doing and to tell people about it.

Pastor Christi:
Yes. Yes.

Professor Nel:
I think it's necessary.

Pastor Christi:
It's necessary.

Professor Nel:
That we don't keep these things for ourselves.

Pastor Christi:
Yes. Professor Nell, we just all wanna say today, thank you that you came to share with us about your research. God did a very great thing through your gift, being willing to do this specific research. We do give God all the glory, and thank you. Thank you for your time and your willingness to share all of this with us. And we believe, Professor Nell, we believe this is but the first, that more is coming, and, we are looking forward to that. Thank you so much for your time here with us today. We say thank you.

Professor Nel:
It was only a pleasure.

Pastor John:
Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. I really want to encourage you to go onto the website, Hofmi.net, and go and have a look at the whole podcast. As I said, it's about 25 minutes long, and it will give you a lot more information. Also, you will find on the website, Professor Nell's entire paper that she published that had all this critical, scrutiny and has been accepted as a worldwide, properly published, properly researched paper, and what her findings were and all of the stuff on there. You will be able to read the paper, watch the whole podcast, and I trust you'll do that. Well, why do we want to do this? Because I don't want to live in a box. I don't want to swap one box for another box. I want to live in the order of God. Don't you? Hallelujah.

If I had to say to you, and I was certainly a victim of this, the word victim is badly used nowadays, but I certainly had the experience of this. When I started to love Pastor Sharon, when I started to love her the way God told me to love her, my priorities became a priority that wasn't set, it wasn't set by anybody else's standard. Come on. It was set by God. Now I'm supposed to love her and give myself up for her. What does that look like? Well, whenever I was faced with a decision to do something for myself or do something for her. What's my priority? Not to do something for myself, but to do something for her. Come on. The word of God that came to me became my priority, not what anybody else thought.

So, I became a victim of what everybody else thought. And everybody else said, "John, what happened to you? You lost your backbone. You've become spineless. Whatever she asks, you just do whatever she asks. You don't do anything for yourself." Can I interpret that for you? "When we invite you to come and watch rugby with us and you say, no. You always used to come watch rugby with us. Now that you're married, you say no." Why was I saying no? Because it was not my priority to go and watch rugby with them anymore. The Word of God had become my priority.

When I said no, to them and I kept saying no to them and I kept saying no to them, they said, "You've quit on your friendships for your marriage. What's happened to you? You've become spineless. She wears the pants in the house." Does that sound like what somebody would say? Because they don't understand, and I couldn't have told them then what the outcome of my obedience to God would be. But years later, when I was living in this ever-increasing joy... So, here's what God's Word came to me now because I obeyed the

first word, the second word was; do not allow strife into your relationship because where strife is, the Bible says, all manner of evil abounds. What does evil do? Steal, kill, and destroy. Right? What I had to do was I had to say, "I'm not going to let strife into my marriage. I'm therefore keeping evil at bay." Where there's no evil, what fills the space? Glory. God's obedience. Now, you can't keep evil at bay by yourself. It's just a different kind of evil that comes in when you think you yourself are doing it. When you are going, when you've got God's Word and His presence in your world, it keeps evil at bay. Right?

As evil was outside of my box that God was creating, glory filled it. God's power filled it. And so, what is the power there for? Where two adult people are trying to live together, and wills are involved, and everybody's will is involved. If it's a clash of wills that needs to be resolved, then we turn to the will of the Father, the will of all life, the will of the Created being. We turn to His will, and we say, "What is Your will, instead of competing wills?" Now this might seem like just the small things, but if you can take out of strife and contention in a will clash in marriage, you resolve most of the problems. Because after all, most of the issues are a clash of wills. So, I said, "Well, I am not going to let my will compete with her will. I'm going to let my will be subject to His will. And then when I'm getting His will on the matter, this thing must come into full joy."

When I say to you that I cannot even begin to describe it to you because what you will see about my marriage is, you will see sometimes I'm affectionate towards her. You will hear adoring language coming from me, and you will see wherever people are around us, you will see the obvious affection and love that Sharon and I have for each other. And you will look at it, and you will say, "Well, that's nice." And they will say, "But your personalities are obviously involved in that - and so, you know, because your personalities are involved in that, that's the way you choose to express your love for each other. We are different." I'm not going to have anything to say about how you're different. I can tell you this though, that if I was serving a God who only wanted to be affectionate to me on His terms when I was only in His will, not my will, I would never feel His love.

