

UNSTOPPABLE

Week #3 of a 4-Week "Songs of Life" Series

Sunday, May 7, 2023

Rev. Richard Maraj

Unstoppable – Lyrics:

All smiles, I know what it takes to fool this town

I'll do it 'til the sun goes down

And all through the nighttime

Oh, yeah

Oh, yeah, I'll tell you what you wanna hear

Leave my sunglasses on while I shed a tear

It's never the right time

Yeah, yeah

I put my armor on, show you how strong I am

I put my armor on, I'll show you that I am

I'm unstoppable

I'm a Porsche with no brakes

I'm invincible

Yeah, I win every single game

I'm so powerful

I don't need batteries to play

I'm so confident

Yeah, I'm unstoppable today

Unstoppable today, Unstoppable today

Unstoppable today

I'm unstoppable today

Break down, only alone I will cry out loud

You'll never see what's hiding out

Hiding out deep down

Yeah, yeah

I know, I've heard that to let your feelings show

Is the only way to make friendships grow

But I'm too afraid now

Yeah, yeah

I put my armor on, show you how strong I am

I put my armor on, I'll show you that I am

I'm unstoppable

I'm a Porsche with no brakes

I'm invincible

Yeah, I win every single game

I'm so powerful

I don't need batteries to play

I'm so confident

Yeah, I'm unstoppable today

*Unstoppable today, Unstoppable today
Unstoppable today
I'm unstoppable today
Unstoppable today, Unstoppable today
Unstoppable today
I'm unstoppable today*

*I put my armor on, show you how strong I am
I put my armor on, I'll show you that I am
I'm unstoppable ...*

Message:

So this man who reeked of alcohol flopped on a subway seat right next to a priest. And the man's tie was stained; he had lipstick on his collar; and a half a bottle of gin was sticking out of his torn coat. And he sat there; he opened his paper and began reading. After a couple of minutes, the guy turned to the priest and said, "Father, do you know what causes arthritis?" And the priest looks intently at the man and says, "Mister, it's caused by loose and riotous living; it is caused by being with multiple woman; drinking too much; having no respect for yourself and no respect for your fellow man.

And the drunk guy raises his eyebrows and nods his head and says, "Well, I'll be darned!" And so he goes back to his newspaper and reading.

And then the priest has some second thoughts and regrets about how harsh he was in his response. So he turned to the drunk guy and apologized. He said, "I'm so sorry. You know, I didn't mean to come on so strong. So how long have you had arthritis?"

And the guy says, "Oh, Father, I don't have arthritis; I was just reading that the Pope does!"

[Drummer does rimshot roll - Congregation laughs]

Alright. Okay. [Laughs] So how many people have had a time in your life where you felt powerful, unstoppable and on top of the world? How many? Alright. And so how many people have ever had time where you felt powerless because your life was out of control? And it was just unstable? Anybody have a ...? And how many people have ever had a hard time believing and owning your personal power? Anybody? How many?

Remember Marianne Williamson's famous poem, "Our Deepest Fear"? She said:

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate; our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure."

You are powerful beyond measure! I am powerful beyond measure! This is the truth! We are powerful spiritual beings. But many of us have a hard time accepting, believing, owning and using our incredible power.

And some of the reasons I think we have a hard time accepting and believing in our power is because all that power means that we will be fully responsible for our lives. And sometimes not having excuses -- not having blame -- can make it a little intimidating ... to feel responsible for all aspects of our lives.

I think we think that, when we have power and more responsibility, it means there will be more expectations; there will be more demands. That there will be more pressure on us. What if we mess up? What if we make a mistake? What if we don't know what to do? What if we don't have what it takes?

What if we can't handle massive success? What if we can't handle an amazing relationship or incredible financial wealth? Sometimes we're so scared of our own power that we would rather sabotage, undermine and limit our greatness and our happiness. We're so scared of our own power, sometimes, that we would rather give our power away than assume and accept it and use it.

"I am a powerful spiritual being with power beyond measure."

"I am a powerful spiritual being with power beyond measure."

Let's say that together: [with congregation] *"I am a powerful spiritual being with power beyond measure."*

Let's say it again: [with congregation] *"I am a powerful spiritual being with power beyond measure."*

Let's turn to somebody and say, *"You are a powerful spiritual being with power beyond measure."*
[Congregation engages in discussions with one another]

"You're a powerful spiritual being with power beyond measure!" Amen! Alright.

