

05 June 2022 Beloved Part 2: Beloved and Enemies Pastor John Bendixen (WTB)

Scripture reference: Mark 1:9-11 (NKJV); Matthew 17:5 (NKJV); Matthew 12:22-30 (NKJV); Ephesians 6:10-12 (NKJV)

Hallelujah, glory to God! Come on, let me see you do some of this. *[Pastor John dancing on the stage]* Come on, come on. Let's see. Oh no, come on! Wooh! Hallelujah. Glory to God. There's a power in the, in the way that we can worship God. You know, when your heart is full of joy and full of gratitude and full of thanksgiving... just watch the guys who play, who, who, fans that go to rugby or soccer and their team is about to win or to, you know, something special; win a world cup or do something. See if you can contain their joy. Huh?

When God rises up big inside of you, and you experience Him in a grand way. Come on, hey, you've got to just let it out a little bit. I mean, you can't be like a stickman, you know. You've got to say, "Praise you, Lord! Praise You, Lord! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Thank you, Jesus! Thank You, Lord! Thank You, Jesus! Thank You, Jesus! Glory to God! Glory to God!" Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

I am expectant this morning that the Word of God that is going to be preached—I'll tell you what happened yesterday. In fact, this morning, Pastor Sharon came in, and I was busy preparing, and she came in, and she said, "You know, is there anything I can do for you?" You know, and I said, "Babe, I don't know what the song list is." She read out the song list for me today, and I said, "The songs that you've chosen couldn't have been more perfectly picked by the Holy Spirit." I had no idea what songs they picked. She had no idea what I was going to preach today. And God has perfectly synchronised the songs and the message for what He wants to accomplish today. Hallelujah.

I have a great expectation that today, the Word of God is going to liberate your mind. It's going to liberate your spirit man and allow your spirit man to dominate your soul and your mind so that you can become a new experience Christian. So today, you can have a new experience in God, which means your whole life can become a new experience because today can be a day of change for you. Hallelujah. Is that what you want? Hallelujah. Do you agree with me about this? Amen. Amen. You may be seated. Thank you. Hallelujah.

You all doing good? Praise the Lord. I'm just doing fantastic. Thank you for asking, Grobbies. Hallelujah. God is good to me. God is good to you, and I thank God that He is a never-changing God. I mean, He's always the same, yesterday and forever. That doesn't mean that things don't change around us because wherever He comes on the scene, things change, but He Himself doesn't change. He's always the same. Hallelujah.

That's why I always say Christians always need to be ready for change. You cannot actually be a practising Christian, a practising believer and not be ready for change. Because God is the, is always going to cause you to want to grow, and where light and energy and life is, there's got to be change. Amen. So are you ready for change

today? [Congregation answers, Yes.] Are you sure? [Congregation answers, Yes!] Come on, get into agreement with me; I'm ready for change. I'm ready to grow. Hallelujah.

Last week, I ministered to you on *Beloved*, and I'm going to just lead into the message today with the same theme of Beloved. I read to you that the word *beloved* means; a *much-loved person*. It also means to be *adored*. I told you it is the word *favourite* is to be *beloved*. *To be esteemed, to be prized, to be treasured. To be loved, to be highly regarded, to be admired* are many words that go to describe the word, beloved. The foundation of it is that there is an affection; there is a love when someone says to you that you're beloved.

It's very, I want to almost say, impossible, but that's a big word and a strong word, but it's almost appropriate to say it's impossible to be beloved if you have been, if there has been violence committed to you by a person, or there has been some kind of acts towards you or things that have behaviour patterns towards you, that are always destabilising your world. There is never a symphony, a harmony, a unity, an agreement, a coming together of ideas and things that are cherished, right? I mean, if there's always disharmony and there is always aggression, and there is always violence and or always conflict and strife and those kinds of behaviour patterns, then it's difficult to call someone your beloved. Almost impossible. Right?

Because actually, to be beloved means that you are highly regarded, you're esteemed, you're a favourite because there's a mutual compatibility or there is a mutual understanding. There's an agreement. So, in Mark chapter one, verse nine, we talk about Jesus, ⁹ **It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.** ¹⁰ **And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.** ¹¹ **Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."** (Mark 1:9-11 NKJV)

So beloved and pleasing go together. Beloved and favourite go together. Beloved and regarded go together. Why was the Father saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased?" Because there was unity. There was harmony; there was an agreement; there was a flowing together. Jesus only did what He saw the Father doing. So, the Father could say, "This is My beloved Son," because everything He does is in harmony with Me; everything He does is in unity with Me. Everything He does is the way I would do things. So, He sees Me do things and then He does the things that I would do. God, the Father, refers to Him as the beloved Son, and then He says, "I am pleased." That's why I can call Him my beloved Son. Amen.

So, there are many, many people, many Christians who want to have a relationship with God; that is a favourite status, well-regarded status. Just because you are a Christian doesn't make you have that kind of relationship with God. You have got to walk in that relationship with God, where the way that you work and you harmonise with Him, you agree with Him, you please Him, and then you have that status of beloved. That's different from an unconditional love that gets you saved. This is a relationship where you are walking in the love of God, and you are walking in the ways of God; then you get the beloved status, the favourite status. Amen.

This isn't a performance thing; this is a choice thing. You don't have to perform and say, "I'm going to stop doing things to achieve the beloved status." It's a choice of "I'm going to love Him. I'm going to pursue Him. I'm going to follow His ways." Even if your performance is below the standard, it's the choice of your heart that causes you to rise into that status. Hallelujah.

