

**Scripture reference: John 8:18 (NKJV), Matthew 24:10-14 (TPT), Ephesians 6:9-12 (NLT), Matthew 12:43-44 (KJV)**

Hallelujah. We thank You, Lord, that our heavenly language is a witness to the fact that the Holy Spirit lives in us, is upon us, and is with us in everything we do. And we speak the language of the Spirit because we are spirit beings, and we thank You, Lord, that we have a place with a heavenly Father that is very unique and special. We are a separated, called upon, called out people. We thank You that we can call ourselves sons of the Most High God. We are family, we are family of the Most High God, and we thank You for that privilege today. We all agree together that this morning Your Word will be declared with boldness and with authority and with love. We declare, and we believe together that the Word of God will penetrate our hearts and our minds, and just move away the darkness that seeks to engulf us. Thank You, Lord, that we work and walk in the light. We thank You for the light, Father. Thank You that we are ready to change, we are ready to receive, and Your anointing rests upon us in this service today, in Jesus' name. And we all say; Amen. Amen.

Well, thanks for coming. You can't go yet, but just tell someone else I'm glad you came and then you may be seated, please. Praise the Lord. I've got some, some good things to say this morning. Are you all okay? Are you good? Are you paying attention? *[Congregation answers; yes.]* Okay. Remember, next Saturday, which is the 14th December, we have special meetings, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. I wonder if you can all handle the amazing glory of the Word of God that is going to be spoken and the amazing fellowship that we're going to have on those three days. You think you can handle it? Are you sure? *[Congregation answers; yes.]* You're going to have to come and see if you've got the capacity for it. If you miss it, *ek gaan jou kom soek* (I will come looking for you). Hallelujah. It's going to be wonderful. I will tell you this, that the Lord has put it on my heart to minister a special set of messages. And, if I don't get through it this weekend, I'll get through it in the rest of our special services that are going to be at the end of the year because the Lord has put a message in my heart for us. Amen. I'll give you a little glimpse into it.

You know, you and I, we live in a very natural realm. Jesus came so that He could put His Spirit in us so that we don't just live in a natural realm, but that we know how to live in the Spirit realm. So, what's the role of a spiritual leader? What is the role of a spiritual leader in this whole process of you living in the natural realm, your spirit that is alive to God, and the spirit realm that is active around you? What's the role of a spiritual leader? So, you might say, "I know that." Well, you are going to find out what the Lord has to say about that. I can tell you this, that He is the Good Shepherd. Yes? And, whatever the Good Shepherd has got going, the Good Shepherd knows what's good for the sheep. What happens, do you think, to the sheep when they think they know what's good for them instead of the Shepherd? They just wander, don't they? They just wander off.

I'm not going to get into my message, although, I'm a bit full of it. So, I'm not going to get into my message this morning. But, you know, sheep are born from sheep. So, the role of a sheep is to get more sheep. Right? Another role of the sheep is to grow wool. Yes? I mean, why else are sheep on the earth? To grow wool. So, they grow wool, and the wool that's on their bodies is good for nothing unless it's cut off. So, then they can grow it again. So, what happens if the sheep says, "I don't want my wool to be cut anymore?" They get tangled and messy and all kinds of stuff. And then you see a sheep, and we have a farmer here that's got sheep, a sheep that's being sheared, they sit on their bum, and then someone comes with a thing and they used to use clippers, now they use shears and other stuff, you know.

But while they are sitting on their bum like this, they, you know, it may look, oh, you're taking

all the wool off the sheep and the sheep is just sitting there saying, "Bring it on because when this is done, I grow again and I grow again." I mean, there is great benefit for that to come off the sheep and for the people that have the wool. The unfortunate thing about a natural sheep is that they do become lamb chops or *skaapboud* (leg of lamb) or something that other people eat. So, we'll talk about how to prevent yourself from becoming chops.

But, the Lord has a lot to say about Him being the Great Shepherd. In the New Testament and the Old Testament, He is the Great Shepherd and He refers to us as sheep because of His care that He has for the sheep. It's not that He expects us to go walking around 'meh' all the time, you know. But He likens us to sheep because He wants to explain His role as a Shepherd and the role that they must play. So, but I'm going to be talking, that's just going to be a foundation. But we'll be talking about what happens in the spirit realm and how you live in the natural realm, and how you transition into the spirit realm and the role of a spiritual leader in that process.

So, some other things I want to say is that, I need to say that this afternoon there's a Slipstream Crit at 3 o'clock. If you can stand the heat, well, I dare you to test yourself. Amen. And then, I'll be at the back after the service, and I'll be signing books. If you own a book, I'll be signing a book. I'll be sitting there. Even if you don't have a book, come and say hello to me anyway because I don't get to see everybody all the time, and I'll be sitting there in the foyer, and then you can come and say hello to me. I mean, this book, you know, is such a reality to me and it is so real to me, how the Laban syndrome is at work in the world still today. Even though I don't preach about it much anymore, the Laban syndrome is alive. The Laban syndrome is active and it's out to destroy, certainly, Christians, but it's out to destroy everybody. Control people. If you want to know what the major spirit that's been operating in the earth, in America and Europe for the last 12 years, it's the Laban syndrome, amongst others. But the Laban syndrome is at work. They want to steal people's resources, their energy, everything, so that they can have it for themselves. Amen. *Dis ñ goeie boek* (It's a good book). *Self gepreek, self alles, né* (I preached it myself).

And now, I would like to say to you with great joy that Pastor Sharon and I have already started celebrating *Project 45*, and we are going to celebrate at great lengths next year. And we are having wonderful conversations, she and I, about *Project 45*. So, we are going to have two major events next year. The one is Valentine's weekend and, just the last two days, I had some really wonderful ideas. And, if we get the right input and the right feedback from the right people, we are going to have an extravaganza. Yeah, on Valentine's weekend we can have a Friday night and we'll have a Saturday night and we'll have an amazing Sunday, and it's partly to celebrate with us. And then it just so happens that our actual anniversary date, that we will be absolutely on that day exactly 45 years married, is the 16th of March, and that is a Sunday, *sal jy dink*. And so, then we will have another day of celebrating 45 years, and then we are just going to celebrate all year long. We have got lots to thank God for, and we thank Him for our health. We thank Him for the wealth of our relationship, the wealth of other relationships, friends, family, the body of Christ, an assignment, the glory of God, covenants that God has established for us throughout the whole earth. I mean, we have got lots to thank God for. We lack no good thing. Pastor Sharon and I, we lack no good thing because we have served Him all these years. I can say all the days of our lives till now, we have served Him, and He is marvellous and very good to us.

