

Why I Opened The Church

Sermon Title: **Why I Opened The Church**

Sermon Number: **5875**

Speaker: **Nathaniel Bronner**

Link to sermon audio - <http://www.theonlineword.com/mp3/5875.mp3>

Link to sermon video - <http://theark.s3.amazonaws.com/vid/5875.mp4>



BrothersofTheWord.com

Nathaniel Bronner: Sometimes, God's plan and God's instructions are not ours.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This is the sermon titled, "Why I Opened the Church", by Nathaniel Bronner. This sermon is number 5875.

(Music Playing: 00:00:15 - 00:00:26)

And now for "Why I Opened the Church."

Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the word. And today, first of all, I did tell you that I'm going to speak today on why I chose to open the church. Now, this is very controversial. We're in a time when a virus is raging through this country, and I'm not sure that we're not the only church in the city that is open today.

It's very well possible that we could be and when I made the announcement that I was going to open the church, I know there was a lot of negative reaction to it. And I want to just take some time today just to explain why I chose to open the church.

But before I explain why I chose to open it, I want to give you four reasons why I didn't want to open it. Number one, streaming is easier. It absolutely is. All of the staff here, all of the pastors, all of us have said, "This is a whole lot easier." Now I miss seeing all of you. I really, really do, but that's the only negative. Everything else was just so much easier.

My first stream, I did in a green stream at home, and then I went, I was on my backyard and out by my lake on the dock. I did my sermon out there. And next when I was up in the mountains, I did the sermons up in the mountains. It was just nice. Then the last one I did, I was out in my front yard and had me (00:02:00).

So, it was just so much easier. I could do the sermon anywhere between Sunday, and the next Sunday, I could do it when I felt like it. When the spirit is here. When I'm live here in the church, I got to be on stage within a five-minute window all of the time. I got to drive over here, I got to get dressed, you got a rigid schedule. Sometimes it's easier and just flown.

So, when we were streaming, the sermon could be edited and I could just float, it was just so much easier. It took roughly like a third of the energy to do streaming.

So, number one, it was easier. So, it wasn't like I was just in a hurry. To be honest about it, I was planning on opening the church sometime in June or July. I was in no hurry whatsoever. So, number one, it was easier. That's one reason why I didn't want to reopen the church.

Number two, there was no money incentive. You see, right now, churches even before the virus crisis, a whole lot of churches were in financial trouble. One of our church advisors told us that roughly and they work with a lot of other churches. They said right now in Atlanta, and this was before the virus, they said there were roughly 200 churches on the verge of foreclosure in Atlanta. A lot of churches. So, a lot of churches were in financial trouble.

And when you go to live stream and some churches were not even set up for live streaming. When you go to live streaming as a general principle, your money goes down. Well, number one as all of you know, I don't get paid. So, my money wasn't going to change one way or another. Whether we had church here or whether we didn't, no matter how the offerings went, my money wasn't going to change.

And the church's money to be honest, we're in really good financial shape. We weren't in any desperation. If we didn't have service and had no collection for months, we'd still be in good shape. We got plenty of money in the bank. We are in real good shape. We've been real good stewards of God money. So, really, we're in real good financial shape, so there was no monetary incentive.

And the other reason most of your real good givers don't stop. I mean the people who really are good givers, they're giving because they are convicted and they believe and they follow God's voice. When you say bow your head for 10 second, ask God, what you're all about real good givers are solid regular givers and they didn't change because we were not hearing the church. My giving, I'm one of the largest, if not the largest giver

in the church, my giving doesn't change whether I'm here or not. Matter of fact, I have it set on automatic.

So, even if I'm gone for three months, my giving never changes, not in out of order, and I don't give based on what I make, I give based on what I want to make. I preached that in a sermon, (00:04:47) so you tithed based on what you want to earn. That's why my tithes (00:04:50) did not want to earn, it's what I want to earn. So, there was no monetary incentive to really start back with live service.

00:05:00

Number three, people are going to talk. I knew that without question. They would go, "That crazy pastor!" I mean, I don't usually worry about what people are saying, but I knew folks are going to say, "This crazy pastor, getting ready to open up the church in the middle of all this virus. This crazy pastor getting ready to open up the church." I knew some folks were going to say it.