Matthew, chapter 17, verse five says, ⁵ **While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" (Matthew 17:5 NKJV). *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him.*** I just want to draw something to your attention that while He was speaking, ***behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them.*** A cloud is in the heavens, right? You can't say there's a cloud that overshadows you, and it's on the earth because it can't have a shadow on you if it's on the earth. So, by definition, a cloud is something that's in the heavens. You'll see why this is important, that a bright cloud had to come and overshadow them. You will see why this is so important as I get through my message.

The next thing God the Father says is, "Hear Him. Hear Him." Living in God is not only hearing with your natural ears. You are listening today to this message, and you're listening with natural ears. As you read the Bible, or as you may speak the Bible, your natural ears will hear, but it's the hearing so that you become Him in spirit and in lifestyle. There are many people that hear messages preached from the pulpit. They hear lots of sermons. They go to church every Sunday, but they don't change their lifestyle because they're not hearing in spirit, and their spirit man is not converting their hearing to choices. They are just hearing words; the words make them or encourage them and make them feel good. They might feel good about the fact that they're actually in church, but hearing with your natural ears is not the kind of hearing that makes a material difference to your life. It's hearing with the inward ears, the spiritual ears, that makes a difference to your life. His Words can shape you. This is very important; His Words can shape you and form you into what He created you to be. I'm going to try and get through as much of my message as I can today.

When you become a lifestyle of living because you're hearing with spiritual ears, you become to Him a problem solver on the earth. The Words that you hear that you live become answers to people. So, if you just hear words, and those words don't become answers to you, then you can't become an answer to someone else. Amen.

You have to come and be in church, and you've got to hear the Bible and read the Bible, and you've got to be in a relationship with God, where He's Words from the Bible, and His Words that He will speak to you by the Spirit. You hear them in your spirit-man, you hear them, and you receive them, and then those Words deal with problems in your natural world, and so you have answers through the Words that you are hearing and living. When you hear and live those Words, you become a problem solver in the world because you; yourself have solved problems through the Word. Amen.

If somebody came to me and asked me to give them counsel about how to deal with sickness in your life. If I haven't used the Word of God to overcome sickness in my

life, it's very difficult for me to become an answer to them when I haven't used the Word of God as an answer for my own sickness. For many different reasons, this natural earth is corrupted, and sickness and disease is a part of humanity, but I don't receive sickness and disease as a part of my life. I receive health and healing and receive physical well-being as part of my portion because of what the Bible says, with long life, will He satisfy me and show me His salvation. So, I'm satisfied in the life that I live; I am physically strong and healthy. Amen.

Now, I have used the Word of God and faith on many occasions in my life to overcome sickness and disease. Sometimes, that Word of God has given me the wisdom to go to medical professionals in moments in time when it was critical that someone with more knowledge about the way I eat, what I'm drinking, and the way I'm behaving myself, needs to change. Come on now.

A lot of people say, "Well, I want only to have the miracle healing power of God in my life." If I'm using the Words of God, and I'm hearing Him speaking to me, then He will correct me and say, "I can heal you, but it's not going to solve the problem because the things that you're doing are going to undo your healing down the line." Amen.

For example, this happened to my natural father. Long before he died, he got diagnosed with type two diabetes. He could say, "Well, I'm going to believe God for my healing, and I'm going to keep eating sugar." The wisdom that the medical profession gave him was to change his diet and do exercise. Then he could use his faith, and he got completely recovered from type two diabetes. He lived the rest of his life without the impacts of all the insulin issues that come with type two diabetes.

Because he changed his eating habits, he changed his physical habits and started to walk and run and do different exercises. This happened in his late 60s when he got diagnosed with type two diabetes. In that case, someone with greater knowledge helped him undo the effects of what the enemy had come to devour in his life because of a bad habit of eating too much sugar. Some people are more susceptible to that than others, so no one solution fits everybody's issues. You have to hear from the Holy Spirit.

Now, you know, I've told you the story many times; I used to have gout every year, at least once a year, twice a year, I used to get gout. I could never tell you whatever triggered the gout, but I used to get gout. Anybody that has had gout will tell you that it is one of the most painful things that you can ever, ever experience in your life. Mostly it would happen in my feet and in my big toe, and you can't even have a sheet touch your big toe because it's just that painful.

I began to speak to the Lord and say, "Lord, what is this gout thing? You know, I need to get rid of this. This is not a blessing in my life; this is a curse in my life. I want to get rid of this." I started to ask him, and He told me to stop eating popcorn. Now if you go to any medical doctor and you associate popcorn with gout, they'd say, "Never heard of that. That's not a thing that triggers gout." They will tell you it's meat, tomatoes, and different acidic kinds of foods that can trigger gout, but not popcorn, but the Lord said to me, "Stop eating popcorn." Sharon and I would eat popcorn once or twice a week. It was kind of one of the things that we enjoyed to do, and He said, "Stop eating popcorn."

As a lifestyle, I stopped eating popcorn. In 13 years, I haven't had gout again. Hallelujah. Once or twice, I felt a twinge in my foot that I thought gout was going to come on me; I said, "No, no, no, no, no, God has delivered me from that, and it doesn't matter what I'm eating or not. I obeyed God. He told me to stop eating popcorn, and I did." So, every now and again, I will eat popcorn, but it's not a part of my lifestyle. Do you understand what I'm saying?

So, if you hear the Word of God, and you live the Word of God, you become not only your own problem solver, and you become an answer to yourself by the Holy Spirit, but you now become a problem solver for someone else because you now can begin to share what I've just shared with you. You can say to people, "Hey, listen; I can pray for you. God's going to heal you. He can heal you, He will heal you, and we're going to believe for your healing, but you've also got to believe for God to show you things what caused this to come about in your life." Amen.