He chose to say to me, "I will always be there with My presence. There is nothing you can do, to do anything that will remove My presence from you. You might not enjoy My fellowship because you're not in a place to enjoy it, but I will never withdraw it from you." Because if He did, then His love would be conditional. And His love is unconditional. If God can love me with that level of unconditional love, then it's possible that I can access all of His love to love her that way.

Now I know that when I talk like this, a lot of men don't like it when I talk like it. Not in this church anymore, but a lot of men used to not like me talking about this because it challenged them to not live in their will. And I've had people leave my church for this. They would say to me, "Your standard is too high, Pastor John. It's unrealistic to live like that. Who can live like that?" I'll tell you this, if I could do it, you could do it. I didn't do it because I was a pastor. I did it because I wanted God's life in my marriage rather than what the world said marriage would be. Because if I had listened to what the world said marriage could be, I would have been done. Sharon and I have talked about this: out clash of wills and out differences in personality, we would have so contested each other all the time, or one of us would have to completely subjugate ourselves to the other's will. Who wants a subject as a marriage partner?

And do you think God wants to subjugate you to His will? Come on. God doesn't want to subjugate you. God wants you to choose His will so that in partnership, you live life to all of His potential life that He can give you. I'm preaching so good today. This is the way we climb out of all of the boxes that the devil has tried to bring into our world. And lest you and I forget, the devil has come to steal, kill, and destroy all of humanity and kill and destroy and steal everybody's life force that God gives us.

John chapter 10 verse 1, in the New Living Translation - Well, I don't have time anymore to read all of that I'm just going to read to you verse 8. ⁸ **All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them.** ⁹ **Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures.** ¹⁰ **The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. (John 10:8-10 NLT)**

I am going to debate with you, whether or not the world has got what it takes to give you a rich and satisfying life. Do you think that money gives you a rich and satisfying life? Some of you might say, "Until you don't have it, then you realize that money can give it." No. No. I promise you; it doesn't matter how much money you've got. You will always have a hole in your heart. You will always have an emptiness that cannot be filled, and so you will try and find bigger, more radical, more success, more ambition, more something to try and fill the hole in your heart. But only God, He created us to pursue Him.

The New King James version of verse 10 says, ¹⁰ **The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. (John 10:10 NKJV)** The Passion Translation puts it this way. ¹⁰ **A thief has only one thing in mind—he wants to steal, slaughter, and destroy. But I have come to give you everything in abundance, more than you expect —life in its fullness until you overflow! (John 10:10 TPT)** Don't you want to have life in its fullness until you overflow? There are some God's ways of going about this.

Psalms 37, I'm going to read to you from verse 3 to verse 7. ³ **Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.** ⁴ **Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:3-4 NKJV)** Can you just help me understand that you get this. ⁴ **Delight yourself also in the LORD.** Delight yourself in who? Say, you do what with the Lord? Are we clear on this? ⁴ **Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.**

I am going to just share with you something. And really, I do believe that God's going to do something amazing here. Pastor Sharon and I have a project. It's called *Project45*. And it's a project for us to celebrate next year, 45 years of marriage. When I say that number, it feels impossible that I have been married for 45 years. Really. I don't feel like I'm even 45. I'm telling you. It is just a number. I'm healthy. I'm fit. I'll tell you the only time I feel like I'm older than 45 is when I go riding with young people, and they now fit, and they just ride up that hill and they just ride away from me and I now.... Okay. You know, I'm over 60 now. You know, and they're 20-something, and they just ride away from me.

I threaten them. I threaten them with obliteration if they do that too frequently and too often and don't consider my age when they're riding up that hill. In particular, Mia. She's my daughter, you know. And so, you know, whenever she rides past me, it's like, "Don't you dare think about it, daughter." You know? Anyway, we have some fun, but that's about the only time I feel like my age is just because the young people are still young. You know? But otherwise, I don't feel like I should be married for 45 years.

Well, I can tell you, part of the reason I don't feel like I should be married for 45 years is because it's been such a joy to me. Every day is an absolute, absolute playground for me. You don't know what that means? Doesn't matter. It's a playground for me. She and I, we have an absolute blast. I'll tell you; I went before the Lord. This is how God works, and this is how God can work. I went before the Lord and I said to the Lord, I said, "Lord, I want to do something for her as *Project45*. There's a few things that we've talked about doing together. I know what she does not want to do. She doesn't want me to take her away to the bush for *Project45*. I love the bush. She'll come to the bush with me if I want her to. But I know that the joy of her heart is not to go to the bush. You guys know her well. What do you think the

joy of her heart will be? Shopping. Where do you think - if she could just dream - where do you think she would like to shop? Italy, Paris, England, Germany, America? Right? *Project 45*. Not the Highveld Mall. Thank you, Miranda.

