

GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby and Hannah Schuller

BS: This is the day the Lord has made! We will rejoice and be glad in it.

HS: And welcome, welcome brothers and sisters in Christ. We are spiritual family and I love it. There is strength and there is power in us being unified.

Would you turn around and shake the hand of the person next to you and say God loves you and so do I.

BS: All right. It's going to be a good day today. I'm feeling good. How about you? We are starting the week off right by lifting our souls to heaven, by worshipping God, and recognizing the love and presence of Jesus Christ and that's a good way to start, don't you think? I think it is, too.

Hey if you're here for the first time, would you raise your hand? We just want to welcome you and thank you for being here. Welcome to Shepherd's Grove! All right. Let's begin with a time of prayer. Father, in Jesus' name, we thank you that you've called us here to your house. It's a celebration. We're celebrating Easter. We're celebrating your spirit. We're celebrating your joy and your wisdom and your word. Father, we pray that you'd continue to build us up into the likeness of Jesus Christ. For everyone that's here this morning, that's watching on television, we pray that you'd begin to break chains and you encourage everyone, and help us realize that you're proud of us, and that we are going the direction that you want us to go. Lord, we thank you in Jesus' name, amen.

SCRIPTURE – Daniel 4:34-36 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for Bobby's message this morning, the words of our Lord found in Daniel:

At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisors and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before.

May we work hard but abandon all outcomes to our loving God, for his power has always and will always be the final word.

INTERVIEW – Bobby Schuller (BS) and Alex Boye (AB)

BS: Well it's always such a privilege to welcome back our good friends to the show, especially somebody as talented as Alex Boye. Hey, Alex.

AB: Hi.

BS: You know since his last visit, I mean Alex was already successful when he came here, but since his last visit, Alex continues to make amazing music. He's covered pop artists from Adele to Pharrell Williams, as well as sharing his positive original songs with his own signature style. And just been incredibly successful online and doing some great things, and we're just so glad to see God blessing your career.

AB: Thank you so much.

BS: So please welcome, Alex Boye! So first, we just want to congratulate you on your success. What's your life been like the last year or two? I mean..

AB: Oh I tell you it's been great. I think when I came last you fed me so good spiritually and I was just out there and just (YEAH!!) you know?

BS: Yes, good!

AB: A lot of really good things have been happening. I went on America's Got Talent. I just decided to do it for a joke and actually ended up being pretty amazing.

BS: I know! And the funniest thing is you're a British born African...

AB: Yes!

BS: ..national on America's Got Talent.

AB: That's right!

BS: It's a new world! It's a new world.

AB: Yes!

BS: And so you've been particularly really successful with your films that you put online..

AB: Yes sir..

BS: ..I mean these are amazing. Everybody needs sort of a niche, right? And like your thing is you cover some of these big songs but you give it sort of this African twist and you always pick really positive, kind of family friendly songs, but you almost didn't do that, right? You almost didn't use the African piece.

AB: Yes, that's right. My mom kept bugging me all the time. She said 'Tunday,' that's my African name. 'Tunday, you put some of the African influence in your music. That is you. That is you.' Cause I've done punk, I've done rap, I've done reggae, I've done EMO; all styles, just trying to experiment. Anyway, a couple of gentlemen asked me if I'd do a song with them, and they said but we want you to sing in Swahili. And I'm like..

BS: Do you speak Swahili?

AB: I'm from England. What do I know about Swahili? So I went to a library and I've got those Rosetta Stone tapes, learned some Swahili but it didn't work. So I called up my mother back in London. She's from Nigeria. She speaks Yoruba. So I had her teach me some Yoruba because they wouldn't know the difference.

BS: Are you ever making it up? Sometimes I swear..

AB: It's like when you do jazz, like Ella, when she does the scat (MAKES NOISES)..that's kind of what it is, but mixed with a little bit of speaking in tongues.

BS: Nice! Nice! Shoulda bought a Honda. Re-tie my bow tie.

AB: Did you just say shoulda bought a Honda?