So we are in Week #3 of our four-week annual series called "The Songs of Life," where I take a famous song and share some spiritual message and some lesson for living. Ever since I was a kid ... I have no musical talent, but I'm inspired by how music inspires us; how music can touch us and lift us and open our hearts and minds; and how music can teach us how to live our lives in a greater and better way.

Week #1 we looked at "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road" by Elton John, a 1973 hit. Last week we looked at "Now That We've Found Love," another 1973 hit by the O'Jays.

Today we're getting a little closer to contemporary times. We're looking at "Unstoppable" by Sia, an Australian artist. It was released in 2016 and then it kind of had a resurgence in 2022 because it was used on TikTok and different commercials. A very popular, very uplifting song. And I think it's one of the most empowering songs I've ever heard. Let's listen to some of the lyrics:

***I'm unstoppable
I'm a Porsche with no brakes
I'm invincible
I win every single game
I'm so powerful
I don't need batteries to play
I'm so confident
Yeah, I'm unstoppable today***

I love that, in the chorus, it says, *"I'm unstoppable ... I'm invincible ... I'm so powerful ... I'm so confident ..."* This chorus adamantly, emphatically and redundantly is amazingly positive! It just goes on in its conviction of our power.

So we're going to look at some points and three ideas for living our lives better that we can glean from this song, "Unstoppable."

The first thing I want to point out is that the word "unstoppable" is used and repeated 26 times in this song, driving home with unshakable faith how capable, how resourceful and powerful we are. This song gives us a level of confidence that **WE ARE ANCHORED AND CONNECTED TO AN INCREDIBLE SOURCE OF POWER.**

So I ask you, when you feel the most ... Where does your power come from? And how confident are you about the source of your power?

In 2 Timothy 1:7 it says:

"God has not given you a spirit of fear and timidity, but a spirit of power, love and self-discipline."

In Philippians 4:13 it says:

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

And so it's sharing how powerful we are. We have spirits of power, love and self-discipline. We can do all things. We have the power to do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We are created in the image and likeness of God, which means we are made of God "stuff." That through us and God, all things are possible!

In the Book of Isaiah, it says:

"God does not faint or grow weary ... God gives power to the faint; and God gives strength to the powerless."

So the most important thing we've got to remember is that God is the source of our power! That Spirit is the source of our strength. And that Spirit of God is in us. When Scripture says, *"Christ in you; your hope of glory,"* that power and presence and Spirit of God is in you.

How many people have had a time in your life where you felt so filled with the presence of God? You felt so connected, so in awe? How many people have ever had a time where you did not feel God at all? You felt so distant and disconnected and lost from God? And here's the thing: When we feel powerful, it's because we feel connected to God. We feel close and filled with the presence of God. And when we feel powerless and hopeless, it's because we feel distant and disconnected from God.

The four most powerful words in the Old Testament to help us in every situation are:

"Be still and know."

"Be still and know that I am God."

Because when we're still, it actually fills, replenishes, renews and reconnects us with God, who is the source of all life and the source of all good.

We are spiritual beings having a human experience, but sometimes we get so distracted by our humanness that we forget our spiritual side. So being still kind of reconnects us and it helps us unify our minds and feel more filled with the truth of God's presence: It's always around. But we're not always connected to it. So we need to be still on a regular basis to ground ourselves in it; to center ourselves in it; and to fill ourselves with that level of awareness.

The fact is: Nobody is unstoppable and powerful and on their "A Game" every single moment of every day. And so we need to keep refilling; keep replenishing; and keep being still and know throughout the day.

Jesus prayed five times a day! He would live and preach and go and do his stuff, then get back to his Source. Get back to center in his spiritual power. And he would go and do it and back again. And that's the kind of rhythm we need. You know, one prayer isn't going to make you feel that filled with God all the time; we need to keep going back, and to keep reconnecting, anchoring ourselves in Spirit.

The fact is, if we want to know our power, we need to be still consistently and regularly to refill and replenish ourselves with the Spirit and the power and the presence of God. That is the foundation of being unstoppable and being powerful.

The second one is to **AFFIRM OUR GOOD**. How many people do affirmations here? Alright! We love affirmations! Because words have power; words have a creative energy to them. And when we speak those words, they create things more like itself. Affirmations conditions our minds; once we get clarity

about our intentions. That clarity and then adding the spoken word begins to attract and move things in our lives.