Unless, and I'm going to get into this in a minute, unless there is the sickness and disease that you have are demons or devils that have come upon you and brought sickness upon your body. Then it's a very easy solution. It's not about what you eat or what you drink; it's about getting rid of that demon that attacked your body, and that's a real thing. So, we, you and I, have been designed to hear from God and receive from Him in every way. We have been designed by God. Your design as a person that is spirit, soul and body has been designed in His image, and if we've been designed in His image, we've been designed to hear from Him. You are actually perfectly created to hear from Him. You're perfectly created for His Words to change, to impact your spirit-man, and for those words to change your natural world. Amen.

Even before Jesus came to die on the cross, God the Father said, "If you will live according to My Word, and you will do all that My Word says, and you'll meditate on it day and night; then I will make your ways prosperous, I will make your life successful, and your life will go well with you, and all will be good for you, and you will be, you will be blessed, and you will bless nations because you obey My Word." So, even when you make a decision to obey God in faith, even before people became born again—by faith, they were perfectly designed to hear and live according to the words of God. So as a born again spirit-man, you're even more perfectly created for the power of God's words to change your world. Hallelujah.

God is the designer of all life; it's important for us to just remember this; God is the designer of all life. That's me, you and me. He is the designer of our life. Yes? Do you agree? The Author, the Designer, the Creator are all the same thing. So, if the creator and the designer create a design—then by the very definition of something that he's designed—he's designed it to initiate a purpose because nobody authors something to have no purpose. Why would you author, design, or create anything without purpose? Yes? Come on; you've got to agree with me on this. I mean, even if you, even if you, you know, decide to have a shower without soap, you are doing it for a purpose. Amen.

Even if you see a child playing, a child, a little child, playing on the beach, building a sandcastle, he's acting as the author, creator, and designer. What's the purpose of a

sandcastle? Create fun. Fun is a purpose. That little child is doing something because they want to have fun and they want to enjoy the environment.

If you have a purpose, your purpose, by very definition, establishes a destiny. So if a cup could speak, I wish I had a mug or a cup here today that had a mouth on it. You know, and it could speak to you, and so if I had a mug in my hand, and it could speak to you, can you imagine? I've got a mug here with a handle. Can you imagine it in my hand? Yes? In the very front of the mug, it's got a mouth that goes like this. [*Gesturing with his hand as if holding the speaking mug*] And it speaks to you. Yes? And it could answer you, and you would say, "Hey mug", not this mug [*Pastor John pointing to his face*], this mug [*Pastor John pointing to his hand with an imaginary mug*].

"Hey, mug. What were you designed for?" "Well, I was designed for people to put liquid in me." "But I've seen you used for other things." "Yes, I know. I've been used to build sandcastles, but that wasn't my purpose." Right? "That wasn't my purpose." "I've seen you; people use you to catch insects and put the insects in you." "I know, but that wasn't my purpose." "What were you created for?" "So, people could use me to drink out of."

Hello? What happens is that the purpose that it was designed for has created a destiny. The fact that people use it for other things is just an imaginative opportunity to use it for different things, but the purpose that it was designed for is going to ultimately; be what its destiny is going to speak to.

Perhaps I could use something that's quite obvious, or you should have all heard about it, that this is a long weekend in Great Britain because the Queen is celebrating 70 years of monarchy, of rulership as a queen, right? She's had some special functions of eating, and so there have been glasses that have been put on tables, probably made of the finest crystal. Yes? Imagine this crystal mug in my hand or crystal cup in my hand, and it's got a mouth, and it can speak to you, and you speak to this crystal glass that is now in your hand, and you ask it, "What are you designed for?" "Well, I was designed for people to drink out of me."

Then you go, and you walk over, and you take this other mug that people have used to catch insects and to do other stuff. You put that other mug, and you say, "Well, what are you designed for?" and this mug says, "For people to drink out of." You look at the crystal glass that the Queen's using, and you say, "What are you made for?" "For people to drink out of." "So, do people use you for anything else?" "Never." The crystal mug would say to you, "Never! Never." "Well, what happens when people are not drinking out of you?" "They put me in a cupboard, and I'll stay there in the darkness, and every now and again, someone takes me out, and cleanse me, and dusts me, and makes me really clean, until the next time someone will drink out of me." "And you mug, what about you?" "I don't know, I sit in the kitchen, and some kid comes and grabs me every now and again and uses me to catch beetles." "But I thought you were made to use as drinking?" "That's true; I am. That's my creative purpose."

So, the destiny of what you were created to do, is actually the creator's original intent; it is really what you're going to be marked by. The fact that other things

happen to you is not what you should be known for, even if you are a mug that's been used a lot to catch insects or to be used on the beach to make upside-down castles or whatever. That wasn't what you were created to do, and ultimately, you were a mug or a crystal glass.

I've belaboured my final point on this matter, and that is that destiny requires accountability to the designer. Without accountability to the designer, people can use you for any purpose they want to, but if you're accountable to the designer, someone's going to protect you because of your accountability. So, if you're the crystal glass, and you're accountable to your designer, that's going to be what you are supposed to be used to drinking liquid out of; they look after you. They put you in places where you are protected. If you are not accountable to the designer, then people can use you for anything: catch bugs, build things for people that just fade away and fall away and don't become anything lasting. Praise the Lord. You have to be accountable. Destiny requires accountability. If there is no accountability, then you cannot match up to your destiny. Destiny and accountability have to be together. Hallelujah.