BS: I shoulda bought a Honda.

AB: That's great!

BS: We totally digress. Let's get back on..

AB: You're killing me. Yes, all right..

BS: ..back on track. I mean life wasn't easy for you, though, I mean you have these deep roots in Africa, but you grew up in London. But when you were a teenager, you were homeless, right? Your mom was going to go back to Africa and she was only supposed to be gone a bit, but then..

AB: Yes, I was homeless for awhile, on the streets, and it was tough. I had a lot of despair and depression. I felt like the people that I loved, I felt like they'd all rejected me in some way. It wasn't till years later I realized why my mom actually left and then I cried, but that was a whole other story.

BS: Well why did she leave?

AB: Because we were all broke. We had absolutely nothing. And she was dating a gentleman in Nigeria and he wanted to have her stay out there. And she said 'well I need to come back to my son.' He said 'well you make a choice: either you go with me or with your son.' So she put me in a boarding school in England, which at the time I really hated, and then she lived in Nigeria and she was sending money back and helping me. It wasn't till years later that I realized that she was working three jobs before she moved out to Nigeria. She was working on the railroad in London on the underground. And her job was at 9:00 at night till 3:00 in the morning, she'd walk the tracks with all the rats and everything just picking up debris so that the trains could be free; they won't derail if there's something on it. That was her job for seven/eight years to put me through the school. See when you're younger, you just think me, me, me, me, and you're selfish and like why did you leave? Why did you leave me? Why'd you leave me? And I look back now, she sacrificed everything for me. So I wouldn't be here otherwise.

BS: Yes, you felt abandoned and of course you felt that way. You felt like why did my mom leave me, but every day she was thinking about you and working hard to get you where you are today. Do you feel like the trials you went through made you stronger?

AB: Absolutely. You don't want them but when you look back, you know that you absolutely needed them to where you are right now and you just think oh my gosh. It's just one of those things where I look at our Savior Jesus Christ; the trials that he went through, and here I'm complaining about mine. And first of all, he had to go through what he went through to get the glory that he has now so what am I complaining about? Don't I want the glory? Aren't I praying for the glory every single day? Right? But then what we realize is the way God's version of good is different from ours. But you have to go through it! You know what I mean?

BS: Yes!

AB: We're just like no, just give me ice cream. That's good. You know what I mean? But I tell you I am grateful for those trials, I'm grateful for the times when I was walking the streets of London, age of 16, eating food from trash. I'm grateful for all those experiences because sometimes when I meet friends, I meet people who are about to give up, and I'm like let me tell you, man, it's like all this that you're going through right now, you're going to use it to bless other people. And sometimes it's not for you. It's for the idea of you to bless other people with what you've been through with your experiences.

BS: And you're doing it. You're doing it for me and you're doing it for so many people as we watch your videos. You have such a way of singing that lifts people's hearts. I mean you listen to somebody with all the things you went through, you can't help but listen to Alex Boye sing and not feel encouraged and lifted up.

AB: That means a lot coming from you, brother.

BS: No it means the world. And speaking of that, you covered "Let it Go." And seventy-eight million views on YouTube. Why do you think, and I'm going to be talking about this today. Why do you think that message of like letting it go resonates so much with people?

AB: A lot of us are struggling. We go through so much. And I think really a lot of us, we walk around here when we're really actually here. But Satan makes us just believe that this is where we are. Lucifer just gives us that feeling of this is where we are. You know how many times when people say 'oh I'm just a teacher,' 'I'm just a scout,' 'I'm just the mother.'

BS: Yes absolutely.

AB: We always put that word "just" in front. Why? Because that just is saying I'm nobody really. I'm just average. But we we're put on here to be gold!

BS: Yes!

AB: You know what I mean? And so it's like there's no just. Take the word just out of your conversation. You know it's like I am Bobby Schuller!

BS: Yes!

AB: I'm not just! And I'm Alex Boye! You know what I mean? That's your beautiful wife! That is not just.. she's not just a mom, you know? And so that's kind of my whole thing with music is really that. Is just helping people to see.. to take away the just from their language.