You know, even the most popular president, the ratings generally would never get beyond 70%. I mean you go all throughout here to even most popular president, one out of three folks going to be haters. There's no way around it. There's just no way around, I don't care what you do. You're going to have some folks that are not going to like and I can understand the reason as to why people would say that. So, it's not without a valid logical reason, but I knew people were going to talk.

And the fourth reason, I did not want to risk anyone's health because I knew that if you did come back to church, even if we practice the best of social separation, the best of putting on masks, the best of disinfecting, I knew that there was still a slight possibility that someone could contract the virus just from venturing out to come to church. I didn't want that on my head at all that anybody got sick because of anything that I did.

So, I had for real good reason. It was easier, there was no financial incentive, I knew people were going to talk, and I didn't want anybody to get sick on my watch. So, those were the four reasons in terms of why I didn't want to open up the church. And I know some of you are asking, "Well, why did you

open it up then? If you had all those good reasons why you didn't want to open up, why did you open it up?"

I want to let you know something that some of you all might not realize. This is not my house. I'm just a steward over that has been appointed over. Now, see, where I live, I got the deed today. That's my house. But this is not my house. Even though the organization has a deed on the bill and we have no mortgage on this building, so, technically we do own the property, but this is not my house.

You all know whose house this is? It's God's house. So, I had gone throughout this whole thing and we actually had a business meeting here at the church on last Tuesday, and it was a Bronner Brothers meeting and I held a meeting downstairs because we had been holding meetings with conference calls. I said, "Look, we're going through some stuff. We need a face-to-face meeting. We need to see each other. The space is big enough. We got a space downstairs big enough in the church. We'll meet there, it would be to spread out, still maintain social distancing, but we would be able to see each other.

That meeting lasted eight hours long because we were dealing with some financial stuff because the virus crisis hit Bronner Brothers hard with income dropping. At the end of that eight-hour meeting, as I was getting ready to leave, I was standing there in the church. And I said, "I wonder when we would be all back up to Ark?" I said, "Let me ask God." There's been all this time, I haven't thought about asking God. Anything about when we go back up. I said, "Lord, when do you want me to open your church back up? And He said, "On the first Sunday of the new biblical month.

So, I pulled out my phone, I have this little Jewish calendar that's on it. It'll tell me the biblical month is entirely different from our regular. It was called the Gregorian calendar, a whole different calendar. So, I looked up and I said this can't be right. I said a new biblical (00:08:39). That was yesterday. I said the first Sunday of the new biblical month is this coming Sunday. I said, "Lord, you got me nut. You mean to tell me you want me to open up this church in the middle of all this mess and you want me to open up this church this coming Sunday?"

It's not the first time -- I've never said this out loud, but it's not the first time I thought when God has told me to do some, "Are you crazy?" I got to admit it, I'm just being honest with you. It's not that I said, "Oh Lord, thou Ark is reverend and thou Ark is kall wise and all-knowing and (00:09:17) to everything, Father. I didn't do that. What was running through my mind was, "Are you crazy? You want me to open up this church this coming Sunday in the middle of all this mess?" That's what was going through my head.

So, trust me, those who said that I was crazy, I was riding that with you on that one. I understood the sentiment, but sometimes God's plan and God's instructions are not ours. And I came in the church that next day, that was a Tuesday, the next day was Wednesday. Wednesday is my Sabbath day. I don't work on Wednesday. I usually go away somewhere. Wednesday is my Sabbath day. But for some reason, I was near the church and I came into the church, it was right around noon and I actually laid on the floor with my arms outstretched and I was laying on that floor right in front of the pulpit on Wednesday.

00:10:13

And I heard the door chime, chime. I said who the heck coming in here this time or day when nobody is supposed to be here. The front door is locked, the back door was locked, but it was pulled up. So, I said, "Who coming in here?" So, I got up, I went to the back door, I looked out of the window, there was no car but mine in the parking lot. I went downstairs. Maybe they came in and went down. I went down and all the lights were out. And the lights were out because no one had been there because we have motion sensing lights downstairs that if anybody walks in the room, the lights come on, there was nobody there.