I'm asking the Lord. Now I'm giving you some heads up here because, and I'm not going to tell you everything, but it's going to become visible to you in time. But I said to the Lord I want to bless her. Over the last year, we've had some conversations that she'd never ever thought that I would activate it. You know? Just words. Just dreaming. Just dreaming.

Couple of weeks ago, I started to get more sort of deliberate about considering whether what I'm feeling is actually something that I must act on. And so then I said, I just got this thing in my heart, and the Lord began to say to me, "Yes, John, yes. That's My desire for her." I said, "Well, Lord, You don't have to speak to me twice because whatever Your desire for her is, is my desire for her." He gives us the desires of our heart. So, I started to activate something. Something that I thought would take 3 months at least, maybe 4, or 5 months to get done, God did in 24 hours. 24 hours. Wait and see. You will see it. But you can just wait and see. God did it in 24 hours. Done. His desire for her. So when the Word of God says, **⁴ Delight yourself in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart (Psalms 37:4 NKJV)**. You know, He's giving me the desire. So I happen to be the vessel that God is working through. Come on. But when I give to her the things that God wants me to give to her, it's so my desire. Tell me why? Because my desire is His desire and He has put all of His desire that He has towards her in me. That's how I can love her so much because I love Him so much that when He loves her through me, it's all of my love coming to her is His love. That's unselfish. It's uncomplicated. It's glorious. In this case, it will end up being material possessions. But let me tell you something, church. The greatest thing that's about to happen or will happen in time to come, it's a joy and delight for us that God could be doing this for us. Hallelujah.

⁵ Commit your way to the Lord. Trust also in Him. And He shall bring it to pass. ⁶ He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light. And your justice as the noonday. ⁷ Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass (Psalms 37:5-7 NKJV).

In other words, don't look at the people around you and say, "Look at their wickedness, how they prosper." Because the measurement of their prosperity cannot even come close to someone who delights themselves in Him. Then He makes all your ways to prosper. There is no comparison. So don't look at someone that's out there that doesn't even serve God that mafia, gangs, corporate raiders, economic bullies, whoever you want to call that are seemingly so wealthy and say, "Look how successful and prosperous they are." They live in boxes of their own making. Their boxes might be huge. They might be big, and everybody might look at their boxes and say, "We wish we could have those kinds of boxes." And the Bible says, "Don't look at their boxes and think, that's prosper."

The Passion Translation puts those scriptures like this. **³ Keep trusting in the Lord and do what is right in his eyes. Fix your heart on the promises of God and you will be secure, feasting on His faithfulness. ⁴ Make God the utmost delight and pleasure of your life, and He will provide for you what you desire the most (Psalms 37:3-4 TPT)**. Come on now. If you are doing this, if you are putting your trust in Him and you desire to be part of what He's doing, then what's in your heart? All of the desires that He wants for you. Come on. Hey? Let me tell you. When Jesus came to the earth in the form of a baby being, do you think His Father that was in heaven, left the provision up to His natural father who was Joseph? God was so involved in the provision for Jesus that He sent a whole delegation of powerful, rich businesspeople to come and follow the stars literally to come to Jesus and find Him, and bring their wealth to His feet because God revealed to them that the King of all

kings had come to earth. And for them to be successful, they had to bring their wealth to Him for them to be blessed in their lives. Jesus was so wealthy before He even knew what money was.

Just by the way, the Bible doesn't say there was 3. The number is not clear. For sure, they saw something, and they brought their wealth. They just didn't bring a little bit of perfume. Let me tell you why religious people make the Christmas thing to be a couple of little gifts because they want all Christians to think small about what God does for them, because they can't wrap their own minds around the fact that Heavenly Father would say, "Before My Son that's in a human body will come and do anything on the earth, He will never have to worry about money or about provision, and His natural father would never have to work for money. He would work for his social order, but not for money." Yeah. I'm getting through a lot today. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus.

What about you and I? Let's ³ **Keep trusting in the Lord and do what is right in his eyes. Fix your heart on the promises of God, and you will be secure, feasting on his faithfulness.** ⁴ **Make God the utmost delight and pleasure of your life, and he will provide for you what you desire most. (Psalm 37:3-4 TPT)** Come on. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus.