People look at me standing here on the platform, and they say, "But Pastor John, who holds you accountable?" Well, firstly, God holds me accountable. Secondly, there are people around me who know me well and are close to me that hold me accountable, but besides the fact that I have to be accountable to God for myself. Hello? I can't hide what I do from God. So, my destiny, my destiny, is about my accountability to God, who is my Designer. He created me for a purpose, and because He created me for a purpose, I cannot meet my destiny unless I'm accountable to Him to fulfil my purpose that He designed me for.

That's number one, number two; other people who know what I'm called to will hold me accountable, and then you hold me accountable. Just the fact that you have chosen and God has called you to be part of what's happening today; you hold me accountable. This message that I preach to you is my accountability before God that I preach what He tells me to preach. Hello? Praise the Lord.

So, if we are influenced or persuaded to step outside of that sequence of the Designer, and being used for the purpose that we were created for, and then being accountable for it, if we are persuaded to step outside of that sequence, you end up living for yourself, not for your destiny, or your purpose, but for yourself. If you end up living for yourself, that puts you on the wrong side of the Eternal Author and the Designer and starts the process of dysfunction. You were made to be functionally created, as a designer, to do something with a destiny. The minute you live for yourself, you become dysfunctional. So you are no longer living to purpose; you are living to dysfunction. Hello?

If I say to you, you're a Christian, you're born again, but you live to dysfunction, do you achieve beloved status? Do you receive favourite status? I'm tempted to just make a short comment here without going into too much detail. The Word of God that I received yesterday cannot give me faith for the life that I live today. That's what God showed the children of Israel when He moved them from Egypt to their Promised Land. He made them get up and eat and get the bread of life every morning. He was demonstrating to them that they couldn't save bread from

yesterday to eat today. You have to have bread every day for the day that you live. You can't say, "I live in faith," when you are not using the Word of God every day. You may have a lot of knowledge of the Word of God that says you know about faith, but if you're not using the Word of God every day in faith, then you're not exercising faith. Because you were designed to have the Word of God come into your spirit, and as the Word of God comes into your spirit, you are designed to hear it. As you hear it, it is designed to give you your purpose and your design and your accountability towards your Creator as you speak it. Hallelujah.

You and I certainly do not want to end up on the wrong side of eternity as a dysfunction person. Hello? I would like to say this to you. Many people are waiting for a revelation or a lightning bolt from heaven to motivate them to be better Christians. I want to say to you; say, "Yes" to God. Say, "Yes. Yes, Lord," you say "Yes," before you get any revelation from God and before you get any answers from God, say, "Yes." When you say, "Yes, Lord, whatever the answer is, I will do it. Yes, Lord," because what that says is, I'm recognising You as my Creator. I am recognising that You designed me, that I have a purpose and that as I live in my purpose, I am perfectly created for a destiny. So I say, "Yes, Lord, whatever my answer is, I say, yes."

You might not like the answer; you might not want to do what God tells you to do; It might be uncomfortable for you because of where you are in your mind and because of things that have happened to you in your past; but say "yes." Because the minute you say yes, you stop the dysfunction process from continuing in your life. You can say, "You're preaching well today, Pastor John." Hallelujah!

You know, you are so perfectly created to hear the Word of God, to receive the Word of God, to live by the very life of the Word of God. You are so perfectly created for the interaction and the relationship with God. Was Adam and Eve not so perfectly created that they were seamless in their walk with God? That when He would come and walk in the garden with them and share fellowship with them, it was a seamless interaction. When Jesus came to earth, and He died on the cross, He restored that seamless interaction between God and you, not in the physical appearance of the way God appeared to Adam and Eve, but in your spirit, you are perfectly designed to hear and speak and be like God.

In fact, you're so perfectly designed to be like God that you have to be trained to ignore God and His Word. You have to be trained and so what happens is that the enemy of God has created an entire culture system, an entire society's behaviour pattern requirement. He has created a whole set of norms in society that train us to ignore God and to look at the realities of what we see in front of us and say, "We rather do what we have been trained to do than to hear God." So, we are being constantly trained to ignore God. That's why coming to church on a Sunday morning and saying that's good enough for me to have a relationship with God - it's not. Because you're going through an alternate training process the whole week long, and then you come to church, and you hear a message like you're hearing today, and you say, "Wow, that's quite something. I didn't know that," but you can't be retrained in one and a half hours. That's why we have Bible School. That's why we have prayer meetings. That's why we do things that give you the opportunity to do

more. That's why we have sound and song, so sound and song retrains your spirit. Hallelujah.

Are you having fun? Are you enjoying the Word of God this morning? I've been ministering now for about half an hour. I've packed quite a lot into half an hour. I'm focused this morning. Are you ready to be blown away by the word of God today? Completely retrained process underway today. Glory to God! You should say yes. Matthew chapter 12 verse 22, I read. ²² **Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.** ²³ **And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" (Matthew 12:22-23 NKJV)** They're asking a question. If they're are saying could this be the Son of David because of this healing process? Come on. This man was demon-possessed. He was blind, and he couldn't speak. He was demon-possessed; his sickness was not something he ate or didn't eat or because he didn't do the 5km time trial yesterday. This was a devil that came to oppress him.

This man lived in the order of the covenant of the children of Israel, and there were Rabbis, and there were Priests, and there were Pharisees and people who knew the covenant. No one could even recognise what the problem was. Never mind, heal him. So they all began to say, "Could this be the Son of David?" Meaning, could this be the Messiah? They're asking the question, because who has this kind of authority? Now when the Pharisees heard it, these are the people that know the Word well. They studied the Bible. They studied the Torah. They studied all the laws of Moses. They held themselves as the gatekeepers to proclaim whether somebody has disobeyed the order and the laws of God.