That door (00:10:51) up, and there isn't nobody here. Some people would have been scared of haint. Some people would have gotten right on out of here in a hurry when that happened. I came right on back. At first, I pulled the door and make sure it would lock real good and I came back and I laid back down. And I said, "Lord." He said, "Son, I want you to know I'm here with you." So, I want you to know for those of you who are here, God's here with us. When you're in his house, when you're obedient to him, God is here with you.

And so, it just shook me with that, but even my next day in prayer, I asked, I said, “Lord, why do you want me to open up the church this coming Sunday?” And God didn’t speak to me. He began to show me visions. And I’m going to tell you what he showed me in the vision. He first showed me four grocery stores that I had been to. I went to one grocery store parking lot, full. Went to the next grocery store parking lot, full. Next grocery store parking lot, full. Next grocery store parking lot, full. Then I went to Home Depot. Home Depot parking lot, full. Few days later, I went to Lowe’s, Lowe’s parking lot, full.

And I know you’re saying, “Well, Pastor, those stores are allowed to be open. All those are essential.” I understand that folks got to get groceries. I understand that. But then, I was in a shopping plaza where there is a beauty supply store. There was a line outside of the beauty supply store that went all the way down the home, it will get full of us in line to get into the beauty supply store. That ain’t essential, but we were there.

Yesterday, I went to Michaels. As I’m walking through Michaels, Michaels is fool. So, God showed me the visions of all of these places to let me know folk go anywhere they want to go, but they won’t come to my house. They got an excuse. They’re scared to come to my house. I’m the one who protects them. I’m the one who creates everything. They go everywhere else they want to go.

Have you noticed the traffic? Now outside of rush hour, rush hour is thinner, because folks are not going to work, they’re working from home. But outside the rush hour, I can’t see a bit of doggone different folk going somewhere and they ain’t going to the grocery store. So, folks are out traveling, some are everywhere. But they said, “I can’t go to God’s house.” And it got deeper than that. That’s just a surface part. This applies to most folk. It got deeper than that.

I asked God, I said, “Lord, what scripture?” And He just gave me one verse, and that verse was James 4:1. It took me a minute to understand that. The verse simply reads, “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?” And the next verse it goes behind that is, “Yet, you do not have because

you do not ask. You ask not and do not receive because you ask amiss that you may spend it on your pleasures.”

Another thing about it is this, God showed me all of this stuff and He gave me that verse and the church was closed. Now, we’re streaming, but we’ve always streamed. We wanted the leaders. We own virtualchurch.com. We were online way before hardly any of the churches. We got over 2,000 sermons online that you can go to and listen to absolutely free at brothersoftheword.com right now. We’ve been online for the last 20-something years.

But what God showed me was this, when the shutdown was imminent -- Now, most of you know that my brother James and I, we run a company called Century System. Century System is a company we sell predominantly nutraceuticals or health food products to about 10,000 health food stores all across the US. And we did everything we could to make sure that business stayed open, but didn’t want to share it now.

00:15:00

Now, last month, we were actually expecting for sales to really plummet because so many stores were closing, some of our big chains, they were in malls and they were shut down. So, they didn’t order. Some chains called and canceled their orders. So, we were getting economic injury, but, you all say “but”. We were getting economic injury, but something happened. We started getting all these new customers and their order started skyrocketing. And James and I was (00:15:30), “How can this be?” Suzanne came and said, “Pastor, do you realize we have just broken an all-time 30-year record, and we still got a week to go.” And none of us could explain it.

In the end of last month for the first time, Century System sales and Bronner Brothers sales were exactly equal. It went through the roof and we had more sales than we have ever had in the history of the company and nobody could explain why. On some of the Sundays before we shutdown, we had to leave and go and open the plant and go to work. Now, the plant never opens on Saturday. Nobody is allowed to work on Saturday because it’s a Sabbath day. But on Sunday, they went to work.

And on Friday, Suzanne came to me and said Mr. Bronner, we've got credit card sales that are so big I got to call the credit card company. And a lot of people when you think about credit cards, you think about it on the consumer and you know you got to limit, you know, you got to maybe have a 10,000 dollar, 5,000 thousand, whatever the limit is on your card and you start approaching the limit.

Well, merchants have the same thing. If you have a store, if you have a business, generally, the bank or what's called the payment gateway, they give you a limit to how much sales you can have because you have to be qualified because a lot of times business will run cons and they may charge up whole life stuff and disappear. So, they have a limit that you can have just like the consumer that uses the card has a limit. So, does the business.