BS: And you're going to be singing the song Gold to us today, and that's really what song is about, right?

AB: "I Am Gold," absolutely.

BS: "I am Gold," yes.

AB: Because you have bronze, silver and gold. It was inspired from the Olympics, and then all of a sudden it just hit me that everybody wants the gold in terms of we want a great life, we want a great marriage, we want a great experiences, we all want the gold. But sometimes we think that we only deserve bronze. We're all gold, every single one of us. We were put on this earth and we were born gold. And whether we like it or not, we are gold. We had nothing to do with that. We were put here to be gold but then along the way we start getting bruises and scratches and then we're like no, maybe I'm bronze, maybe I'm silver, maybe I'm copper, and you just don't think there's a purpose to it, you know what I mean?

But I'm starting to realize and look I'm not perfect. I've got a long way to go, but I'm starting to realize that when you go through that stuff, it's not because you're bad people, it's because the Lord wants to refine us. That's how gold is made.

BS: Amen. Yes, it gets refined. That's right. Well Alex, you're a living testimony for so many people that are here this morning and watching on TV, that no matter what you're going through, God has a future for you. Don't give up and he will make you into gold. And you're going to sing that for us in a bit, but Alex, thank you so much for being here.

AB: Thank you, Bobby.

BS: And blessing us with your music. We can't wait!

AB: Thank you.

#### DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Friends, would you hold your hands out like this as a sign of receiving as we say this confession together: I'm not what I do. I'm not what I have. I'm not what people say about me.

I am the beloved of God. It's who I am. No one can take it from me. I don't have to worry, I don't have to hurry, I can trust my friend Jesus and share his love with the world.

## MESSAGE – Bobby Schuller “I am confident!”

You know we say that every week: I'm not what I do, I'm not what I have, I'm not what people say about me. I want to begin today by encouraging you that I believe you are learning to become the kind of person that really is letting those things go. It's hard not to hold onto our reputation, to hold on to all the things that we think matter to us. Sometimes it's money or our jobs when maybe they've been lost, but we just still are not letting go, or maybe of our past, or of tomorrow. You are becoming the kind of person who is letting go of the many burdens that are pulling you down and keeping you from fulfilling what God has called you to do.

So some of you came today and you're like why did they play “Let it Go” in church with Alex Boye. By the way, Natalie, our very own Natalie Leonard sang that song. Natalie, it's so great to have you in the house. Wonderful. I wanted to begin with the movie “Frozen” and the success of this song. How many of you have seen “Frozen,” just raise your hands? So everybody. And if you have a four-year-old daughter, you've seen it a hundred times.

The story “Frozen” was a huge success because it was a story about a princess, a queen who has this gift that she thinks is a curse, and it's this magical power; it's a fairy tale, to control snow and etc. And because she thinks it's a curse, she locks herself away in a castle and she's always afraid, always trying to control what people see so she finds herself more separated and isolated from people.

Finally, when the truth about who she is comes out, she runs away and then there's this amazing moment where she's like walking through the mountains and she builds a castle with ice and she makes a little snowman, who is adorable. And she's doing all of this stuff with her magical powers or whatever and it's Idina Menzel, who's a famous performer from “Rent” and “Wicked.” And she's singing this song and of course this princess; her hair comes down and she makes this new dress and she's just like this big.. and everybody loves it because she's singing “Let it Go” in the sense of I'm letting go of all of my worries, of always trying to control how people see me, and it's like this freedom song. And I guess what I want to ask is why was that song resonating so much with so many people? Why do you think? I think it's because the opposite is true. That instead of letting it go, all of us are like constantly trying to hold on to so much and many of us feel so tired. If we were to actually let it go, our fingers would creak as we sort of.. our spiritual fingers would creak as we sort of unfolded our hands and released whatever the worries are. We're so used to worrying that we feel awkward to let it go.

