

Scripture Reference: Ephesians 2:1-5 (AMPC)

10:10 Good morning, church, Heritage of Faith. Wow, do I miss you? I just wish that I could see your face, hug your neck. Wow, social distancing, right. Terrible, terrible, terrible. Social distancing. Oh, my word, quickly may it come to an end, social distancing. Don't like it. Church was not designed to run at a distance. The church was designed to be the body of Christ and to be together and to fellowship together and let the life of God in each other, touch each other and help us grow together. That's the way the body of Christ was made to live. I miss you. I love you. I'm praying for you. Pastor Sharon and I are praying for you and I just know that God's got good things for you, got good things for us together. Certainly, God is showing and demonstrating His blessing, His abundance and His glory upon my life, and upon everything that we are doing. Testimony upon testimony and some of which I will share with you today. But what a great moment it is for God to show us that as His children we can truly rely on, depend on and recognise Him as Lord and Master of our lives.

You're going to see some changes coming over the next little while. We're going to change doing Midday Moments. We are going to scale back on some of the Facebook moments, the evening Facebook moments. We're going to do something a little different in terms of me, you're going to see a little bit more of Pastor Garth and SNCTRY in the evenings on Facebook or on Instagram. You'll see me in the mornings that will be an ongoing thing on Facebook, me or Pastor Sharon. But we're introducing a very exciting, new way of having church. It is just possible that our government may decide that a sports event, any kind of entertainment event, and unfortunately the church is categorised alongside with those events where a lot of people come together and congregate together. It may be that the church may not be able to gather together for still another eight weeks, maybe 12 weeks. Who knows what the government is going to decide? We are going to be doing something different. We are going to initiate with you, if you are really desiring to be a daily disciple, we are doing a daily disciple programme, which is going to run every day. New topic, a new subject every day for six days. Then we repeat that for the next eight to 12 weeks. Just watch out for more news about daily disciple programme that we are going to be initiating, not this coming Monday but the following Monday. You will hear again from us next Sunday about the programme, and then on that Monday morning, we will be airing digitally our first daily disciple programme. I look forward to sharing it with you.

Okay, so now I'm going to just share the Word with you a little bit. I'm going to read to you from Ephesians chapter two. I'm going to read from the Amplified Bible. It goes, I'm just going to take some time to read it and then I'll talk through it a little bit when I'm done reading it. Verse one says, **¹And you [He made alive],** thank God he made you and me alive, **when we were dead (slain) by [your] trespass and sins (Ephesians 2:1 AMPC).** We were born into trespass and sins. When you, because we were born into it automatically the consequences of being born into a sin world and a sin nature was evident that we were going to be separated from God because of our sin nature. Let me keep reading verse two, **²In which at one time you walked,** the Amplified Bible says, **[habitually], you were following the cause and fashion of this world. You [were under the sway of the tendency of this present to age].** Meaning, whenever you are born and for people that have come and gone and lived and died before us, they were also under the

tendency of their present age, meaning, this life that we now live, **following the prince of the power of the air**. In other words, following the prince of darkness. **[You were obedient to and under the control of] the [demon] spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience [the careless, the rebellious, and the unbelieving, who go against the purposes of God] (Ephesians 2:2 AMPC)**. So we, at one time as a people who didn't have an option to connect with God, we have habitually lived against the purposes of God. ³**Among these, verse three, we as well as you once lived and conducted ourselves in the passions of our flesh (Ephesians 2:3 AMPC)**. What the Apostle Paul is doing here, is he is making a direct connection between either living for the purposes of God or living for yourself, your flesh. **[Our behaviour was governed by our corrupt and sensual nature] (Ephesians 2:3 AMPC)**. You may say, but I, you know, I didn't purposely corrupt myself or I didn't purposely live just the way I did. No, you didn't purposely do it. It was in your nature. You were born into that way of choosing things for yourself against the purposes of God.

Obeying the impulses of the flesh and the thoughts of the mind [our craving dictated by our senses and our dark imaginings]. We were then by nature children of [God's] wrath and heirs of [His] indignation, like the rest of mankind (Ephesians 2:3 AMPC). In other words, at that point in time, anybody that was born in mankind that behaved in this manner, following their senses, following themselves, being disobedient, being rebellious, just choosing your own ways, thinking in your own imaginings how you want your life to live, all of those things were against the purposes of God. So because of that, **we were children by nature of God's wrath and heirs of [His] indignation, like the rest of mankind (Ephesians 2:3 AMPC)**. So, I purposely wanted to read this passage of scripture to you for you to see that sin always is going to attract consequences of death. Always. It must be that the life of God always is the standard. In all of mankind, the life of God is the standard. All of what God created is measured against the standard of God's life. What happens is that in the standard of God's life, where the earth, mankind doesn't measure up to the standard of God in that time there is God's wrath and indignation that can be seen. ⁴**But God - so rich, verse four, but God so rich, is He in His mercy! Because of and in order to satisfy the great and wonderful and intense love with which He loved us (Ephesians 2:4 AMPC)**. Because God loved us so much, ⁵**even when we were dead (slain) by [our own] shortcomings and trespasses, He made us alive together in fellowship, and in union with Christ. [He made us alive. He gave us the very life of Christ Himself, the same new life with which quickened Him, for] it is by grace (His favour and mercy which you and I did not deserve) that you are saved (delivered from judgement and made partakers of Christ salvation) (Ephesians 2:5 AMPC)**.