Suzanne had to call the credit card company because our credit card sales had gone through the roof. We had one customer who had several hundred thousand dollars. They put on a credit card, I didn't even know you could have a credit card and can put that much stuff on it. And when she called the company, the credit card processing company said, "Yes, we were holding up your funds because it said look, you all are three and a half times over your limit."

When C. Elijah gave the offering this morning and he said God will pour you out the blessing that you don't even have room enough to receive. The man said, he said, "Look, we're a national credit card processing company. We had thousands of businesses. All of our businesses are down doing this national emergency, but you all. What are you all doing?" And the man thought we were doing some kind of illegal stuff. He said, "What in the world you are doing? How you all three and a half times up and all of my other thousands of business are down?"

So, he said, "Look, you all got to send me a bank statement. You all got to send me those invoices. And Suzanne, she was arguing. She said, "You don't need to see our back. It's none of your business. We've been in business which all over 20 years, you know we (00:18:15), you know this is solid. I said, "Suzanne, that's all right. We'll send them." Because I understand the man, he didn't understand what's going on. See when God is in something to work, he didn't understand it.

The man said, "What you all doing?" You see, he was cursing me. He said, "What in the black you all doing?" What in the world is happening here? So, I typed the man a letter. I put in the bank statements because what they have to know is they have to know if for whatever reason you're doing something fraudulent and they have to do a chargeback, they have to know you have enough money in the bank to cover all that stuff.

So, I sent them my bank statement. We got plenty of money to cover all this. I said, "Look, this is no problem. We send them the invoices to show them the orders, and I put one line and I said, "Yes, you said that all of the other businesses are down but we are up." And I typed out, "Thank God!" But the odd thing about it when I typed out, "Thank God!" for some reason my autocorrect kicked in. It scared me.

And sometime I see God's hand and just be a little bitty thing. But you know, it's like the magicians of Egypt when He say, it's the finger of God. It's a small thing, just a little finger. I typed out, "Thank God!" and my autocorrect changed it. It changed it from fake God to that's God. It sent a chill through me. I said, "Whoa," and I sent the letter off just like that. That's God. So, he may not understand it, but he knew something was going on that was unusual.

But the thing about this, this is what God convicted me with. It had nothing to do with you. This is what God convicted me with. He said, "First of all, I blessed your business beyond even what you could imagine.

00:20:00

James and I couldn't even wrap our head around because we said at least if we had this huge month last month to just bigger than we ever had by a long shot, we say it's got to drop the next month. And James said, "It's going to go way down next month," which is this month. It's going to go way down. It went down. And I was real careful not to speak because I don't learn the words in my mouth just have power, (00:20:21) based on what you say.

So, it's an interesting world but what God placed in my spirit was this. I have blessed you beyond your imagination. You

fought like mad to keep your business. We did everything. We were checking everything. We were making sure we didn't close up. He said I'll bless you beyond me as you fought like mad to keep your house open, you know, shut mine down. I said, "Whoa!" And sometimes when the word of God comes, this is the thing about it, and I understand some people are truly -- they don't want to go out like my mother.

My mother is 86 years old. Since this thing started, she had been at the house. She hadn't been anywhere. And if you're not going anywhere then stay in. But if you're going anywhere that's non-essential, now I know you got to go out and get groceries. But you've got your head in that beauty supply store, salons and barbershops going to open, they are open on Friday, nail salons. If you got your behind in and get your nails painted, and then you're talking about I can't go to the house of God. That's what I was doing.

There was the same risk as the business. I had people in business. I had people in manufacturing, people in warehouse, people in the office. Now, we maintain the social separation. We had people with mask on but, because if you did everything to figure out how to keep your business, why didn't you put that same figure when I'm keeping my house open. And it's so clear. See, that's why that -- you ask amiss and you want all this stuff is all about pleasure and money and all this stuff. And when it come to me, I'm on the back burner. I'm on the back burner.