So, please, you must fill in the RSVP link from the WhatsApp message or from the QR code while Pastor John is making the announcement, it says here. *Maar nou weet ek nie, jy kan nie twee dinge doen op dieselfde tyd nie* (But now I don't know, you can't do two things at the same time). It came up on your phone on the WhatsApp. Did it come on your phone? There it is. Check at that! So, you better do it now in a flash second. See what - they're all smart but now they're taking my time. *Jis, die mense*. Praise the Lord. So, then there's a big online brainstorming meeting this Wednesday at 7 o'clock. Where everybody's going to be

able to talk their ideas out. Be part of it. We want this to be amazing. You guys look very quiet this morning.

Hey, let me just tell you something. When you get to my age and you've been married 45 years and you've had the kind of marriage that I've had, I expect all of you to have it better than me. I do. Then you'll also have something to celebrate. Yeah, why not? And if you're not quite sure about it, then come and celebrate with us anyway. Then you can believe God to get and have what we have. Well, you might say, "I've got - I think my marriage is as good as yours." Fantastic. Go for it. Go for it. I just think mine is amazing, because it is amazing. Praise Jesus. Amen. You're allowed to say, Amen this morning? *[Congregation says; Amen.]* And again, *[Congregation repeats; Amen.]* I want to know you're with me here. *Ja, lekker, nê?* Praise the Lord. Okay. I need to put my timer on here. Okay, are you ready for the Word this morning? *[Congregation answers: Yes!]*

I've been sharing some scriptures with you, and because next week the Lord is having me minister on something else, I want to finish off today. I mean, you never finish a series really, you just move from one thing to another as the Lord leads you. But, the definition of a *witness* is *to testify*, or *to act as a legal witness of*, *to testify*, *act as a witness of*. *It means that you're actually there as a sign of proof. One who testifies in a cause or before a judicial tribunal. It's an attestation of a fact or an event.*

So, when we came together today to speak in tongues, and we did speak in tongues for a minute, it's evidence that you are a spirit-being and that the Holy Spirit has given you a language that communicates in the spirit that you can only receive in faith by the Spirit. So, it becomes a witness that Jesus is alive. You, as a Christian, you are a witness that Jesus is alive and wherever you go, the Jesus in you is a witness that Jesus is alive. Us coming together to church today is a witness that Jesus is alive, and there are many things that people witness, but if you're a Christian, your life becomes a witness and I've been speaking about that over a period of time and I talked to you about John the Baptist and how John the Baptist was a witness of Jesus that was coming, and He was the Lamb of God that was going to take away the sins of the world and that He would fill us with His Spirit. That's what John the Baptist declared as a witness.

And then I read to you from the book of John about how, **“<sup>18</sup>I am the one who bears witness of myself and the Father who sent me bears Witness of me.” (John 8:18 NKJV)** So, the fact that there is witnessing going on is a requirement of evidence or proof that something exists. So, when Jesus came, He came to give evidence and He came to be a witness that the Father exists, that the Father sent Him and He said, “If you see Me, you see the Father because I am a witness. I am a living testament. I am proof and fact of the Father's existence and if you see Me, you know that the Father lives.” He was a witness. He was testimony. He was testifying to the evidence that Father God exists.

So, everything we do that is in covenant with God, is a witness. Then, I got to read to you how, when God came upon the Christians in the book of Acts, the witness that Jesus was alive became so powerful in them, became so real to them, that they all started saying, “You know, all of my earthly possessions don't belong to me. They belong to the church.” The church that was around them. So, they just brought all their possessions and shared it amongst each other because the power of the witness was so strong in them. Come on. That's quite something, that the power of the witness of the Holy Spirit and the power of the witness of Christ as a Savior was so strong on them that they exchanged their material possessions for the unity and covenant that was now evident by the Holy Spirit in this new relationship with Christ and the body of Christ that was His people. That was a witness to the power of what God was doing amongst them.

So, I'm going to read Matthew chapter 24 verse 10 to you from the Passion Translation. Matthew chapter 24 verse 10 and I'm going to read to verse 14. <sup>10</sup> **Then many will stop following me and fall away, and they will betray one another and hate one another.** <sup>11</sup> **And many lying prophets will arise, deceiving multitudes and leading them away from the path of truth."** (Matthew 24:10-11 TPT) You know, there's many people, many Christians that have got a lot to say about the interpretation of the Word of God. Especially once you get to the book of Acts and then you go through to the book of Revelations. Because most of what you read in Acts to the book of Revelations is about how we live with each other and it's about the glory of the church on the earth. So, many people have got a lot of things to say, especially well educated theologians. They've got a lot to say about their interpretation of end times, of church life, of many different things, especially from the book of Acts to the book of Romans. You will find less argument, I wouldn't say you will find no argument, but you will find less argument about Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John because these are the words that Jesus spoke. And so, you know, most often theologians won't go after the words that Jesus spoke, but they may offer an interpretation of something that Jesus spoke. Hello?

So, when Jesus is writing this, this is Jesus speaking about something that's going to happen in the end times. Jesus is speaking these words and He's warning His disciples or He's speaking to His disciples that they need to be aware of these things that are going to happen. So, <sup>10</sup> **Then many will stop following me and fall away**, when persecution comes and when comes and bad things begin to happen, **and they will betray one another and hate one another**. I read this to you some weeks ago already. <sup>11</sup> **And many lying prophets will arise, deceiving multitudes and leading them away from the path of truth.** <sup>12</sup> **There will be such an increase of the sin of lawlessness that those whose hearts once burned with passion for God and a passion for others will grow cold.** Is it possible that Jesus is saying that when certain circumstances arise, that because of deception and lying prophets and there will be such an increase of sin and lawlessness, that those Christians, there will be Christians whose hearts once burned with passion for God and others will grow cold? And now He gives us an instruction, <sup>13</sup> **But hold your hope firmly to the end and you will experience life and deliverance.** <sup>14</sup> **Yet through it all, the good news of heaven's kingdom will be proclaimed all over the world, providing every nation with a demonstration of the reality of God. And after this the end of this age will arrive (Matthew 24:10-14 TPT).**

I want to just read verse 14 to you again. <sup>14</sup> **Yet, through all of that lawlessness, passionate Christians who grow grow cold in their hearts, this joyful assurance of the realm of heaven's kingdom will be proclaimed all over the world.** Who's going to do the proclaiming? Those that are still passionate. Those that have not allowed their hearts to grow cold. Right? <sup>14</sup> **... all over the world providing every nation with a demonstration of the reality of God, and after this, the end of the age will come (Matthew 24:14 TPT).**

So, it's a real thing that you and I have an option to believe. You have a choice to believe. This is real. You have a choice to believe that Jesus is Lord. Yes? Now tonight, 5 o'clock, we're going to have another service, and these evening services, we are gearing them more towards, becoming or preaching the Gospel of salvation type of services because that's what we need to do, preach the Gospel and have people come into church that don't know Jesus, so they can get to know Jesus.