²⁴ **Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow, he can't be the son of David. "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, meaning Satan, the ruler of the demons." (Matthew 12:24 NKJV)** So, they don't just go and say, "This guy is under the direct control of the person who just cast out the demon." So he has the power to cast out the demon because he's under the direct rulership. So top guy Satan, second guy this man. That's why he's got the authority to cast out the devil. ²⁵ **But Jesus knew their thoughts.** Hallelujah!

I might stand here and preach every Sunday, and I can't think; I don't know what thoughts you are thinking, but Jesus does. I'll tell you something if there's something going on in your life, the Holy Spirit knows your thoughts. He knows what's in your heart, he knows that, and if there is ever an issue that needs to be confronted, the Holy Spirit can tell someone who is perfectly designed to hear from Him. ²⁵ **But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶ If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? (Matthew 12:25-27 NKJV)**

In other words, He is saying, "Are you telling me I'm Satan?" So, anybody of you cast out demons lately? So if you haven't, what's wrong with you? If you have, by which authority do you do it? You see, people think they're very clever until Jesus comes on the scene with His wisdom. Then He routes out, and He finds the cause and the

motive of our people's hearts, and He goes with a sword of His Word, and He separates what is the soul and what is the spirit.

²⁷ But if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do you sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. ²⁸ But if I cast out demons, by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. He's saying two things, My presence here and your words have judged you. Regardless of what your answer is, your words have judged you because if you say that someone else has got the authority to cast out demons, then they will be your judges because they have more authority than you. If you say, and if I say that I come here in the name of Jesus, in the name of God, and I come by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you and the kingdom judges you. Either way, the motive of your heart and your words and your behaviour is judged. ²⁹ **Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.** Watch what he says now. ³⁰ **He who is not with Me, is against Me. And he who does not gather with Me, scatters abroad. (Matthew 12:25-30 NKJV)**

This is a very powerful passage of scripture, and it is the foundation of something that I want to bring to your attention. That whether you know it or not, whether you believe it or not, whether you choose to live with the understanding of this or not, or maybe you've just never actually been taught this in any kind of church service. Your presence in this church today has made you have a decision that you want to hear the Words of the Kingdom of God. You want to hear the Words of Light. You want to hear the Words of truth; it directly requires you to respond. Because on the other side of you, hearing the Word and hearing the truth is a dysfunctional kingdom that is nevertheless a kingdom, and it's the kingdom of darkness. It's a kingdom that is ruled by Satan. The kingdom is real. It's not just a bunch of demons haphazardly running around on the earth, just looking around to see, you know, how can I operate here? There is a highly organised functional kingdom of demons and devils and Satan, which is a kingdom that operates in darkness.

If you choose not to live by the Words of God, you are going to live in a dysfunctional lifestyle because you are choosing to sometimes live in God and sometimes not. So, it confuses you and creates conflict, and so many people lose their faith and make shipwrecks of their lives because they don't live in either of the kingdoms. They tried to live in both. Jesus said (Himself); you cannot serve Me and serve Mammon. Why? Because Mammon is a god, a demon god, a demon ruler in the kingdom of darkness. So, we are involved in a clash of kingdoms. Are you all with me still? Don't get too quiet on me, hey. I know you really want to grasp this, but every now and again, you can say amen. Huh?

In this case, that Jesus has just confronted, invisible power caused a condition. I just want you to understand that—here is a human being, a being in a human body, and a spirit realm being, for whatever reason, came onto this person. The way that this demon spirit came upon this person was to make him both blind and dumb—invisible power. Jesus comes into the situation, and He immediately makes two powers visible. He takes the invisible power of darkness, and He exposes it by coming with the invisible power that He's walking in, which is the will of God, the ways of God, the love of God, the beloved Son, favourite status, highly regarded exalted One, He

comes in there, and He takes the power of the invisible dark kingdom, and He banishes it. In that moment, He exposes into the natural realm two invisible kingdoms, two invisible powers.

Jesus knew about the anti-God kingdom and how the anti-God Kingdom operates. How did Jesus know? Because He knew from the beginning, when Satan was cast out of heaven, that Satan had no more creative power left, all he could do was copy God. And so his kingdom is organised because all of the angels that fell from heaven with him, all they knew was the ordered way of God's kingdom. When they went on to the dysfunctional dark side, they still operate in the same order that God originally created because they have no other way of creating another order. So, Jesus knew the anti-God behaviour pattern that was at work.

These people that were around Him had no will, they had no power, and they had no connection with God to deal with the operations of darkness. It's a sad state, actually, that the church, the modern-day church—we are sliding into that same condition that the majority of the modern-day church is sliding into a condition where they have no will, they have no power and that they do not recognise the operations of darkness anymore.

So, when people have conditions that happen to them, then everything is “Go and see a psychologist” or “Go see a doctor” or “Go see a specialist” or “Go and see somebody that knows about a medical condition because surely it can't be a demon.” Oh, and your business is not making it, and you seem to hit a ceiling in your business. Well, it's got to be mismanagement, or it's got to be your lack of opportunity, or it's got to be something out. Surely there can't be a kingdom of darkness operation that is preventing you from being successful. Because actually in your heart, you want to hear God, and you want to actually do what God wants you to do.