If you figure out a way to keep your businesses, and I'm the one who blessed your business. I'm the reason you're there. If you didn't keep your bill, why can't you keep my house open? So, God dealt with me on this. He got nothing to do with you. And I had to make God this promise. And I see one of the things about the Ark, before this virus situation, we had never closed for anything. And I always told the people I don't care if it's a blizzard, I don't care if it's 10 feet of snow. I said, you don't have to call this church to find out if we open on Sunday. I'm going to be here. I got a four-wheel-drive Jeep and if I can't get here in my car, nobody else can either, but I'm going to be here.

And I always told people that. You do not have to worry about this church being open for Sunday service. I will always be here and I'll be here even if I have to just preach in front of the camera with just me. I'm going to make you that commitment

again. The only reason this church will be closed in the future is if the government shuts it down, if the government says we cannot come and we cannot assemble, then it will be closed. I will follow civil authority.

But, you know, when the governor of Georgia, when he reopened -- he reopened barbershops, beauty salons, nail salons, spas. He's going to reopen restaurants and gyms tomorrow and some people said, "Well, when is he going to reopen churches?" Let me explain to you when he's going to reopen churches. He never closed them. He never closed them. He did ask people on Easter not to go, but he never closed them. He said as long as you maintain social separation, he never closed them.

Now, the governor brought everything under one rule because I live in unincorporated Fulton County, work in Fulton County, have to drive through the city of South Fulton, the church is in City of Atlanta. So, they got all these multiple jurisdictions and everyone (00:23:59) some different rules. He brought everything under one rule. He said this is what we're going to do and it supersedes every municipal and county jurisdiction in the state of Georgia.

He said I'm in charge of this state, this is what we're going to do. Nobody else can do anything more nor less, this is what -- He go, whether you agree with it or not, he did do the right thing in making everything unified. He said we're going to be on one accord and this is what we're going to do. A lot of people arguing about what he said to do wasn't right. But let me tell you this, you can't judge another man. We need leadership, because you don't know all the facts. There are some states about to go bankrupt.

So, sometimes, there are other reasons behind this stuff that you just don't see, that you just don't know about. It's like sometimes when you're watching a football game and you're watching the Super Bowl and you (00:24:40) that coach ought to know better than that. Why did he do that? He should have put this man in, he should have run this place. They had never coached a team in their life. They had never gone to the Super Bowl. But yet sometimes you can't judge what another man does because you don't know all of the facts. You don't have all of the pressure on you. You don't have all these multiple (00:24:59) coming at you one way after another.

00:25:01

You're just looking at narrow little part. So, you can't judge the decisions that another man make, because you don't generally know all of the facts, and if you had all that pressure on you, you may fall with all that pressure. So, I'm not saying what he did was right or wrong, but I am saying he did unify things and he made everything under one accord. But what he did not do, he never closed churches.

Now, I don't know why he never close churches, but I do know one thing that's not the reason he never closed them. He didn't forget. It didn't slip his mind because folk will criticize him about it. Why don't you close houses of worship? It didn't slip his mind. He did plead don't go to church on Easter, but he didn't say you couldn't go and he didn't mandate it in the law. I don't, but I believe the governor had sense enough not to touch the house of God. I don't know but I believe he had sense enough not to touch God's house.

If you let any other thing be (00:26:00) because sometimes it's our definition of what we think is essential. My personal belief is God is essential. My soul is essential. The church is an essential business. Because if I don't have God, what do I have? So, sometimes we don't understand some things and God really had to just -- he had to correct me. There's no question about that. He had to really, really work on me because I was out of line. I was putting more value, more focus, more emphasis on my business than I was at house of God. And which one of those is more important

Now, some of you at your job calling, you got to come to work on Monday, you're going to be there, you're going to be there. So, here in the house of God, I don't even know the reason sometimes. Do you know we had to turn away seven people today because they had temperatures a 100 plus? We turned away seven people because they had temperatures over 100, and we told them, "Look, you need to go get checked. They did not know.

You don't know what God tells you to do, son. Just by turning away those seven and telling them they need to go get checked, that may save some lives. It may keep them from going

somewhere and infecting somebody. You don't know what God tells you to do, son. It's just like you don't know why the governor did what he did. You don't know. God has a scope of vision. It is not yours to question God, it's yours to obey God, and to make sure it's God.