I want to say it like this. There is nothing that happens in the church of the Lord Jesus that is not speaking as a witness to the world. Everything that happens in the church is a witness to the world. So, if we speak in tongues, it's a witness to the world that these Christians have a power about them and they have something about them that others don't. It doesn't matter even if the church is at war with each other. I used to preach this years ago, I haven't touched on this subject for some time but given what I'm going to say this morning. If you

had to go into Ireland for many years and you were to say to the Catholic Irish, the Irish Catholics who were at war with the Irish Protestants, you would say, "What's the nature of your war?" "Well, we, the Catholics, serve the right God. Those Protestants, they believe in a grace message, and they believe they can serve God without the Catholic church, and so we have to kill them, and we disagree with them because they are undermining the Catholic church." That war continued for decades. Still, today, if you go to Ireland, there is the Catholic Irish and the Protestant Irish. So, people say, "Well, that war between the Catholics and the Irish, that war it's not a good look for God, and it's not a good representation of God." Well, if you want to have that argument, you can have that argument. I would say, the very fact that there's a war about God proves that there is God. I mean, I'm just taking a positive view on it, that if there's a war about God, being the Christ God, the Christ that died on the cross God, it's all about the same God that they're warring about. Well, why war against each other like that if there's no God? At least that's a witness that there is a God, and they feel passionate enough to have a war about it.

So, hey, you know, we can say we need to be good representatives of Jesus. I'm not good enough, me, John. I'm not pure enough. I'm not perfect enough to be a good representative of Jesus. Don't look at me like that. Because in my flesh, in my humanity, I am not good enough. I am not good enough. There is nothing that I can present to the earth and say, "Look at me, I'm good enough to represent Jesus." I can't live upright enough. I can't live with enough good values and enough good morals to be a good representative of Jesus. Because some people might say, "You are a good representative." Other people might say, "Well, we think that your values and your morals are not a good representation because we think God represents other morals and values." Now I'm no longer a perfect representative of God in their eyes. Come on. So, I can never be good enough to represent Jesus. All I can do is say, "I have Jesus in me. I can preach the Gospel of the perfect One that was Jesus, that is Jesus, and He lives in me, and I live for Him, and I live to serve Him, but don't look at me as a perfection of who Christ is." Come on. The minute I take on the responsibility of presenting Jesus well to be the image of Jesus, or that I must somehow carry the reputation of Jesus on my shoulders, I'm already failing because I think I'm good enough to do that. That doesn't let me off the hook to go and sin. It doesn't let me off the hook to go and do bad things. It doesn't change the fact that I must go, and I must serve Him with all my heart, with every obedience I can give Him. And if that witnesses to other people, then I'm glad Jesus is using Him in me to witness to other people. Hallelujah. But God and Jesus are well able to take care of Their own reputation. They don't need me to be Their reputation on the earth. I'll tell you this, it doesn't matter how good the Church is, the people in the world are going to always be able to accuse the people in the Church. They will find fault with us. They will justify themselves and accuse us of things, whether we're guilty of them or not. Because they can't handle the way we live, that we are a witness of Jesus, and that because we exist, they must make a choice. And so, if they don't want to make a choice for us, then what they're going to do is they're going to make their own choices and that has to be against what we stand for.

And, you know, perfection is a marginal thing. If you talk to people that have excelled in sport, people like Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Djokovic, people like that in the tennis realm, they will tell you. And you go and ask them and you say, "Did you play, it seemed to us like you played a perfect game of tennis." They will say, "We played at a high level but there's still things we can improve on." Because even at the level they play at, they know with each other that there are still weaknesses in their game that they have to get better at, even though the average person look at him and say, "That was a pretty perfect game of tennis." Come on. Amen.

So, we are a witness of Jesus. And so, if you remember, I read to you a couple of weeks ago, I read to you a scripture from Ephesians and I'm going to read to you again. Ephesians chapter 6, verse 9. **9Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them;**

remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites. <sup>10</sup> A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:9-12 NLT). Is this in the Bible? Is this the New Testament? Is this scripture written to the Church? If someone who's not a Christian reads this passage of Scripture, do you think they can understand this? They can't understand it. The Bible says their minds are darkened. They can't understand it.

So, if we read the scripture, we have to read the scripture with this understanding that this scripture is written to me. Come on everybody, just please point your finger at you. Come on. Just work with me now. It's written to me. It's written to me. *[Congregation points and repeats; it's written to me.]* Okay? So, we are not fighting against flesh and blood. So, who are we fighting against? We are fighting, <sup>12</sup> ... **against evil rulers, authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world and against evil spirits in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:9-12 NLT)**. Are we fighting against them? We are. I mean, Jesus beat the devil, so He took the fight to the devil, beat the devil. So, why is it that we still have a war? Because the devil brings the war to us because we're a witness. Amen. The devil brings the war to us because we're a witness. And so, we must understand that when you are tempted to be angry, then the devil is bringing the war to you through your own fleshly desire so that you can compromise yourself, but you're fighting against forces that are wanting you to give up your strength in Christ.

I'm going to share something I shared with Pastor Sharon. Yesterday I went and I stopped at the garage, the petrol station, to go and fill up my vehicle and fill up some canisters so that we had extra fuel for the the lawnmower and for the generator, which now is not working and we don't have electricity today and *daai goeders, jy weet?* Anyway, I went and I filled up the fuel tanks. As I was arriving in the petrol station, there was one bay open. All the other bays were occupied. It was one bay open and this gentleman had parked his huge, big Ford Raptor, Ranger, whatever thing it is, with big mag wheels. He didn't park it close to the petrol station. He parked it almost in the middle of the petrol station, of the 2 bays. So, I pulled in there with my car and now I'm eyeballing him and I've got my car parked in so that my nose is by his nose, and I'm eyeballing him and I'm waiting for him to move his car because he's not yet putting petrol in. He's waiting for the attendant to come. I'm eyeballing him. He eyeballs me back like this, picks up his phone. *Hy lag my af* (He laughs at me). He just said, "I don't care about you."

Something happened to me that hasn't happened to me in a long time. There's a man inside. That man has not shown himself in very many situations in my life, but suddenly, I found him there, lurking in the darks of my soul, you know. That man, on occasion, you know, when I was in the army, I told you the story, the guy was throwing *doppies* at me. That man is not a big flashy man. That man just acts. That guy that was throwing *doppies* at me, he didn't see it coming, I got up there, and I just walked up to him and he said, "And what you going to do about it?" When he was still strutting his chest out, I hit him so hard he didn't see it coming, and he landed on his backside.

You know, what are words going to do? If you're going to confront somebody, then take action. Otherwise, don't do anything. *[Pastor John mimics yapping]* What for? You know? I'm just sharing with you. You know, that man, when I hit that man, he again sat down. I didn't even look again. I just turned around and walked back, and I went and sat in the hall, and I just carried on with my life. You know, I found that man yesterday, on Friday, I found that man. I was about to get out of the car and the Holy Spirit spoke to me and He said, "John, this will not turn out well." Just like that He said, "This will not turn out well." "I don't want to hear that, Lord." I clenched my teeth because I wanted to go and take action. I reversed my

car and I pulled my car, I mean when I pulled my car into that bay, I mean, my mirror passed his mirror like that. [*Pastor John demonstrates how close with his hands*] You know, I showed him I could drive. If he didn't know how to drive, I showed him I could drive. As I was opening my door, I was about to say what I just said and go and say it to his window. "Can I show you how to drive so that next time when you park here, you know how to park?" And the Holy Spirit said to me again, "John, this will not turn out well."