And the big question I have for everyone is why haven't you let it go. And I think the answer is for most people that don't have a faith, how can I let it go if I don't have someone to let it go to. And that is the crux of today's message. I want you to know that when you release the burdens in your life to God, he is strong enough to hold them and sustain them. All the things that you're worried about – your kids, your job, all the outcomes that you're trying to control, let me tell you work hard, do your best, dream big, but in the end abandon those outcomes to God. He has your best in mind and your best future is ahead as long as you don't give up. So just let go and enjoy today. You can smile and stop worrying about tomorrow, and stop worrying about yesterday. And you are. You are the kind of person who is building into you a trust, a deep trust in the goodness of God. And you're slowly learning to let go of these things and because of it, you are becoming a happier person, and that's very good news.

You see all of the Christian journey, most of it is about simply letting go. To become a Christian, you let go of your self-righteousness, and you let go of your past. And you let go so that the hands of a loving Father can save you. You let go of your sin so that you can inherit something new. And most of the Christian journey is letting go of the things we thought were so important to us so that we can inherit the things of heaven today. You are letting go and that's great.

There is this story I never forgot that was always so sad to me. It was a story of how Indians used to catch monkeys. And basically what they do, my dad told me this story, basically what they do is they take a coconut and they would cut a hole just big enough so that a monkey could put his hand in and they'd put a little jewel or a piece of glass in there. And then they would tie the coconut down to a tree or something. And so what would happen is the monkey would look inside the coconut and it would see this little piece of glass, or a little piece of jewel, and it could make its hand go like this and it would take its hand and stick it through that little hole.

And then when it grabs the piece of jewel, the hand makes a fist making the fist too wide to pull out of the coconut, but still refuses to let go of this piece of jewelry to save its own soul.

I think the world is a lot like this. Many of us are like this monkey where we could escape easily but we have to let go of this thing that's holding us back, but we just can't bring ourselves to let go and pull our hand out. But you're doing it. You are not like that monkey and you are not like the world.

You are the kind of person that values the things of heaven, and you know that there is no peace of jewelry or anything else that is worth giving up God's best for your life. You're forming into your soul the kind of character that doesn't always have to be tied down to these types of things. God is freeing you. In fact today, I'm proclaiming over you that no longer will you be chained down to these things. Today, you're going to release your worry, your burdens, these big heavy metal weights that you've been carrying, you're going to give them to God and they're going to become balloons. It's going to be just like taking this backpack full of weights and opening it and balloons come out. You're going to be free today, in Jesus' name.

Daniel 4 is the story from today in our series, and in the story of Daniel 4, it's a great passage. It's actually about King Nebuchadnezzar, a real historic figure, a mammoth of a man, incredible power. In his day, by far, the wealthiest and most powerful human being alive. The prophet Daniel is in his retinue as like a wisdom counselor. And the weird thing about this passage in Daniel chapter 4 is that now Nebuchadnezzar sort of speaks to the audience. So imagine that this were a play and you'd see the play of Daniel unfolding, in which Daniel's the main character. Then all of a sudden Nebuchadnezzar, whose doing this.. all of a sudden (in theater they call it breaking the fourth wall) all of a sudden he turns and faces the audience, and he tells his testimony.

So when you read Daniel 4, it's Daniel telling about what happened in his life. And he said at the end of my reign, I had this dream and this dream was about a huge tree. And this tree was huge and animals would come and find shade under the tree. But then the tree was cut down, and chains were put along the stump. And he said and I woke up and I went to my prophet Daniel and I asked him what is the meaning of this dream? And Daniel said oh King, I wish this dream were about someone else. This dream is about you. That although your branches are wide, and although you protect and care for so many in your kingdom, you will be cut down and you will be put in chains. You will lose your mind and you'll become like an animal. And Daniel says until you acknowledge that heaven rules, you will not regain your sanity.