Next week, I'm going to be talking to you a little bit about, how the devil steals your dreams. How he steals your ability to dream, the God dream. Not the way other people say you should dream, but the God dream. How many of you want to dream God's dreams, not just dream what everybody else says, "Let's dream like this." I'm going to already help you to get out of the box. Are you with me?

The world wants you to live in the box that you have to work to get houses, clothes, and cars. And that you are measured by how many clothes, houses, and cars you have. That's the size of your box. I've still got news for you. They want you to live in their boxes. Until you get a little bit older enough and maybe God has prospered you and you realize, "What's this all about money? I want quality of life."

You know, people that have got enough money that they don't have to just work from 8 to 5 every... This is what Joseph had to do. He worked in the community to have a job so that his place in the community was the order of God. He wasn't working in the community so that he could earn a living. He was working in the community so he had a place in the order of God and in the order of community because God had already provided for Him through the rich man who came to give to his feet. Come on.

No wonder Jesus can say in Matthew chapter 6, and he can talk about, "Don't serve Mammon. Don't serve money. Don't serve the gods of this world. Give God all of your firsts. Because once you do that, you won't have to think about what you're going to eat, what you're going to wear, what you're going to drink, what you're going to do. Because your heavenly Father knows you have a need for these things, and He will provide all of these things." If you do what? Seek Him first.

"Well, Pastor John, then how are you going to get money? How are you going to do that stuff?" He'll lead you and He'll guide you. He may cause kings to come and put deals in your hands and say, "Please handle this business because we can't." Now you're working in the order of God, not so you can get money. Changing the box.

God doesn't want you to live in the boxes of this world system, people. He wants us all to live in His grand, grand creation plan. When He made man on the earth, He gave them a command. What's the first command He gave them? He says, "Have dominion. Have dominion. Dominate, don't be dominated." Let me tell you, boxes confine you, constrain you,

control you. God said, "Don't be controlled. Don't be constrained. Don't be intimidated by those boxes. I've told you to dominate." Hallelujah. "Well, Pastor John, you've got a domination fixation." Absolutely. Hallelujah.

There isn't a man on earth, there isn't a psychologist on earth, there isn't a sexologist on earth, there isn't an economist on earth that can give me the information that I need to be financially successful and to have a marriage the way God wanted me to have a marriage. Come on, say amen again, please. [Congregation says, "Amen."] Well, why do I say that? You know, these are professionals, these are paid people, they're very learned people. I'm happy for them. Let me put it to you this way, you know, a while ago, we had Dr Gerrie here, and he was telling us about how to eat. I have medical doctors here in the church, and they will all tell you that medicine can't heal you. Medicine can provide relief from symptoms, but your body has to heal itself. Huh? So here's what Dr Gerrie has taught me; if you eat right and you live right, then your body's got the best possibility of dealing with any kind of disease that will come to your body because your immune system will be strong. Right?

The world says, "It's socially good to go and have Kentucky Fried Chicken or Big Macs." Don't you like the taste of a juicy Steers burger with all of that mayonnaise dripping out of your mouth? Or a Spur's rib that you see on the TV, and they've got this basting they put on, and the 'flame grilled' comes up there, and your eyes look on it as like, "Give it to me now." Right?

You see, the world's system says, "I know how to keep you in a box. I'm going to train you your whole life to like it. It's not that bad for you. I'm going to train you to like it." So now I say to you, "Hey, you should eat broccoli and Brussels sprouts. What about a few asparagus? Some cabbage." And you say, "Keep that stuff away from me." Right? You see, because we've been trained that that kind of food is not nice. So don't eat that food because you have a will to eat what's nice. Every time you make a choice to eat what's nice and not what's right, then you are making a choice to stay in a box.

I'm preaching to myself today. Hey, this is a lifelong struggle. I'm not saying you're going to defeat it one time and forever, and I find myself on this journey like this the whole time. You walk into a place that's got freshly brewing coffee and cronuts - croissant donuts - unless you don't know what a cronut is. It's one of the most divine things men have ever created - to my tongue. Here's the most interesting thing; once it goes past my tongue into my gut, I don't remember anything that was on the tongue. It just processes it the way it has to process it. Huh? So, you might as well eat all the broccoli you need to eat because once it's passed your tongue, your body doesn't know. It will just process it like it processes a doughnut. If you don't believe it, stop eating hamburgers. Your body will process a hamburger the way it will process a salad. Once the salad gets in there, or the hamburger gets into your stomach, it doesn't tell your taste buds, "Thank you for sending me this food." It just processes the food inside the stomach by what you put in there. This is profound. Come on. Give me a bit of credit here.