Suzanne asked me when I see her, she said, "You sure that's God?" Yeah. Sometimes (00:27:36) but I know that was him at that time. And by the time he got through showing me all that vision and showing me my mistake and my mess and what I was focusing on, I knew it was God without question. So, sometimes you can't judge this thing. You have to be obedient. So, I do make you this pledge from here on as long as the government allows us to open, we will be opened. We're going to check your temperature when you come in. We're going to give you some mask. We're going to make sure you have plenty of (00:28:03).

Let me tell you some of the truth about this stuff. See, a lot of you are so scared of this virus. All of the scientists say two out of three people in America are going to get it eventually anyway. The government is not saying you're not going to get it, what they keep saying is they're going to do what, flatten the curve. Do you know what flatten the curve means? It means that the people go get it anyhow as it going to take them longer. And they're doing that so you don't overwhelm the health system, which makes perfect sense. But they're not saying you're not going to get it. Instead of you getting it over a three-month period, they want you to get it over 13-month period. But it doesn't mean you're not going to get it.

So, you need to have your mind get first of all to do some practical stuff to make sure your immune system is strong. Half of the people who contract this virus would never have a symptom. You need to be in that half. Now, the seven people this morning, they had fevers, but half of the people will never have symptoms. See, I know two out of three people in America are going to get his virus and more than likely because I travel a lot and I go a lot of places. I'm going to be one of them two out of three. Matter of fact, I could have already got it and my body could have killed it already.

I don't know, but I know probability of likelihood because I just think I'll stay in the house all day. I will tell you right now. I'm going to just be honest with you. Matter of fact, when I was in

Michaels yesterday -- I was in Michaels and trust me, what I was going to get was not essential. I could tell you that. I was going to get something to put on my phone so I could tell which way was up, but that was not essential. I am not going to lie to you. I would have no essential stuff and whole lot of y'all been -- I see all these folk driving all during the day. They're not going anywhere for any essential. I'm pretty much tell you that.

So, I was out in Michaels yesterday, walking down the aisle and I looked up and here comes my oldest son. Here comes my oldest son. Here comes C. Elijah, son, and here comes my brother's son, and one of their friends full of them, walked in there together.

00:30:00

And my son said, "We saw your car because my car got this do 42(ph) or so you can't miss it. And I'm thinking to myself, "I'm glad I wasn't doing something with somebody I wasn't supposed to be with. I'm telling you that's the first thing ran through my mind. I'm glad I wasn't somewhere with somebody I wasn't supposed to be with or doing something I wasn't supposed to be doing. And trust me, that kind of stuff messed up more folk than this virus. It really, really does.

So, I was out doing some non-essential stuff, and they were out doing some non-essential stuff. They weren't worried about stuff at all. So, look, if you go, go out, put the house of God at the top of your list. Give God priority. Now, I understand the streaming, and just like it was easy for me it's easy for you, but there was a power just coming in the place forsake not the assembling together of the saints. There is a power, there is a spirit, the Holy Ghost resides in it. And when I was here on Wednesday, and I heard that door ding and couldn't find a human flesh this body in here, and God said, "I am with you." He let me know he coming in the place and He's here.

So, give God priority. That's the part where he had to correct me with. He said, "I wouldn't blame you if you shut down your businesses and the church, but no, you kept your businesses open and shut my house down." That was the problem. That was the problem. So, the problem oftentimes is our priorities that here is God who gives us everything we've got and we put Him not just sometime at the bottom of list, sometimes, we take

Him off the list altogether? So, He wants us to give Him priority.

And I had an email on yesterday, and it's not related to the virus, but it's another example of how God speaks. This was back in July. I was in prayer one morning and I heard God speak a name. The name was foreign to me, just never heard the name before in my life. I'm going to change the last name because I don't want to reveal anything personal. So, I'm going to change the last night and I heard the name just Emily Kennison.

Now, I've never heard that before. It was a strange last name, but what is that? So, I Googled it. When I Googled the name, it belonged to a young teenage girl in Canada who had cancer. And she had a GoFundMe account that the family had set up to help during the cancer. And I sent them some money and when I sent them some money, in the description, I said, "I was in my prayer this morning and I heard the name of Emily Kennison, and I went and searched it and found your GoFundMe site and I sent them the money. Yesterday morning, this is back in July.