I was already out of the car standing on my two feet. *Jy verstaan?* (You understand?) And so, I walked around the front of the car [*Pastor John praying in the Spirit*]. I'm telling you. Eventually, I got charge over my soul man that wanted to rise up and make me do something that I shouldn't be doing. What was my battle? I'll tell you what happened; the devil provoked me in that moment for my self-man to rise up and create a situation where anything could happen. I'm pretty sure it would have happened because the Holy Spirit alerted me and said, "Don't do this, John. It will not turn out well."

Later that day, I went and spent a couple of hours with Dr Nico, who did some work on me. *Sjoe, Dr Nico, wat kan ek sê? Maar, nou ja.* But after I was with Dr Nico, I have to take some antibiotics and stuff, and I'm standing in the pharmacy minding my business. Wouldn't you know it, two guys come walking in there and one of them is like, loud and he's talking and, 'whda whda whda', making a big noise, and they want to come and interrupt my line here, you know? Eventually, the loud guy says, "So, what's going on?" I said, "No. I'm next." "Okay." He goes and he sits down. Next minute, the Holy Spirit is all over me. So, instead of resisting the guys, I start speaking to the guys. "How's your day? What are you doing? What are you going to do this weekend?" Turns out the guy that's loud, he says, "No, man." He says, "I've been drinking since this morning." He says, "This man, he pulled me to come with him to a hospital and here I am in the chemist and I'm losing my drunkenness. I'm getting babalas already and I need to have another drink. I'm drunk, but I'm getting less drunk. The babalas is already starting. I need another beer or something." I said, "Is beer what your poison is?" He says, "No." He used the name of alcohol, which I think is a brandy. I don't know. He says, "That's what we like." So, then I asked his friend, "So what do you..." Anyway, the long and short of it is; I got to share the Word with them, a little bit.

But the Holy Spirit spoke to me and He said to me, "John, this man has been drinking from the morning. If you had not obeyed Me at the garage, you could not have been in the position to minister to them that's just happened to you. You don't know what condition that guy was in, in the garage and if you'd confronted him..." Just like this guy that was friendly, if I confronted him, who knows what he might have done? He could have gone from friendly to aggressive and he might be one of those action guys that doesn't speak, he just hits. Wouldn't you be, you know, if Dr Nico walked past there and I'm sitting flat on my backside in the chemist because this guy decked me. "*Pastoor, what happened to you?*" "I've just been in a brawl." Hey?

But you see, our day is 24 hours long and if I had to take the view that any one of those guys is my enemy, then I could have reacted to them as my enemy. But the Holy Spirit alerted me and said, "Your war is not against these flesh and blood creatures. Your fight is against the spirit principalities and powers that are trying to dominate you through your actions. And if you give yourself over to your actions, it will dominate your future."

So, I went into my weekend victorious rather than, you know, maybe a black eye, maybe, I mean, who knows, he might have just kicked the door of my car just to make a point or something. I mean, anything could have happened. I mean, we could have had a brawl in there and other people joined in the fight and the petrol attendants pulling us out. Wouldn't you see the headlines in Witbank News next week? "Pastor gets into big brawl at the Total Garage." Huh? Just like the devil to do something like that to undermine what God is doing here. Who knows? Viral YouTube video of the pastor. Amen. Thank God for the Holy Spirit.

You see, if I see everything as, it is just my natural. Listen, I can't ignore my natural man. My natural man was ready to say something, and more than that. I haven't found that guy in me for a long time. you might say to me, "But Pastor John, hey, isn't that guy supposed to be dead in your humanity?" He is. I killed him a long time ago. Where he came from, I don't know. But it would be silly for me to ignore that he was there. Hey? Praise the Lord.

You know, there's a lot of things that I say to you as a pastor, and I trust that the Holy Spirit witnesses to you, testifies of Himself to you, that when I share the Word of God with you, that you receive it as a testimony, as a witness, you know. But sometimes, occasionally, the Lord will have me do something that I'm going to do with you this morning, and I'm going to read from other people's material, other wonderful people that have served God all of their life when they were alive. These two men happen to have already gone on to be with the Lord, but they served God wonderfully while they were on the earth.

And this book here was written by Doctor David Yonggi Cho, who pastored probably the largest church in the world. There are some people that said there are larger churches in Nigeria now. I'm not sure, but Yonggi Cho certainly had a church that was a million to 1,500,000 in Seoul, Korea. I'm just going to read this to you. I just want to find it here. So, okay, this is how he writes; *By deceiving Adam and Eve, our enemy, Satan, has gained the pinnacle of authority over mankind. Ever since that day, Satan has ruled over all man born after Adam and Eve. There was nobody to recapture the high position that had been lost to Satan. However, Christ came to reclaim the upper ground man had lost to Satan. Christ has torn down the bunkers of illness, curse, despair, death, and hell, and knocked Satan off the pinnacle. As Christ spoke the words, "All is done," Satan was knocked from his place. Sadly, there are some servants of God who fail to understand the significance of what Christ has done for mankind. Such men prepare and arm themselves to conquer the summit which Christ has already conquered for them.*

How many of you know I didn't need to go and beat that guy? My fight was against conquering the devil that wanted to put me in a bad position. I won, but it wasn't me that won, it was the Christ in me that won that battle on Friday.

*Such men neglect the great redemptive power of Jesus Christ and, instead, emphasise ethics and morals, preaching as though man himself has the power to do great things. Such men tell others to do this and do that. Such acts of mankind, no matter how ethical or moral, cannot dislodge Satan from that position, or from his position. Instead, we must start our invasion from the cross, the ground of which Christ has already conquered for us.*

*First, a correct understanding of the Gospel must start from the cross. Therefore, we must understand how Christ has been victorious over sin, illness, curse, Satan, and hell, and must stand strong on the grounds Christ has won for us as we face Satan. Therefore, we pastors should have a deep understanding of this Gospel of redemption at the cross, and when we witness Jesus, we should shower the people with the gospel as if they were attacking the enemy's bunker.*

*In other words, instead of telling the congregation, "Do not sin," we should tell them, "Your sins have been forgiven and you have been made victorious over sin." Without telling them their sins have been forgiven and that they have been given power over sin, telling them not to sin is much like attacking sin from a lower ground. It only creates a heavy burden for the people, not providing them with the power to overcome sin. Hey? Telling a person who is struggling with the curse of life, "Free yourself from the curse," is useless too. To a man who has been cursed, the fact that Christ has died on the cross so that we may be victorious over our curses must be taught.*