When Scripture says, *"Ask and ye shall receive,"* affirming is a form of asking. It's not just asking, but it's claiming, and it is calling forth the good that we desire in our lives. To be able to speak it actually begins to bring life to it; begins to shift in us and shift the circumstances in our lives.

What I find interesting about this song: As powerful as that chorus is about being unstoppable and being invincible and being powerful, the verses kind of tell a different story. She's kind of sad. And she kind of fools people with her smiles and tells anybody whatever they want to hear. She breaks down privately. She feels alone. And she's really kind of struggling. And yet she's speaking all these powerful words.

And so it is interesting to be feeling one way but affirming another. But it kind of reminds me of the Book of Joel, 3:10, where it says:

"Let the weak say 'I am strong!'"

That it is an example of speaking a word of a situation or something you like that may not be currently present in your life, but speaking life into it. Calling it forth. Focusing your intention and desire on that good. Because when we speak words, we open our hearts and minds to possibilities, and we create an attracting force in the Universe to bring it about.

It is good to affirm peace when we feel inner turmoil. It's good to affirm abundance when we're in situations of lack. It is good to affirm health when we aren't feeling our best.

"Let the weak say, 'I am strong!'"

It begins to give us a level of strength and points our energy towards creating and attracting something greater. And note it says, *"I am strong."* It's not, *"I might be strong; I hope to be strong; I will be strong; I will be strong. It is "I am strong."*

In the same way the song says, *"I'm unstoppable today,"* it is about speaking to the present here and now. *"I am strong."* Even when the circumstances aren't the way we want it, we can actually speak it and call it forth into existence.

"I am strong."

Let's say that together everybody: [with congregation] *"I am strong."*

One more time: [with congregation] *"I am strong."*

Do you feel a little difference in your energy? I mean, that's the attracting power of the spoken word! Let's do a few affirmations together; I'll say them and you repeat them. A couple of them are long, but they're good!

"I am poised and centered in God's peaceful presence."

Let's say that together: [with congregation] *"I am poised and centered in God's peaceful presence."*

"I am prosperous in all that I do."

Together: [with congregation] *"I am prosperous in all that I do."*

"My heart is filled with love and overflows with joy."

[With congregation]: *"My heart is filled with love and overflows with joy."*

"My life is richly and abundantly blessed."

[With congregation]: *"My life is richly and abundantly blessed."*

"I am patient and kind to all people, especially myself."

[With congregation]: *"I am patient and kind to all people, especially myself."*

"Good things come to me at all times and in all ways."

[With congregation]: *"Good things come to me at all times and in all ways."*

"Each and every day [congregation joins in], in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."

One more time! [With congregation]: *"Each and every day, in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."*

Speaking the power of the word -- even when circumstances don't look that way at all -- is a transforming, it is a creating, and it is an attractive force of the universe.

So my question is: What are three things you would like to have in your life that you would claim and create an affirmation for? Whether it's to call forth more peace and harmony; more love; or more understanding or guidance. Whatever it is, speak the word! Affirm the good that you want! It is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom! That means God isn't withholding anything from us! But we're the ones that have to co-create and shape what that good looks like. And affirmation is a wonderful way to use the power of clarity and intention and our desires to speak it and attract it and call it forth.

The final thing I think this song teaches us ... Let me just read you this verse. It says:

***I know, I've heard that to let your feelings show
Is the only way to make friendships grow
But I'm too afraid now
Yeah, yeah
I put my armor on, show you how strong I am***

And one of the things is that ... So what she's saying is ... She's lonely and she knows that the only way to build friendships is to share your feelings, *"But I'm not going to do it! No. Too scared to do it right now."* And so, it's one thing to affirm, and that's good. But affirming alone doesn't do it. **WE NEED TO TAKE SOME ACTION.** We need to take some steps.

Because what she's saying is, *"I know that's what works, but I'm just not going to do it."* It's almost like a stubborn statement. She's letting fear stop her from acting and taking actions that would bring forth what she wants. It's almost the opposite of being unstoppable and being powerful!

And so how many people have ever had this experience? I'll give you the words of Paul. He said:

"My own behavior baffles me. I find myself doing things I should not do, and not doing things that I should."

Anybody relate to that in any way? [Congregation laughs] How many people have ever been stubborn, rigid or inflexible? Anybody? [Congregation murmurs] Anybody ever purposely not do something that is good for you because you wanted to do it your own way on your own terms? Anybody ever be like that? [Congregation laughs]

Sometimes we get stuck stubbornly, because we know what needs to be done, and we choose not to do it. Sometimes we keep repeating unhealthy patterns in our lives over and over again and wonder why we're not getting better results. Sometimes we stay and perpetuate unhealthy relationships and enabling behaviors and wonder why things aren't changing. Sometimes we engage in negative

behavioral patterns that we keep doing over and over and over again that leave us in the same mess with the frustrations, struggling with the same pain.