I just want to make a distinction for you here. When you live your life in Christ, you live your life so that judgement does not come to you. I want to just draw a distinction here and the distinction is; if you have never made the Jesus the Lord and Saviour of your life, then the judgement that you are going to be living with every day is the judgement that you can have life in Jesus but you choose not to. That standard of judgement stands. If you do not receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of your life, then you live outside of the grace, outside of the mercy. You live as the rest of mankind does live where there are wrath and indignation from God. What happens to the rest of mankind is that as they sow to their flesh, they from their flesh reap death and destruction. That's what the Bible says in the book of Galatians. But if you sow to the spirit, you will from the spirit reap life.

Now, according to Paul's writings to the Ephesians, if you are in mankind and you have not received Jesus as Lord and Saviour of your life, you are living in a space where mankind's actions will reveal what they sow, they will reap. That's the truth of God's Word. If you're sowing corruption and your sowing in the way that he said it; if you're constantly sowing cravings dictated by your senses and dark imaginings, when you are living that way, the corruption that comes from that is coming into humanity. God did not bring Coronavirus into the earth. He did not bring it here, COVID-19, He did not bring it here. The sin factor that's in the world, the sowing of sin to the reaping of sin is because sin of its very nature separates itself from God and separates all of what is in the earth from God and the sin nature creates sickness and disease. It's part of what is corrupted, it brings sickness and disease. God didn't bring this sickness into the earth, the sin nature developed the place where sickness and disease could hibernate and could evolve and could grow into being something which we have now named as a sickness and a disease in the same way as flu is named, in the same way as cancer is named. Those things do not come from God either but they were found to have been dormant, to have been waiting in humanity, living in there to become something that becomes more and more prevalent in society. This new sickness, this new disease that has come upon the earth has been incubating, if you like, inside sin in the darkness of the sin factor. It has now emerged into the world as part of all of mankind's life of living their own corruption against God. That sin factor is what has brought this devastation and destruction upon the earth.

Where does that leave us as the church? I'm glad you asked because the Apostle Paul says in the same passage of scripture in Ephesians that we at one time were living as mankind where we were judged alongside with all of mankind, but now we by grace, because of His great love that needed to be satisfied, by His grace, He made a way for us to have the Christ nature. If I can read it to you again in verse four, **⁴But God - so rich in His mercy! Because of and in order to satisfy the great and wonderful and intense love with which He loved us (Ephesians 2:4 AMPC).** That great love is the One that sent Jesus to die. **⁵Even when we were dead (slain) by [our own] shortcomings and trespasses, He made us alive together in fellowship, and in union with Christ (Ephesians 2:5 AMPC).** He made us alive in fellowship and in union. Fellowship and union with Christ. That means, we have that intimacy, we have that connectivity, we have that complete ebb and flow that complete flowing of His life into us and our life that we give in response to His love; we give back to him. Our life given back to Him places us in a great position to enjoy all the good things that He's done for us.

⁵[He gave us the very life of Christ Himself, the same new life with which He quickened Him], Him being Christ, for it is by grace (His favour and mercy which you did not deserve) that you are saved (Ephesians 2:5 AMPC). We are delivered from any kind of judgement eternally because we receive fellowship and union with Christ.

Now I want to just talk a little bit about that fellowship and that union with Christ. That fellowship and that union with Christ allow us to receive from Him the purposes that He wants for our lives. Then as we give our life to His purpose, then He begins to make all things come to pass to fulfil that purpose in our life. Part of that purpose is for us to be able to demonstrate the very life that Christ has given us, demonstrated to Him, demonstrated to the world and demonstrated to the heavens, to all created beings that are watching as mankind lives on the earth. God gives us purpose. It's been my privilege to understand that, really that every one of us have been born for a reason. Not one of us has been born into

the earth just because there was a union between a man and a woman. That is not the reason why you were born into it. That is the method in which you were born into the earth but you were born into the earth because God chose you to be born into the earth at the time that you are born into the earth, which means that He didn't just birth you into the earth and breathe His life spirit into your body for you to just follow your own imaginings and your own desires and your own corrupt thinkings that are subject to the earth system. He wanted you to receive Jesus, He wanted you to receive His life so that you could live out the expression of Jesus' life. This is a wonderful thing. As I live out that expression, I no longer allow the earth and mankind to dictate to me how I must live, but rather the Christ-life inside of me will dictate to the earth how I will live. That's the way Jesus lived. When Jesus came on the earth, the way Jesus lived was, He came and He clearly said in the book of John, He says, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father," because Jesus, He didn't say anything unless the Father said it. He didn't do anything unless He saw the Father do it. There was nothing about His life that wasn't completely doing the Father's will.