I'm going to just keep reading a little bit here. *In addition, we must proclaim with our mouths that Christ has conquered and given over the higher ground to us. Instead of asking God, "Make me holy," we must proclaim, "Thank You, God, for making me holy through Jesus Christ." Instead of asking God, "Free me from this curse," we must proclaim, "Thank You, God, for lifting the curse from me."*

*We, as servants of God, should impress upon our congregation that through His suffering and death on the cross, Christ has recaptured the high ground taken by Satan and that we have the upper hand as we have faith in Christ. Therefore, success of ministry depends on a correct understanding of the Bible. Christians must realise that they are fighting from the higher grounds, which Jesus has conquered for them, and that they are fighting a battle already won. Amen.*

We are fighting a battle that's already won. So, why are we in the battle? It's not because Jesus came to say, "You won't have battles in life." Because the enemy has a right to function in the earth, and I'm going to read you about that right now. The enemy has a right to function on the earth because Adam and Eve gave it to him. So, he's going to bring the battle to us and so that's why we must walk in the armour of God and we must remain as a witness. Amen. Praise the Lord.

I want to read you a little bit from this book of Kenneth Hagin. I'm going to read you two or three passages out of here; *I Believe in Visions*. You know, I was privileged, I was privileged to know Kenneth Hagin. I had opportunities to be in his company. Pastor Sharon and I had opportunities to be in services close to him. You know, Brother Jerry had him come and preach one time at Jerry Savelle Ministries in a tent and Brother Jerry, on that series of meetings, he had me as his runner, and he asked me to do the run around the tent, which I did. And the Holy Spirit fell and then we had an amazing move of the Holy Spirit, and that was in Kenneth Hagin's, he was the invited guest to speak in those meetings. It was a marvellous, marvellous time. I was privileged to know the man and to know his ministry firsthand. *For 15 years*, there's a lot to this book and there's a lot more to the story. I'm just picking up from a point. Okay?

*For 15 years I had been only in His permissive will. I had been a pastor for 12 years and had been in evangelistic work for three. During those years God permitted me to do it, but it wasn't His perfect will for my life. And He said I hadn't been waiting on Him; He had been waiting for me to obey Him. Then He talked... so he's having a vision with Jesus. Then He talked about the time I entered into the first phase of my ministry in 1949. He said I had been unfaithful and hadn't done what He had told me to do; I hadn't told the people what He had told me to tell them. I answered, "Lord, I wasn't unfaithful. I did obey You. I left my church and went out in the evangelistic field." "Yes," He said, "you left the church and went out in evangelistic work. But you didn't do what I told you to do. The reason you didn't is because you doubted it was My Spirit who had spoken to you. You see, faith obeys My Word, whether it is the written Word of God or My Spirit who has spoken unto man." Faith obeys it. I fell down before Him saying, "Yes, Lord, I have failed and I am sorry." I repented with many tears because I had missed His will and had doubted His dealings with me. "Stand up on your feet," He said. As I stood before Him again, He told me that I had entered into the second phase of my ministry in January 1950, and at that time, He had spoken to me by prophecy and by the still small voice in my heart. In the next eight months, during this second phase of my ministry, I had believed, I had been faithful, and I had obeyed. Now I was to enter the 3rd phase. He said, "If I would be faithful to what He told me, if I would believe and obey Him, He would appear to me again." At that time, I would enter into the 4th and final stage of my ministry.*

The next thing that happens to him, is that Jesus says to him, "Stretch out your hands," and Jesus touches his hands. And as Jesus took His finger and touched his hand, his hands got

like fire. Jesus told him that from that day onwards, certain things would happen when he would lay hands on people. And it was from that day when there was demonic presence possessing someone, he would know it by a burning sensation in his hand. And if there was a special healing miracle that was going to take place or God wanted to use him in special healing miracles, that burning sensation would come in his hands. I'm just looking for the other part that I...

So, there's a few things that happened. Jesus says to him... *"I fell at Jesus' feet and pleaded, "Lord, don't send me. Send someone else, Lord. Please don't send me. Just give me a little church to pastor somewhere. I would rather not go, Lord. I have heard so much criticism of those who pray for the sick. I just want a common place ministry." Jesus rebuked me saying, "I'll go with you and stand by your side as you pray for the sick and many times you will see Me. Occasionally, I will open the eyes of someone in the audience and they will say, "Why, I saw Jesus standing by the man as he prayed for the sick, by that man as he prayed for the sick." Meaning Kenneth Hagin.*

*Jesus went on to ask, "Who had called me, He or the people?" "Well, You did, Lord." He explained that I should fear Him and not people because even though people may criticize me, they are not my judge. I will stand before His judgment seat one day to give an account to Him of what I have done with this ministry, whether I have used it rightly or wrongly. "Alright, Lord", I said, "I'll go if You'll go with me. I'll do my best and be as faithful as I know how to be." Then there swelled up within my heart a love such as I'd never known for those who criticize this type of ministry. I said, "Lord, I'll pray for them for they didn't know or they wouldn't say these things that they do. I've said similar things, but I didn't realize or see, I do now and neither do they. Forgive them, Lord." Then He said, "Go your way, My son. Fulfill your ministry and be faithful for the time is short."*

Hey. I want to ask you a question. What do you think the war was that Kenneth Hagin was facing? The war was fear of men, criticism of men. Right? So, you might say, "Well, that's just a human thing." Well, it's a human emotion that is played on by spirits that know what kind of damage the testimony of Kenneth Hagin can do. Yes? So, I want to remind you very quickly of the testimony of Kenneth Hagin and then when I read the last portion from this book, I'll be done.

So, he was a teenager and he was busy dying from illness. I'm just cutting the story short. This is the third time that he's about to die. *"Granny," I said. "I'm going again. I'm dying. Where is Mama?" "Your mother is out on the porch," she replied. About that time, I heard my mother praying at the top of her voice as she walked up and down the porch. "Where is my brother?" I asked. "He ran next door to call the doctor," Granny answered, "If you're not ready to go, you want somebody with you. You're afraid." I said, "Granny, don't leave me. Don't leave me. I'm afraid. I'll go while you're gone. I want somebody with me. Don't leave me."*

*So, she gathered me into her arms again. I said, "Tell Mama I said goodbye. Tell Mama I love her. Tell Mama I appreciate everything she has ever done for me and for all of us and you tell Mama that I said if I have ever put a wrinkle in her face or gray hair in your head, I'm sorry, and I asked her to forgive me." I felt myself slipping. I said, "Granny, I'm going again. You were a second mother to me when Mama's health failed. I appreciate you. Now I'm going, and I won't be back this time." I knew I was dying unprepared to meet God. I kissed her on the cheek and said goodbye.*