I had a friend; he wrote a book. It was called, *Why Is This Happening to Me Again?!?* [Congregation laughs] And we should not be surprised when we don't do things that we know are right for us. Maybe it's time that we need to just humble ourselves and to admit that we're struggling. To admit that we've got a problem; to admit that we're hurting; or that we're lonely or depressed; or that we just don't know what to do.

Maybe it's time that we do something differently. Maybe it's time that we get some help. Maybe it's time to stop doing some old stuff and start doing some new stuff. Instead of complaining how lonely we are, maybe it's getting out there and going to meet some people. Instead of saying, "I'm just not feeling so good or healthy," maybe go see the doctor or get on an exercise program. Maybe it's time to lay down the armor of resistance and stubbornness and inflexibility and start thinking in a new way. Taking some new actions that support the words and the affirmations but bring some actions to bring some changes in our lives.

Anybody ever been in an argument and, halfway through it, you realized you were wrong? [Congregation laughs] But you kept arguing because you wanted to find a way to win the argument? Anybody ever have that experience? My dad used to call that being "wrong and strong." [Congregation laughs] You know, like ... So one of the things we need to do is stop being "wrong and strong"!

Maybe it's time to go see a therapist. Maybe it's time to find a support group, whether it's for grief or AA or Al Anon or Helping Parents Heal ... Maybe it's time to deepen your friendship and your relationship with your friends. Maybe it's time to volunteer and get involved. Maybe it's time to grow and expand your social life. Maybe it's time to find a prayer partner or a prayer group. Maybe it's time to admit we need some help.

This father and son ... The father is trying to teach the son a lesson. There's a big rock there and he says, "Son, you're powerful and you've got all the resources you need to move that rock. So I want you to move that rock." And so the kid starts pushing it and that's not going anywhere. He starts leaning his back against it. And he tries to get a piece of wood and pry it. And he's getting frustrated and irritated.

And the dad says, "Son, you've got resources. Use all your power to move that!"

And he says, "I'm trying, Dad! I'm trying!" And finally the kid gives up.

And the dad said, "You think you used all your resources, son?" And he said, "Yeah! I did, and I can't move the rock!"

And the dad said, "One thing you didn't use, son, is you didn't ask my help. [Congregation murmurs]"

Sometimes we think being powerful and unstoppable means that we don't need any help. That maybe asking for help is a sign of weakness. But the fact is: It's powerful to say, *"I need help."* It's powerful and wise to ask for the support and seek the support we need.

Martin Rutte once said:

"You have to do it by yourself ... and you can't do it alone."

We need one another; nobody does it alone! And we need to engage the support that we need; be there for others, but also seek help the help that we need, the support we need socially, emotionally and whatever different ways to expand and grow our lives.

Sometimes we have moments that ... Being unstoppable doesn't mean you're not vulnerable. It doesn't mean that you don't hurt or cry. Jesus wept! Jesus got angry. There are different emotions in this human

experience. and to be unstoppable ... Part of it is being as strong in God and affirming. But it's also asking for help. It's also admitting that we're struggling in some areas, because the admitting of it -- and the getting help -- actually lifts us up to the fullness of our power.

You are powerful! You're not powerless. No matter what moments might think, that is the absolute truth. You are endowed with greatness! You're endowed with beauty! You're endowed with goodness! You are an amazing spiritual being, powerful beyond measure!

The question is: Are you willing to believe it, accept it, own it and use it? Are you willing to connect with your Source and to be still and know God? To replenish that and do it frequently like Jesus, to stay as connected to the power of that source that is in us? Are you willing to affirm your good? To speak the word of the things that you want in your life, even if they're not there right now? "Let the weak say, 'I am strong!'" Speak the things you desire in your life. And then: Put your armor down and don't get stuck. And allow yourself to stop resisting and just do something new; do something different. Seek some help and get yourself the support you need.

Doing something different will change your life; it will bring new things in.

You are so powerful! And if we are willing to own it and if we're willing to use it, we can make our lives better and better and better. And that is the lesson for living a greater life from the song, "Unstoppable."

God bless you, everybody! [Congregation applauds]

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