So, most of the church today, the majority of the church today do not preach and teach about the kingdom of darkness. The kingdom of darkness is directly opposed to what you want to do as a being that is created to ideally hear from Him. He's hell-bent, (wrong word) because he doesn't live in hell, I'm going to tell you why, but he's hell-bent to actually make sure that you keep being trained by the system, the culture, the order of the world's environment, that you keep being trained to obey that rule, rather than the rule of God's Word. The training continues, and if the church only comes to church because there's good music, good coffee, and inspirational preaching, then they don't have any power to deal with what's coming. Hallelujah.

Satan has no power; Satan has no power. Huh? So, what about that scripture? Satan *goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*? Well, he has no power to devour you. He has to seek someone who gives him the power to devour them. So, we give him the power, and then he takes it, but he doesn't have power. Human beings have got power because we are created in the image of God, perfectly designed, perfectly created to hear Him and to behave like Him. So, the conflict in the kingdoms is played out in the lives of human beings.

So, the God-created beings, man, me and you, we have the right to choose, is what he gets his power from. How does he get his power? He uses questions to cause a

desire for answers and living outside the will and the ways of God. He creates questions. How do I know this? Because actually, the sin of Adam and Eve was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The first temptation that Adam and Eve succumbed to was, "Did God say?" So, the first thing that the devil always will do in the kingdom of darkness because he has no power is to ask you a question. Is it worth going into business by yourself? But God's called you to be in the Ministry of Finance. Is it worth going into business? For yourself? Is it worth it? Is it worth all that hassle? Is it worth all that effort? Is it worth all of that?

And so, then when you start going through business plans, and you're going through all kinds of stuff, "Joh, I don't know if this can work? Ja it's not really worth it, Is it?" What did Adam say? What did he say to Adam? He said, "Did God say...?" And then the next thing he said, "Surely you will not die?" He didn't make a question, but he made a question in the form of an answer. So, when you look for answers, he will give you the answer in the form of another question, to question your purpose and your destiny.

What about if God's calling you to serve Him in a particular way? Let's say that God wants you and has called you to be a Pastor, but actually, you are an extremely talented golfer, and you are such a talented golfer that everybody wants to sponsor you because you actually are that good that you could become the next Tiger Woods or Ernie Els—name it. You're that good, but God didn't call you because He gave you a talent. He called you because he gave you a purpose and a destiny.

So, just hear me out now, in the Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires that existed, was there a golf course anywhere? Huh? No, golf courses. The point I'm trying to make is that God's destiny for you is eternal. Man-made systems to elevate you and promote you are just temporary. Just because you might have a physical talent that is trained by the system design, and most people who know that people are born with good hand-eye coordination know that good hand-eye coordination doesn't just happen to the level that it needs to happen; it's got to be trained to become better.

So, the training process begins because potential is existent, but the potential is only existent because the training of the system says, "Release this potential into the system so we can train you to control you." We want you to be dysfunctional in the way that you live your life with your talent rather than following God with your purpose. Some churches would say I'm preaching hierarchy today, but what I'm doing today is I'm exposing the kingdom of darkness, and I'm revealing the kingdom of light. I want to ask you this question. Jesus being a perfect being; a perfect human being, yes? Do you think Jesus could have stayed a carpenter if he chose to all of His life? Of course, if He couldn't have chosen to remain a carpenter, then what He did wouldn't have been a choice. Yes? He chose to obey the Father and to die on the cross. It was His choice as a human being.

So, we forget that Jesus, sometimes, we forget that Jesus was human, not just God. So as a human, He could make every choice that you and I could make. The human choice that He could make was He was raised to be a carpenter. Do you think that with His creative ability and His knowledge of the way God works, He could have become the greatest carpenter that the world ever knew? Do you not think that He could have made such beautiful things in carpentry and woodwork that actually they

will have still been in storage today all these thousands of years later because they would have been so way ahead of their time?

So, why did Jesus not follow the future that His Father and all other fathers created their sons to follow? Fishermen became fishermen, carpenters or woodworkers became woodworkers, and metalworkers became metalworkers. So, why did Jesus not follow in the footsteps of His father, His natural father? Because God called Him before the beginning of time for a purpose. He was perfectly designed, perfectly created, perfectly purposed so that He could be the One that would make a decision as a human. He had to make the decision as a human to die on the cross. I'm stressing this. I know that His spirit man that was connected to God was obedient to God, but let me tell you, when He was in the Garden of Gethsemane, and He was asking His disciples to pray with Him, and He was sweating blood, He was going through the human process of dying on the Cross. He was going through the human process. He was facing the condition of His humanity that had to die forever, and so, when He ends up on the Cross after people massacred His body, He ends up on the cross, and He's able to say, "It is finished—the work that You sent Me to do in my humanity."

I'm focusing on the humanity side today because He had to come in His humanity and die as a human being, not just as God. In fact, there are many theological doctrines that will say that as God, He never died, but He definitely died because He was separated from the Father and the Father had to separate Him because He had to judge sin on Him, on His body and on Himself. So, He could not stay before the presence of God with the sin that was judged upon Him. He had to choose as a human to obey God, even though all of the cultural systems around Him was trying to train Him to go back into His box. No pun intended, actually, but go back into His box. Be like everybody else, do what everybody else does, follow your father's pattern, go and do what everybody else does. Just don't follow God. Don't become a powerful spirit being that knows the difference between darkness and light, and operates on this earth and walks on this earth and is able to distinguish the operations of what's happening in darkness and the operations of what's happening in light. You walk around as a powerful spirit being as the words of God get stronger in you, and the power of His will and His ways are growing inside of you, and you become more discerning of the ways of the operations of darkness and the operations of light. As you begin to walk, you begin to speak, and you begin to come against the powers of darkness, and you begin to take charge, and you begin to take authority, and you begin to walk like a Son of Man, like a Son of God, like the Son that you are intended to be born to be. Perfectly created and designed to hear Him and to walk according to His way.