This is profound because God has given us a way to remind us every day how we can delight ourselves in Him because you can take thoughts that the world tells you to think, and you can put them inside yourself, and your body will process them, your soul will process it, your life will process it. And God is saying, "Whether you choose to eat My Word or the word of the soul of the people of the world that want you to live their way, it will process it in your soul the way it knows how to process. And it will either kill you or it will give you life." If you don't think Kentucky Fried Chicken will kill you, think again because all of that food is processed, overcooked, fatty. Come on. "So, Pastor John, what happens when you eat it?" I shut my mind and say, I'm enjoying it. Shut up. I feel like this right now. You know, I don't think I've had a Big Mac in 20 years.

Anybody who knows me, you will know I don't drink Coke, and I don't drink Fanta and I don't drink sodas. Tell me why not? Because they're so destructive to you that they kill you on the inside. I still sometimes drink coffee, but I don't drink coffee every day. Sometimes I'll have a day where I'll have 2 coffees. I'm working on that. Am I right, Miranda? Miranda: "Absolutely."

Pastor Sharon will tell you that I wake up in the morning, and both she and I have green tea in the morning. We do not drink coffee in the morning. And rooibos is not my favorite. I know for some of you, rooibos can be, and I am happy with that. It is good herbal tea. Drink as much rooibos as you want. Amen. Anyway, I am going to get off my pedestal now.

I am merely just trying to tell you and show you that the world has a way of training you to live in a box. To the point where you do not even want to climb out of the box because you don't think you're in a box. You think it is your own choice the way you are living, and, yes, you feel comfortable, this is my choice to eat this food, but you see the next advert for grilled chicken, and you race to Nando's 3 days later. And you are driving past the Nando's and it's around lunchtime and you think, now that would be an I haven't had Nando's in a long time. Let's go. But you were impacted by a Nando's advert 3 days ago, and you don't even realize it's come back into your soul 3 days later. Let's have a Nando's.

You know? So, I'm not asking you today to get rid of all of your boxes, but I want you to be aware of the fact that there are boxes that we live in. Amen. And why are we doing some of the things that we're doing in the church right now? Quite honestly, it's because we've had to journey. Pastor Sharon and I have had to reach a place where we can pursue God's will for us, where all of us are together. Because now, you know, if I stand here and I'm preaching homeschooling, homeschooling, homeschooling, and I'm shoving it down your throat, eventually, you're going to leave the church because I'm just shoving homeschooling down your throat, and you don't want to know about it. When I can and when I feel led to it and by the leading of the Holy Spirit, we talk about it. We talked about it.

God says, "Thank you for your seeds, John. I'm going to bring a message to you. I will take the children, and now I'm going to rearrange, and I'm going to change the order where you no longer live in boxes, but I'm going to change the whole way you see life." Now as a whole people, we are ready. I will take the children. The parents were ready to make the decisions. The kids were ready to make the decision. God's timing was involved in it, and so the few seeds that we prayed out, the few seeds that we spoke out, the few things that we let God used all of it to create a harvest. And so, it is with us now. We are stepping into harvest and harvest and harvest because of the years and the years and the years that we've been planting, planting, planting, planting, and the water's been coming on us and coming on and it's been growing, and it's been growing, and it's been growing.

Now we are ready to have freshly planted things, newly, midway through, and then the harvest that we're busy going to take now. The harvest will never stop. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. This should be an encouragement and a motivation for you that when you start going for God, He's harvesting your life. When you delight in Him and you give your ways over to Him, the harvest will never stop. He will keep giving you all of the stuff that you desire in your heart because your desire is towards Him. This is one of the best faith messages you'll ever hear. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. This is good news. That's good news. God is a good news God because He's a good God.

And He's never ever once wanted to put heavy new-duty bad news on you. He's always wanted to say, "Come, follow Me. Come, follow Me. I'm the source of life. I want to give you all the life that you can handle. And the only thing that will stop you from getting more life is your ability to walk with Me." Stand to your feet, everybody. Did I take an offering? So, then you must be seated again. Sorry.

Let's just take an offering, please, people. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. So, I just want you to know that when you see what God's doing for us in *Project 45*, you need to understand that God's been in this. Hello? Now I want to ask you guys a question. Because there's only 1 or 2 people in this congregation that know about what God did this week. I had to inform them because I needed help. Okay? And so the minute they found out, they began to say to me, "Can we be part of this? Will you make an opportunity for us to sow seed towards this?" So, I said, "Well, in time, I think that's probably a good thing." What do you all say? You don't even know what it is yet, but I can tell you that it is fabulous. It's absolutely fabulous.