*My heart stopped beating for the second time. It's almost as real to me today, nearly a half century later, as it was that day. I felt the blood cease to circulate. The tips of my toes went numb, then my feet, my ankles, my knees, my hips, my stomach and my heart. I leaped out of my body and began to descend down, down, down. I know it was just a few seconds, but*

*it seemed like an eternity. I began to descend again into the darkness until the lights of earth had faded. Down below, the same experience occurred. The voice spoke from Heaven and again my spirit came up out of that place, back into my room and back into my body. The only difference this time was that I came up at the foot of the bed.*

*I'm just skipping some verses here. Until this time, I had thought, this is not happening to me. This is just a hallucination. It can't be real. But now I thought, this is the third time, I won't come back this time. Darkness encompassed me again, darker than any night man has ever known. I wish I had adequate words to describe the horrors of hell. People go through this life so complacently, so unconcerned as if they will not have to face hell. But God's Word and my own personal experience tell me differently. I know what it is to be unconscious. It is black when you are unconscious, but there is no blackness to compare with outer darkness. As I began to descend in the darkness the third time, my spirit cried out, "God, I belong to the church. I've been baptised in water." I waited for Him to answer, but no answer came, only the echo of my own voice as it came back to mock me. It will take more than church membership. It will take more than being baptized in water. To miss hell and to make Heaven, Jesus said, "You must be born again." Certainly, I believed in water baptism or being baptised in water, but only after a person is born again. The second time I cried out louder, "God, I belong to the church. I've been baptised in water." Again, I waited for an answer, but there was no answer, only the echo of my own voice through the darkness.*

*I came again to the bottom of that pit. Again, I could feel the heat as it beat in my face. Again, I approached the entrance, the gates into hell itself. That creature took me by the arm. I intended to put up a fight if I could to keep me from going in. I only managed to slow down my descent just a little and he took me by the arm. Thank God that voice spoke again. I don't know who it was. I didn't see anybody. I just heard the voice. I don't know what He said, but whatever He said that place shook. It just trembled, and that creature took his hand off my arm. It was just as if there was a suction in the back of my back parts. It pulled me back away from the entrance to hell, until I stood in the shadows. Then it pulled me up head first. As I was going up through the darkness, I began to pray. My spirit, the man who lives inside this physical body is an eternal being, a spirit man. I began to pray, "Oh God, I come to You in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I ask You to forgive me of my sins and to cleanse me from all my sin." I came up beside my bed. The difference between the three experiences was that I came up on the porch the first time, I came up at the foot of the bed the second time, and I came up right beside the bed the third time.*

*When I got inside my body, my physical voice picked up and continued my prayer right in the middle of the sentence. I was already praying out of my spirit. I looked at the clock and saw it was 20 minutes before 8 o'clock. It was the very hour I was born again due to the mercy of God through the prayers of my mother. I felt wonderful. It was just like a two ton weight rolled off my chest. Although I was rejoicing and I was happy in my spirit, although I felt wonderful spiritually, I felt no better physically. The doctors had been called and they told my family that I was going to die. I thought I would die that night, but it no longer bothered me. I knew I was ready to go.*

Well, the rest of the story is how he dies again, but this time he goes to heaven and he has an encounter with Jesus. Jesus tells him many things, and one of the things Jesus tells him to do, is to go and tell the people that hell is real and that people need to be saved. And when Jesus got finished talking to him in heaven, He sent him back to his body for the fourth and final time that he died, until the time of his eighties when he died for the last time. If we think that the spirit realm is not real, we are mistaken. We, as Christians, would be naive to live our lives like the spirit realm doesn't exist. That all of the choices you make on the earth are just your choices alone, and that there's no influence in your thinking, and there's no influence on your emotions, and no influence on the words that you are saying.

Have you ever found yourself in a spot sometimes, have you found yourself in a position where something comes out of your mouth and it's like, "Where did that come from?" And it's like, it feels to me like I wasn't even thinking that, but that just came out of my mouth. Right? And most often, it's something negative; some doubt, some unbelief, some fear, something. Right? And then you want to push those words back in your mouth. If you're having a fight with someone, you think, "Well, why did I say that? I love this person and I would say that about them?"

You think your thoughts are not being influenced, your emotions are not being triggered? I mean, I know that we can't blame the devil for everything and say, "I'm not responsible for anything," because it's still your choices. It's still your thoughts. It's still your actions. It's still your mouth that's got to speak. It's still your own choices. So, we can't blame the devil for everything, but it would also be naive for us to say that we just go about life living the way we want to and that we ignore the spirit realm. We quickly want to believe that there are angels that will be around us and protect us, but we don't really want to think about demon spirits that might also be around us. Because then if we were conscious of that, we would be a lot more careful, a lot more careful. Yeah. Okay.

Are you all with me still? Are you getting something out of the service today? That's why I read to you the book of Ephesians. We're not fighting against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, rulers of darkness, wickedness in high places - that's who we're fighting against. That's our fight.

Now listen, if you're a Christian, I've got news for you. If you are a born again Christian, you have a great privilege. Your privilege is that you know where your eternity lies. It's a privilege to have that confidence, but you have something else that happens to you. You are automatically light and you will confront the darkness wherever you go, and you can't walk away from that. As much as you might say to yourself, "I don't want to do that", somewhere along the line, God is going to require you to do that, because you are a witness.

Matthew 12 verse 43, <sup>43</sup> ***When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. This is spirits, demons that come out of a being, a human being.*** <sup>44</sup> ***Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out.*** I'm just reading out of his book and he goes with the old King James version. <sup>44</sup> ... ***when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished, or clean.*** <sup>45</sup> ***Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first (Matthew 12:43-44 KJV).*** I asked the Lord, "Why can't we cast them out, cast them into the pit and banish them from earth forever?" Jesus said - this is another vision, another encounter that Kenneth Hagin is having with Jesus.

*He said, "The time for this hasn't come yet. If it would have been possible when I was on earth, I would have cast them all into the pit. But you will remember, on one occasion, the demons cried out to Me saying, "What have you to do with thee, Jesus, Son of God, art thou come hither to torment us before the time? Before the time. They were telling Jesus, "Have You come to torment us before our time?" And, of course, Jesus had to tell him to shut up because He couldn't afford the demons revealing that He was the Christ, because He needed the Father to reveal that He was the Christ, not the demons. So, you understand that if you think someone is telling you to do something that looks like it's God, doesn't always have to be that source. Anyway, that's a different subject.*

*So, You see, their time hasn't come yet. The time is coming when Satan and all his demons will be cast in the lake of a fire where they will be forever. While Jesus was talking to me, an evil spirit that looked like a monkey ran between Jesus and me and spread out something that looked like a black cloud or a smoke screen. I couldn't see Jesus anymore. So, he's in a*

vision. Then the demon began jumping up and down waving his arms and legs and yelling in a shrill voice, "Yakety-yak, yakety-yak, yakety-yak." I paused for a moment. I could hear the voice of Jesus as He continued to talk, but I couldn't understand the words. I thought to myself, doesn't the Lord know I'm missing what He's saying? I need to get that. It is important, but I'm missing, I'm missing it. I wonder why Jesus didn't command the evil spirit to stop.