The devil will do everything he can to stop you from operating like that as a lifestyle, and he uses the seemingly more real sensory realm that we live in, than the more real spirit Kingdom realms that are functioning around us. Finally, it says in Ephesians chapter 6 verse 10, ¹⁰ **Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Be strong in the Lord. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord.** Who are you going to be strong in? In the Lord! You got to be strong in the Lord. If you're strong in academia, if you're strong in other areas of your life, it's no match for the power of darkness. It's no match. Because you continually live in a training system, where you continually give up your rights. ¹⁰ **Finally, my**

brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. So, ¹¹ **Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.** So, why does he put it like this? Because the devil has no power to come and command you to do anything. He has to come wily. He has to come with deceiving questions, and he's got to come with deceiving ambitions and deceiving desires to have more, know more, and be more. He comes with deceptive things, and so, you have to be strong in the Lord. You've got to be that being that's purposed and created and designed to be the being that can say, "I'm strong in the Lord because His Words are strong in me."

So, therefore, I can stand against his wily, deceiving practices, ¹² **For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.** (Ephesians 6:10-12 NKJV). Remember earlier on in the message; I said that Jesus and the disciples, suddenly there came a cloud, a bright cloud. Why was it required that God came as a bright cloud because the rulers of the darkness of this age have a legitimate right to heavenly places? God had to come with a bright light to cover what was going to be said in the spirit realm that was going to prophesy what was about to come. He had to cover it from the spirits of darkness so that they couldn't see and hear what God was saying.

A Greek scholar that lived with Greeks, and studied Greek as an English scholar, translated that scripture in Ephesians like this, and I find this to be probably the most accurate translation of that Ephesians scripture from the Greek to English. It reads like this; *For our wrestling match is not against persons with bodies, but against rulers, with various areas and descending orders of authority, against the world dominators of the present darkness.* So, let's not be mistaken, the kingdom of darkness is a highly organised kingdom that they learned from God, and it's the only way that they know how to set up a kingdom, and the enemy knows how to set up a kingdom, but it is a kingdom of rebellion.

Okay, are you still with me? I need to continue for another five minutes or so. This is an important teaching that I'm giving you today. Hallelujah. What I don't get through today, I will get through next week. I need to say this to you. That if you operate in the kingdom of darkness, understand this; all you have to do to operate in the kingdom of God is to ignore the Word of God. The kingdom of darkness is to ignore the Word of God. If you ignore the Word of God as your life force in your life, if you ignore the Word of God, you are operating in the kingdom of darkness.

"But Pastor John, I'm a Christian; I'm born again. I'm spirit-filled. I really love God."
"Yes," but if you are not actively pursuing the Word of God and hearing from Him, and you ignore His Word in your life, you are permitting the kingdom of darkness to order your steps because you cannot stand strong in the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. You can't stand strong in His might if you don't have His Words and His will in your heart coming out of your mouth, living it in your life.

Can I read that description to you again? *For our wrestling match*, please bear with me if I say to you probably wrestling, judo maybe, but out of all of the sporting things, maybe rugby, I suppose, but rugby is actually just a glorified wrestling match for a ball. Right? Really? I mean, guys wrestle each other for a ball. I don't mean to

diminish that. I'm just saying it is what it is. So, wrestling match, you can't wrestle somebody like, you know, I'm gonna wrestle Grobbies now. I can't wrestle with him sitting there. I mean, there's this whole space between us. Wrestling means we grab each other, face to face, body, to body, touch, right.

So, the scripture—there is no coincidence. This is not just a word that he just decided this was our *wrestling match is not against human people. It's not against persons with bodies, but against rulers, but the wrestling matches against the ruler that is as close as a person with the body.* That kingdom of darkness is that close to you. The Bible says so, not me, but *against rulers with various areas of descending orders of authority* because that's also in the Heavenly realm, the Gods realm, *against the world dominators of this present darkness.*

I want just to make this clear to you, God never dominates. Anything that you see as domination, I will dominate with my thinking, I will dominate with my words, I will dominate with my strength, I will dominate with my choices. I will, or I will be dominated, or I am being dominated. Anything that is a domination impact is in the realm of darkness because that's not the way God operates. God operates through free choice and through love.

God never dominates. He is love and draws people through His goodness and justice, based on the foundation, and this was the way that God gave me love as a definition of love a long time ago. *His continuous perfect state of being, which is expressed as unconditional mercy and grace, for our own continuous perfect state of being experienced as life, love, hope and joy.* I'm going to read that to you again because I know it was a mouthful. I can't help when I'm preparing, and I've got to write it down that this is the way I have to write it down. So, God never dominates. How does God operate? God operates through love, and He draws people by His love with His goodness and His justice. Full stop.

I can now continue with the rest of my statement. What is love? Love that I have asked God to give me a definition of many years ago is that *He is a continuous, perfect state of being.* The Bible says in Him there is no variableness; there is no shadow of turning. So, God doesn't have love; He is love. So because He is love, He is a continuous, perfect state of being. God never draws you through domination. He draws you with mercy and goodness and grace through His continuous perfect state of being that is always the same. When you touch that perfect, continuous state of being, the love of God, which is always the same through mercy and grace, this is expressed in His unconditional mercy and grace for our own continuous perfect state of being.