That's our challenge in our lives is as we do the Father's will then all of the things that are coming upon mankind because of the sowing and reaping of sin, we are saved from that judgement, which is why I've got great confidence in Heritage of Faith members, people that are worth Heritage of Faith Ministries, and connected to this, that we have a life force because we have an understanding of what God's assignment is, what His purpose is for our lives, that we as a body of Christ can pray on behalf of God things into the earth that He wants to birth. We as a ministry can walk by faith. We as a ministry can show God our love with our tithes and offerings. We as a ministry can show God that we can be united as a body rather than divided as a body because all of these things reflect Jesus Christ into the earth when we live that way. As this pandemic has separated us from our physical space from each other, our unity and fellowship and our knowledge of God's purpose and assignment that He has called to bind us together, still binds us together, still holds us together, still is a thing that's blessing us and continues to bless us and continues to be of significance to all of us. Even though we are physically separated, we are unified and joined together as a body in Jesus. What a wonderful, what a wonderful thing.

I want to remind you that it is that union that also gives us direction. I know you remember this and I remind, church, that our union with an apostle, a man that God divinely connected to us, Doctor Jerry Savelle, has permitted us to receive directly, spiritually, input from God's Spirit to His Spirit. God gave him a word for 2020. And that word was that God would open new doors for us and that we would experience supernatural increase as never before. We're going to be sending you a notification via website and by email of the further word that Brother Jerry has had, and I've just been recently speaking with him on the phone, but he has had a further word from God and what God told him is that; do not be concerned about the way the year has started because He is still going to show you supernatural increase by the end of the year. He is going to show you that new doors and supernatural increase is coming to you, regardless of what the circumstances look like. Our job is to stay in faith. Now I'm using this connection with Brother Jerry Savelle because even though we are oceans apart, we are many thousand miles or kilometres apart from each other, there is a unity of spirit where God's Spirit has joined our spirit together with his. We receive the very life of God from him through his connection with God, and it gives us an increased awareness of our assignment, our purpose, and the things that we need to do and we still flow together. We still remain connected in spirit, and even if I couldn't speak with him on

the phone, even if I couldn't have any electronic or digital connection with him and or with Joe or any of the other people that are in Heritage of Faith in Texas and or Jerry Savelle Ministries in Texas, even if we couldn't have this immediate contact capability, we would still be joined spiritually. We would still be having that union of assignment and connection. What a glorious thing to be able to have this as the body of Christ. I'm so glad that I could speak to you this way.

I want to share in closing this service with you today, I want to share a personal testimony about how God creates new doors and supernaturally increases things for you, even when the world is experiencing, for the most part, global economic shutdown. I think we will all recognise that actually the people that are probably making more money than anybody else at this moment or having opportunities will be people that are in the medical profession, and all services that serve the medical profession, and or essential services. And so even people that are needing to buy stuff, they buy online. So online delivery organisations that are geared for that are experiencing at least some form of economic go forward and increase.

Well, in my world, I've experienced something unexpected. I'm sharing this with you because I'm trusting that as we go into the next phase of lockdown, phase four in South Africa, you will join us in this supernatural increase that God has done for me and with me and with us in a portion of something that God wanted me to do a long time ago. We started the Slipstream Athletic Club many years ago. We had some traction with cyclists. We had some traction with running and in some traction with different areas. The club was sort of, I want to say, sluggishly moving along. Every year we were kind of, you know, is the club growing, it's not really growing as we thought it would, not really being as significant as we wanted it to be. Certainly not in the church, not in the community. But all the while in my heart, I knew that God wanted me to minister and to have this as a service for the community, but also for the body of Christ. So, every year I had to make a decision. Did I hear God? Did I not hear God? Do I continue with this or do I just walk away from it? And so we had a lot of moments where there was every reason for us to just say, we're not going to do this anymore. Everybody can just run for themselves, join those clubs out there that already have a service and be done with it. Yet I knew in my heart I've got to just keep going.