I can't have you looking at my flashing light .[Pastor John switches off his timer] But I'm nearly finished. I waited for a few more moments. Jesus continued talking as if He didn't even know the evil spirit was present. I wondered why the Lord didn't cast him out, but He didn't. Finally, in desperation, I pointed my finger at the evil spirit and said, "I command you to be quiet in the name of Jesus Christ!" He stopped immediately and fell to the floor. The black smoke screen disappeared and I could see Jesus once again. The spirit lay on the floor whimpering and whining like a whipped pup. I said, "Not only must you be quiet, but get up and get out of here." He got up and ran away. I was still wondering why Jesus had not stopped this evil spirit from interfering.

Of course, Jesus knew what I was thinking. He said, "If you hadn't done something about that, I couldn't have." "Lord, I know I misunderstood You! You said You couldn't do anything about it, but You really meant that You wouldn't." "No", He said, "If you hadn't done something about that spirit, I couldn't have." "But, Lord, You can do anything. To say You couldn't is different from anything I've heard preached or preached myself. That really upends my theology." Because many people say that God is in control of everything. "Sometimes your theology needs upending", the Lord answered. I said, "Lord, even though I'm seeing You with my own eyes, even though I hear Your voice speaking to me as plainly as any voice I've ever heard, I cannot accept that unless You prove it to me by the Word of God. For the Word says, '...in the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses shall every word be established.' (that is 2 Corinthians 13:1. I will not accept any vision. I will not accept any revelation if it cannot be proved by the Bible." Instead of becoming angry with me for saying this, Jesus smiled sweetly and said, "I will give you not just two or three witnesses, I will give you four witnesses." I said, "I have read through the New Testament a 150 times and many portions of it more than that. If that is there, I don't know about it." "Son, there's a lot in there you don't know." The Lord pointed out, "There is not a single place in the New Testament where believers are ever told to pray against the devil and I will do anything about him. There is not one instance in any of the epistles written to the churches that said to tell God to rebuke the devil or do something about the devil. If they do, they're wasting their time. God has done all He's going to do about the devil for the time being until the angel comes down from Heaven, takes the chain, and binds him, and puts him into the bottomless pit." Every writer of the New Testament in writing - in the church always told the believers to do something about the devil. The believer has to have authority over the devil or the Bible wouldn't tell him to do something about the devil. Chapter 28 verse 18 in Matthew, <sup>18</sup>... **All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (Matthew 28:18-20 KJV) . And there are many other scriptures about that.**

"Pastor John, what are you saying this morning?" Well, we are a witness. I meant, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, to keep you informed and to keep ministering to you, that unless you fully embrace the fact that we are spirit beings and that our life is meant to be in the spirit, rather than in our natural world, then we are going to miss so much of what's happening in our life because of natural reasons. Amen. I'm trusting that the Holy Spirit will minister this to you, that you will realise and recognise that as you go about your life, that the Holy Spirit is with you. He has given you authority and He's given you a command in this natural world that you should live by the command of the Word of God.

I want to dispel something for you today, and that is, I want to remove this myth, this lie of the devil, that you have to be perfect or you at least have to be intentionally perfect before you can walk in authority. Hello? It is part of the reason why I started sharing with you the way I was sharing with you early on in the service. I cannot validate the reputation of Jesus by my so-called, upright living because in the spirit realm there is not enough of me, perfect enough of me in my flesh. In the Book of Romans the Bible says; the best I've got to offer God is as filthy rags before Him. There is nothing I've got to offer Him that is good enough to be a reputation on His behalf. Nothing. It doesn't matter how long I live for Jesus. It doesn't matter how mature I become in the things of the spirit, it doesn't matter how good my spirit life is, I'm still not ever going to be perfect enough in my flesh that I've got something as a reputation to offer on behalf of Jesus that says, "Look at me, I represent all of Jesus." I could never do that. I've got news for you, neither can you. If you are waiting for some level of maturity to be achieved by you so that you can operate in the realm of the spirit, you're going to wait till you die.

So, we have to depend on the grace of God and by His grace, we need to walk through life and we need to respond to the leading and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. You know, people say to me, "I want to know the will of God. I want to hear the voice of God. I want to know what the will of God is for my whole life, and for my life assignment, and all of that kind of stuff." Well, you know, I'd say this, "If you are aware of how your own human interaction is being affected by the Word of God, then you are in a place where you are realising, "God is touching me here and I'm changing, and I'm touched, and I'm changing, and I'm being touched, and I'm changing."

Many years ago, I had a prophetic word in this church and I said, "God is bringing about an identity change and He's bringing it about in me, and if I have to tell my own self that I'm changing, but you can't see it, then maybe I'm not changing." I said, "You need to be able to witness the change that's happening inside of me, because then I know that I'm changing. Otherwise, it's just a mirror of self-reflecting to myself what I think I'm changing with." Let me tell you, we're always going to give ourselves a bigger pat on the back than we think. Right?

So, if someone else is telling you you've changed, now you know that you're obeying the Word of God. When you are being obedient to the Word of God and others are telling you you're changing, and they see the life of God in you, and they see the Spirit of God in you, and they see the ways of God in you, now you know that you are hearing the Word of God because everybody is a witness of what's happening inside of you. Amen?

So, I want to encourage you and I want to say; be aware that you are a light and that your perfection or your imperfection is not the reason why you actually walk in life with authority. Authority is given to you by grace. It is given to you because you're born again. It is given to you because you're a child of God. It is given to you because God wants you to be a witness. Hallelujah. So, as you walk through life and as you walk in life, start with the Word of God in your mouth. I can say this and it's relevant, and I use this a lot but anyway. My witness of the change that the Word of God was doing in my heart began to manifest itself when I started loving Sharon as Christ loves the Church. The Word of God came to me, the Holy Spirit gave me the power to act out the Word of God, and I started to love her when there were times when she wasn't lovable. Come on.

In every marriage, there's going to be a time when someone else, the other person, is not so lovable. I mean, I'm very aware of Sharon's unlovable times. I'm not aware of mine, I don't... Believe me, there were many times when I was *hardkoppig*, stubborn, and just grumpy, and in those moments, I was unlovable. Yes? But God has to do the work in me, and as He does the work in me, we begin to change. Sharon became a testimony to me of the life of God and the Word of God that was in her. Because as God told me to love her with everything I

got regardless of her actions. She had a bad temper. She was aggressive in the way that she would express herself. She began to go before God and said, "I don't want this temper to be part of my life because I can see how it will destroy my marriage, it will destroy my home, it will destroy me." So, she took the Word of God and started to speak the Word of God about this temper that she had in her life. As she began to speak the Word of God, the Word of God began to change her from the inside and the power of that Word of God began to shut her mouth when she wanted to give over to it. It began to shut her mouth and shut her mouth and shut her mouth. Hello? I have lived with a woman who has been putting the Word of God to work for 45 years. I have witnessed her and she is a living testimony to me about the power of the Word of God in a person's life. Amen.