How do we live in a continuous perfect state of being? We live in His love, and when you live in His love, it is expressed, or it is experienced as life, as love, hope and as joy. Which kingdom do you want to serve?

So, Satan and his rulers have the ambition to dominate the whole world and all who move through it eternally. Satan has ambitions to rule the world eternally, and all the human beings, all the beings that move through the earth, generation after generation, his ambition is to dominate the whole world and all who move through it to satisfy the original source of sin, which is a departure of the ways of God, to set up

his own realm or the kingdom that always disputes the absolute authority, ways and will of God.

So his sin was to dispute the absolute authority of the will of God. Isn't that what his sin was? He disputed the absolute authority and will of God? What did he say? "I will become like the most High God. I will be His equal." Wasn't that he sin? He created and founded that sin. "I dispute Your absolute authority and will in the universe." So, Satan has ambitions for his kingdom to reign forever. Through the lives of human beings, as they move, live and die, live and die, live and die, live and die as they move through generations. He has ambitions to have his kingdom and his darkness and his realm of authority given to him by men, for it to dominate the earth and dominate eternally through the lives of men. It is designed to set up his kingdom as a continuous evidence of the non-absolute authority and will of God, that his is equal to God because Satan truly believes he is equal to God.

I'm going to stop now, because from here I'm going to teach and I need to teach about that scripture that says that we fight against heavenly hosts and I need to teach you that there are hosts in the heavenlies. They are demonic forces, hosts, armies of devils and demons, beings without bodies that are designed in order of authority and hierarchy, as they were in the heavens with God, in order of hierarchy and authority to come against the ways of men as they would want to be perfectly designed to worship God. So, he wants to create a world order that is darkness, that is dominated by men over men so that men do what men tell them to do. They do what men, with the forces of demons, continuously dictate for their future. Military type hosts of demons that are designed ambitiously to create a world order of darkness.

There is only one institution living on this earth that is preventing it from happening; it's the Church. And it's not just 'the Church', it has to be the Church that understands this. It can't just be people that go to church because there's a feel good moment on a Sunday. It's got to be a Church that is willing to say, "I'm ready to hear the will and word of God for me, for my life. I'm ready to hear, I'm ready to walk it out, I'm ready to live it out. I'm ready. Guide me, Father. Lead me, Father. Show me Your ways. On a day-to-day basis, show me Your ways that I may live in them. Show me Your ways that I may abide in them. Show me Your ways, Father, that day by day I may not go to the left or to the right but I may walk steady and straight in the paths that You have created for me." Hallelujah.

People that will wake up in the morning and they will say, "Father, even though I might be going to do this today or do that today or be involved in this today, I'm always under Your command. I'm always willing to hear what You have to do, and say and be through me." God is looking for a people that understand that, actually, our human experience, if it is completely submitted to God, we will be the authors and the creators of all of the answers to all of the problems on the earth. Governments have no answers because governments and financial institutions and any other kinds of authorities, medical authorities, they do not have the answer for men, for mankind. Hallelujah.

Do you not think that Einstein would have found it? Socrates, maybe? Solzhenitsyn? You name it. Anybody that's ever done incredible feats on the earth, do you think that

they would not have found all of the answers for mankind? It's only the Church that can do it.

And we are not, we are... I want to just be cautious in the way that I finish off my message here today, we have a responsibility to press into God for what God wants us to do. We are not responsible to find an answer for all of the Church and for all of the world. We are responsible to first press into God for the answers to problems that we have. Because when we do that, then we can let God be God to the next thing that He may ask us to do. But we have to start somewhere first. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

Let me see here. I'm on page 6 of 12. And I thought I might be able to get through it today. Well, you know, I've got to just prepare as it comes in my heart, so... Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. Glory to Jesus.

I tell you what, every time you walk around in your day and you say, "Praise You, Lord. Thank you, Jesus. Hallelujah. Glory to God. Hallelujah," you may say, "All those words are just repetitive." They're giving glory to God. They're making your spirit man aware all the time; I'm ready, I'm ready, I'm ready to be spiritual. I'm ready to be an answer. I'm ready to be an answer. I'm ready. I'm looking for the answer. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Won't you stand with me, please? Praise the Lord.

Please put your hand on your heart. Say, "I'm a son of God. I believe in Jesus as my Lord and Saviour. Thank you, Lord, that I am sensitive to Your will, to Your ways and to Your Word. Thank you, Lord, that I am an answer to the problems of life, that You answer every problem in my life through Your Word, through Your ways, and through Your will in my life, in Jesus' name. Amen." Hallelujah.

I'll tell you what, if we can live like this, if we can live with this understanding and I've got a lot more to teach on this, but I tell you what; we will make a big, big difference. We are making a big difference. This church is making a big difference and next week I'm going to show you how big a difference we are making. Based on the Word of God, not based on the results that we see, but based on the Word of God and our obedience to the Word of God, I'm going to show you what a big difference we are making as a church. Hallelujah. So come prepared for a lot of good things you're going to hear next week because of what we are doing as a church. Praise the Lord.

Be blessed as you go. Be at peace as you go. I truly pray this and I've been declaring this over you; that the peace of God rests upon you, that the power of God and the strength of God's Word is so strong inside of you that it combats everything that the dark forces want to bring to your mind, to your emotions and to your wellbeing and the world around you. I declare, in the name of Jesus, that you have answers to every problem that you face in your life and the life of those that are around you, that you have the answer by the Holy Spirit, in Jesus' name. I pray that you will experience the power and the presence of God every day this week that you have, in Jesus' name. Hallelujah. And you all say; amen. Thank you for coming to church.