As the lockdown started, I got a WhatsApp message from a cyclist who said; why don't we do a cycling challenge. The idea was that over 21 days, we would do so many hours of cycling, to help the cyclists be motivated to keep conditioned. So you can't ride your bicycle on the road, so you can ride it on an indoor trainer. If you're riding on an indoor trainer, then some people have better measurement capabilities than others. It wasn't about how fast you're going or how many miles or kilometres you did, it was more about time spent on the bicycle and each to their own level of fitness and their own desire to become fit. Then we all agreed and going on. Then I made a call to some of the runners in the ministry and said, "Don't you guys want to get on board?" They said, "Yes." I said, "Well, let's think about a challenge of how we can get this thing moving". They came up with a challenge that over a 21 day period, you could run or walk or exercise one kilometre a day, which is 21 kilometres or two kilometres a day, making it 42 kilometres over a 21 day period. And so that was the challenge. Anybody want to join, walk in your garden, that's the only place you can walk, walk in your garden. So, we put it out there, we started to send it to people who want to join

in the challenge. As per usual, we thought the cyclists would actually be more keen and more active and there are not as many runners in our sphere of influence. But suddenly an amazing thing happened. People in lockdown just began to talk to each other over social media about this challenge. And just people all over Witbank and Johannesburg began to say; we want to be part of it. And so, people began to walk and run and people that have never walked and never run have ended up completing the challenge of 21 or 42. Some people have done more than that, have done 100 kilometres, all in their garden over 21 days.

The result of it is that certainly within the Witbank environment, to a lesser extent Johannesburg, but in the Witbank environment, we suddenly have a very, very high profile because other clubs like Park Run, Run Walk for Life, people that generate activity and events, all those people got to hear about it. They all wanted in on the action. Before we even knew it, Slipstream Athletic Club became the management, event management, the challenge to accept and suddenly our database and our connection to the community just supernaturally increased. God opened a new door for us to have a digital challenge at home and suddenly it just blew out. It just grew beyond our wildest imagination. It just exploded. Then an amazing thing happened in the cycling community where a whole bunch of cyclists got on board and they brought their friends on board and suddenly the Slipstream Athletic Club is so well known and has become like one of the highest-profile clubs because of lockdown.

Now, you would never think that lockdown could actually produce such a supernatural increase of growth. But God spoke a word and it just took a moment of obedience and a couple of people to get on board and look what God has done. He's turned something that was an average club into something that is really supernaturally increased and become certainly in the Witbank area, the most high-profile, visible athletic club, certainly in running and in cycling. I say, thank You, Lord, that we kept going with the vision that you placed in my heart. We kept going and when the season for supernatural increase came, there You were. I didn't have to do anything. God made the increase happen. It just happened. It's like when Jesus blessed the bread and He broke it and He gave it to his disciples. His disciples couldn't do anything. They didn't have to do anything. As He broke it, it just multiplied as they broke it, it just multiplied.

I'm going to leave you with this; in the same way that God has increased this supernaturally in this season of our lives, I want you by way of encouragement, I want you to agree with me that you will not quit on your declarations. You will allow the life of Christ, you will allow the very life of Christ and your fellowship and your union with Christ Ho put you in a place where you are in your union with him. You keep speaking the God result. It doesn't matter how the year has started. It doesn't matter what seems to have gone and how long of will that work on. God has got something good for me. God has got increase for me. He's got supernatural increase for me. He's got a new door that He wants me to walk through. He wants to open things up for me in ways that I couldn't see possible. I do not have to live under that corrupt system anymore of sickness and disease and destruction of finances. I live in a system that is God's life, God's union, the fellowship with Him, and He will never leave me. He will never forsake me, He will make sure that every one of my needs is taken care of. So come on, church, I do miss you. I miss seeing your faces and I miss fellowshiping with you, person to person. But I want to encourage you; come and join us

on the next level of Slipstream challenge. At least one of our strikes for the year is to be well-conditioned. As you condition physically, you can also condition spiritually. Be conditioned, keep strong. Keep walking in your union and fellowship with Him and reach out to someone in the church that you haven't called for a while and just touch base with them and minister the life of God to them.

Let us continue to be strong in our union with Him. Let us rejoice together even though we are not together, let us rejoice together. Let us praise God together. Let's give thanks to Him that He is a God that is above every other God. His name is above every other name. We worship the only true and living God. If you don't quit on your faith, God's not going to quit on you. Stay strong in the Word, stay strong with the power of His might and may His blessing rests upon you from morning till night. As you sleep may His blessing even rests upon you there that you will dream dreams that are God kind of dreams, that you will see visions that are Godkind of vision, and you will be obedient to Him and He will bless your life.

It's been wonderful spending this Sunday morning with you. I trust this message has been a blessing and an inspiration to you. I look forward to hearing more and more testimonies of how God has blessed your life. Thank you for joining this service today. Enjoy the worship and don't forget, watch out for daily disciple programme coming your way. Thank you. God bless you. Bye for now.