So, here it is, what, 10 months later. Here it is 10 months later, and I get an email yesterday morning. I'm going to read you the email. The only thing I've changed is I just changed the last name. And somehow, they found me from just putting my name on the donation, because if you Google Nathaniel Bronner, they found me.

"I just wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart for reaching out when you heard the name Emily Kennison during your daily prayers. My heart is so full of gratitude for your obedience. You are such a wonderful man of God." That made me feel real good.

"I just wanted you to know I was struggling at the time when my mother called me at the Ronald McDonald House to share with us your message. We were away from home family and friends. The enemy was working real hard to shake my faith. I felt at that time we just had everything going against us and I was alone with my 15-year-old trying to be strong for her when inside I was torn apart. I had just prayed and asked the Lord that I need to know He was still with us and He still had us.

Hearing that you heard Emma's name during your prayer just sent chills, and for your message to be delivered by my mother who does not have a relationship with the Lord and she couldn't stop talking about what such a blessing. God is our strength and healer. There are so many blessings that came out of Emma's cancer diagnosis and relationships brought closer, but I just hate the journey that she had to endure.

A little bit about Emma, she is a beautiful young lady with a zest for life, a heart for people and animals, so kind, many friends, loved school and was a competitive dancer. She began to have breathing problems and was misdiagnosed for exercise-induced asthma and pull muscles. A year and a half later, she was watching Grey's Anatomy and self-diagnosed herself. She asked me if I thought she had cancer.

00:35:01

I quickly brought her into the hospital and our worst nightmare became reality. Emma had stage 4 Hodgkin's lymphoma nodular sclerosis. Diagnosed in February, that was February of last year, and today by the grace of God is cancer-free. Being on an experimental regimen of chemo, she will need to travel to the Children's Hospital and be screened for the next 10 years. She has to be scanned every three months. She is experiencing numbness on her inner right leg near her ankle right now. We are not certain why, but the same doctor again advised us not to worry. Let's see if over time it will disappear.

Everyone is in lockdown with this virus. We are in complete isolation as Emma has a large scar in her right lung. The cancer had spread outside of Emma's lymph nodes and into her lung above her heart. I hope and pray you and your family are safe and well. I have always wanted to thank you for your prayers and for your generous donation. You will never be forgotten. Stacy and Emma Kennison.

That was the letter I got yesterday. And sometimes you sit and pray and you just hear a name out of nowhere, a strange name you've never heard it before, you look it up and God didn't tell you to send them some money. When I read this email yesterday, He said I want you to send them some more money, but you will send them this time 20 times what you sent them the first time. I didn't send it (00:36:30) of the evening because I

had to wrestle with that thing. He told me to send it today. I just waited to the end of the day.

People, I'm just telling you, I have some struggle sometimes with the stuff God tells me, but I remember when He told me before as I begin to bless you, I will send you to them not them to you. And I understand it, I had no idea it would operate like this, but He then said, "Look, you need to be a conduit, not a damn." So when God blesses you, you need to be a conduit. He didn't just give you a whole bunch of stuff just for you to damn it all up and hold it out of yourself. You should be a conduit. He blesses you to bless others.

And sometimes God will speak a word to you and it is to help someone else. He'll send you through some things so that you're able to minister to somebody else. Sometimes, it will shut you down so you can minister somebody to shut down. Also, you can turn back to Him. People, we're open. We're open for business. the Ark of Salvation at 3:55, Georgia Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, 30312 is open. We are open, we will be open.

And if you decide to go anywhere else that's non-essential, I hope you decide to come to the house of God. Your temperature will be checked. You will be given a face mask as long as it is required and we will do everything that is medically possible to make sure you stay safe, but we will be here.

This is Pastor Nathaniel from the pulpit, live at the Ark of Salvation, and hopefully I will see some of you on next Sunday. Thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word, because brother you need the word.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This was the sermon titled, "Why I Opened the Church," by Nathaniel Bronner. This sermon is number 5875, that's 5875. To listen to thousands of free sermons or to send this sermon number 5875 to a friend, go to brothersoftheword.com.

Nathaniel Bronner: If this message has been a blessing to you and you would like to help support this ministry, go to iwanttogive.com, that's iwanttogive.com.

Female: Listen to brothersoftheword.com often because brother, you need the word.

(Music Playing 00:38:52 – 00:38:59)

00:38:59