I know that God is in us to give us the power to overcome things that are in ourselves. Now, when we are living with that overcoming power, now we begin to hear things from God that have a bigger role to play in the body of Christ. Now we can say, "Look at the testimony of our lives and now we have a role to play." Hello? Praise the Lord.

So, that is, if you want to know, that is part of the reason why I'm protective over young people who are giving their lives to God. Because the protection, I don't want to promote them and give them too much responsibility too quickly. Why not? Well, because there is some level of, they've got to realise this is where I've got to use the Word of God to overcome in myself. I've got to use the Word of God and their living testimony of how they use the Word of God to overcome themselves, just like Sharon and I had to do. Just like we had to do in our marriage, in our children, in our finances. The living testimony of that Word puts me into the knowledge of His will and then as I know the knowledge of His will, I begin to walk in a way that I have more to say because my testimony is already there. Amen. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

I'll tell you this, that I can see and I'm not going to name names today. I can see God at work in people's lives because as the Word of God has come to them, they've decided to obey. As they've decided to obey, they've started to activate and started to go in the direction that God is telling them. Sometimes there are people in our ministry here that are called to finance. I've watched God speak to them, and then they've had a wrestle with giving their money to the Lord, and then they've acted on it. So, then as they've acted on it more and more, God has used them more and more, and they're setting themselves up that God can use them in a much greater role because they're being obedient with the substance of the world and God is wanting to give them authority in the Spirit. It needs obedience to the substance of the world first.

I've watched people obey God, where their life is going in one direction and God speaks and their lives go in another direction, and God is setting them up to have more authority, more boldness and confidence to walk in the will of God because it starts with the mundane things of how am I living my life? How am I taking the Word of God? How am I being obedient here? That's what Kenneth Hagin had to ask God to forgive him and repent. Right? Because, God told him to do something and he hadn't been fully obedient. Hallelujah.

So, what do you think, people? Do you think that we need to be aware of the spiritual realm that is trying to derail us, distract us, hold us back, and give us alternative options for ourselves? I would say one of the greatest things, strategies the devil is using in the modern-day world is; many different options. The more options I can give you in life, the more you'll be distracted. The more distraction and the more options, the less you're going to hear the will of God because, "I want more options."

I think the Lord used this vessel pretty good today. Don't you think? [*Congregation answers; Yes*] You can say, Amen. [*Congregation says; Amen.*] Because if you say, Amen, you say so

be it, then it means, so be it to me, Lord. Come on. Amen. Amen. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

And so now, I didn't forget about money. Thank you, Empinator (Empie), *baie dankie*. They're always ready to remind me to take up an offering, but this morning, the Lord reminded me. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Praise Jesus.

I need to tell you that there are very marvellous and wonderful things happening. I can tell you because we have agreed this, voice-to-voice, face-to-face as it were, long distance, but we have a special speaker coming and being with us next year in April, on our Easter weekend. Pastor Scott Webb is going to be here, and I want to tell you, this is going to be a marvellous conference. And there are other things afoot. There are other things in the happening, and God is speeding the things up with our ministry. He's speeding things up. He's not slowing down, He's speeding up and I'm so glad He is.

So, I want to tell you that I believe that in 2025, you and I are going to be more and more alive. I believe in 2025 that you and I are going to thrive. Amen. Those words rhyme, but I'm not saying to you because they rhyme. I'm telling you that I know that the Word of God is coming to us that is going to validate the fact that we are going to be more alive and we are going to thrive. I've got more to say about that on the weekend. Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. Glory to God.

Why don't you stand with me, please? *Hier kom meneer*, Hans De Wet. (Here comes Mr Hans de Wet). Hans is a long-time cycling partner with me. I'm so glad you're with me, Hans. How long have you been in this church? [*Hans replies; 12 years*] 12 years? *Nee, dit moet seker meer as dit wees*. (No, it must be longer than that) Since 2010, 14 years. *Jis nê, ons raak al oud saam, nê?* (We're getting old together) Praise Jesus. Won't you stretch out your hands here, please? Thank You, Lord, that we can give of our substance to You. We bless You and we thank You and we glorify Your name and we thank You for all the good things that You give to us, Lord. And the least of what we can do is give You our substance. We ask You, Father, that as we give You these offerings, Jesus, we ask You to worship the Father with our tithes and our offerings and we thank You for the blessings that You pour out upon us in our lives. We thank You, in Jesus' name. And we all say; amen.

Thank you, Hans. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. *Ja*, you know, Hans used to ride this old bicycle and one day we were riding together and the Lord began to work on my heart and on Grobbies' heart that we needed to get Hans a new bicycle. So, Grobbies found a bike. I'm telling you, if you need a motorbike, a car or a bicycle, or something, Grobbies can find it. Grobbies can find it. And anything else in between - if you need dentures, if you need whatever, he can find that, too. You know. [*Pastor John and congregation laugh*] Anyway, you know, I was just reminded when he came walking up here, we had a marvellous thing where we ended up, all of the guys in the cycling club, we all shared in it and we all put money towards it and we all bought Hans a very, very orange Trek bicycle. To my knowledge, he still rides that orange Trek bicycle, *nê?* I know he uses it mostly on the indoor trainer now, but that was at least 10 years ago. *Nê Grobbies?* Ja. Praise the Lord.

That's how the Bible works. This is how we work, this is how we grow, this is how we flow. Don't you know? Hallelujah. Praise Jesus. You guys are amazing people. You're wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. Sho. The glory of God is upon you, you know? He really is. He rests upon you. I see it on you. I see Him with His love upon you and His life force upon you and in you. You guys, you shine. I'm telling you, you do. You shine. The love of God shines in you. Hallelujah.

Come on, put your hand here. Just make this declaration and say; Thank you, Lord, I am a child of God. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for giving Your life for me that I may live. I



may live life abundantly. And I thank you for it, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen. *[Congregation repeats after Pastor John]*

I bless you and I ask God to watch over you, for His blessings to come upon you and overtake you moment by moment, day by day. No weapon formed against you will prosper. And that as you go out and come in, you're blessed and He will make sure that you don't get your foot caught by a hidden snare. Amen. You are protected by His Word and the blood of Jesus. And His angels hearken to the Word and they watch out for you, wherever you go, in Jesus' name. Do you agree with that?

You know, as I was speaking that over you, the Lord just said to me; "And that's what I did for you, John, I made sure that your foot wasn't caught in a hidden snare when you, yourself, wanted to go and take action." You know? That's what He did. He warned me, "This will not go well for you, John, don't let your foot get caught in a hidden snare here." It was a hidden snare the devil set for me there and He prevented me from walking in it. Amen. We'll see you later tonight. God bless ya'll.