So while they're taking up an offering, can you put the dates up for me, please?

15th September 2024, we have a Vision Church Service here.

14th, 15th, and 16th of December 2024: Special Obedience Services, conference.

25 December 2024 - We're going to have a Christmas service,

Then we're going to have special services on the 28th December 2024 to the 1st January 2025. Special Obedience Services.

The church offices will close on the 13th or whatever that Friday is of December, and it will reopen on the 13th January 2025.

14-16 February 2025: Relationship Celebration weekend with Gala Event on Friday night

23 February 2025: Ps Sharon Birthday Celebration (Part of Project45)

16 March 2025: Project45 Service

18-21 April 2025: Easter Weekend - Full Convention

These are dates that we have provisionally earmarked. I'm happy for you over the next week to send us comments if you have any ideas about it. This is only for now. We are working on an entire year's program for next year. I just want you to understand that when I give you these dates, everything's subject to change by the Holy Spirit. But I'm giving you something that you can work towards so that you can do some planning. Amen.

So, *Pastor Sharon's birthday celebration*. Look at that. *23rd February*. Because that's a Sunday and her birthday is the next day. *Project45*. Because next year is also a very significant birthday for her, and we decided we're not going to tell you how big a birthday it is for her because you won't believe us. Because I'm, she's older than me, you know that. She's 5 and a half years older than me, and I'm 64. I'll tell you what. I was collecting my car that went in for a service this week, and I was talking to a gentleman there. When I gave him my ID number, he said, "No, sir this is not possible." He said, "You can't be 64." I said, "I am." He said, "If I had to ask you," he said, "you don't look a year older than 55." I said, "Thank you, sir. I'll take that."

That's why I say, when I tell you I've been married for 45 years, you look at me and say, "You can't be that old." I'm not. My youth is renewed. It is. So then, she's going to have a significant birthday in the same year that we have *Project45*, which is why we're combining the two, which is why I had to ask the Lord, "Can I do something special for her?" Because the greatest joy of my heart is to bless her. Amen. Come on, stand with me, please. *Ja*, come, Waldus.

You know, the greatest joy of my life is that every one of you that have a relationship that is in this church, that you will have the quality of relationship that I have with Pastor Sharon. And let me tell you, God is already on all of our relationships because we have meaningful, powerful, deep, wonderful relationships in this church. There are few churches around the world that have the kind of relationships that this church has. Do you know why? Because I was obedient to God 45 years ago, to her. Amen. Hallelujah. Stretch your hands out.

Thank you, Lord, that we can give. We are so grateful that we can give to You because You are no man's debtor. And this is just our sign that we trust You. It's a part of us giving to You because we trust You with our lives. And we thank You for it, Father, that You would bless it in every area in our lives, that we will have all sufficiency for all things and lack nothing in any way, in Jesus' name. And everybody said; amen.

It was a little bit of a different service today. But praise the Lord. Family business, exactly. Are you glad you're in church today? *Ja*, me too. I'm really. You know, this is how the Lord gave it to me to preach this message today and for a couple of weeks, it's going to be out-of-the-box. We are getting out of the box. I'm not going to be contained and constrained by the world system. I'm an out-of-the-box man. You know, call me John Change Bendixen. You can also call me John Out-of-the-Box Bendixen. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus.

Can I pray for you, will you get into agreement with me, right now? Please put your hand on your chest like this and say; Lord, I receive everything that You had for me today, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now, I'm going to pray for you and I ask You, Father, that You will bless everybody. Make Your Word alive to them so that this Word is so fueled and full of life in them that they just are pressing into more of You. I pray that Your joy will be upon them, rise up inside of them, that Your great peace that passes understanding will be their portion. I pray, Father, they're blessed going out and blessed coming in. No weapon formed against them will prosper. Your angels, now, according to our agreement and the Word of God that we declare, Your angels have charge over Your people to protect them from any hidden trap or anything that might upset them or derail them. Your angels have charge to protect Your people, in Jesus' name, so no weapon formed against them prospers. In the mighty name of Jesus. And you're all in agreement and you say? [*Congregation: Amen*] Amen, everybody. Shalom. Shalom! And you say? Ah, people. Shalom! [*Congregation: Shalom!*]