Sure enough, weeks go by and the King says, and I was standing on the walls and I was looking at all of Babylonia. And I said to myself, did I not create this kingdom for my glory and my majesty? And that day the Lord Yahweh struck me down and I became mad. And like an animal, I ravaged in the woods. And he carries on with a story about how he completely lost his mind until finally he turned back to the Lord and he said this poem that Hannah read today where he gives glory to God. Very reminiscent of Job's prayer, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. That Lord, all I have is yours. And he says and when I confess that Yahweh was king, he restored my whole kingdom. It's a powerful story. And it's an ongoing theme, especially in the Jewish bible, in the Old Testament; this theme that all power is ultimately God's. And that power only remains in the hands of the powerful as long as they are just. And so it's the promise that God will undo unjust power.

And it also is the promise, and it's the lesson, power, all earthly power is temporary. And if you hear anything, hear that. Power is control. Power is influence. And all power that you have in this world you will someday lose. All power that we have is temporary. Huh? God, though, loves to give power to the wise, to the humble and to those who trust in him and not in their own power. So the power that God has given you is temporary and it lasts as long as you remain humble and meek and wise and trust in God. And you are humble, and you are meek, and you are wise. And as you look to build your character instead of power, God will give you more power. If you look for power, you will not get power from God. As you seek character, wisdom and humility, God will bless you with more power, the power to make a good difference in the world, and that's a promise.

So, when we talk today about letting go, and by the way that song will be stuck in your head for days. When we talk today about letting go, letting go in the kingdom of God, I'm not saying quit or give up. Very often it's easy to think oh letting go, that means we're supposed to quit. That's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is do your best, work hard, dream big but in the end abandon the outcomes to God. The outcomes are God. Or as Tony Horton from P90X would say, do your best and forget the rest. You know you do your best in your relationships, you do your best in your job, you do your best if you're in ministry, but in the end, stop trying to control and manipulate people, and stop trying to control and manipulate outcomes. When you abandon outcomes, you're able to trust that if I did my best but didn't get what I wanted, that God has something better in store for me, and he does. You see so much of letting go is the posture, as we teach often, the posture of the open hand. When you let go of something in the kingdom of God, you're actually opening your hands to receive something new. In Christianity, we call this the Paschal mystery, or the Easter mystery, that in order to receive life I have to first experience some sort of death in my life. We're so afraid of death and loss that we can't let go of the old things in order that we can inherit the new things God has for us.

So for some of us, we're holding on so tight God is saying unclench your fists, let go, let go so that I can give you something new and awesome. I know it hurts. I know it's been hard. But you can trust me. I'm going to take care of you.

Friends, you don't have to worry. You don't have to be afraid. Your best days are ahead if you simply let go of the outcomes, abandon those outcomes to God and know that he will come through for you. When you abandon outcomes, you learn to stop being controlling and you learn to be empowering to others. You are not a controlling person, you are an empowering person. You are the kind of person that sees the best in other people. You're the kind of person that even when you feel afraid about what they might do when you give them freedom you empower them to be their very best. And because of that, people look to you for leadership and encouragement. And you continue, God bless you, to be the kind of person who lets go of people so that you can empower them and strengthen them. You don't push, you don't control, and you don't manipulate. You're the kind of person who empowers people and doesn't control them, and that makes you a better leader. Some of the worst leaders in the world are those who always try and micromanage everything. If you've worked for someone like this, you know how horrible it can be when somebody comes in and says the smallest little thing is wrong, and this is right, and those types of leaders are holding onto everything tight. But that's not you. You're a good leader because you believe in people and you're not afraid of them messing up because you know that when other people mess up, that you'll be there to encourage them to help them be better.

People that are not controlling but are empowering are also better friends, and you're a terrific friend because you don't try and control your friends. You don't freak out when they don't call you back or text you back. You're letting them go. You want them, you desire a friendship, but you're no longer your worst enemy by constantly being afraid that everybody is abandoning you or leaving you.

This is also true in parenting. When you empower your kids and your grandkids instead of trying to control them, you're able to help them become adults and grow into the person God has called them to do. Now I've never been a parent of a teenager. I've heard it's easy. But I was a teenager once, and I know that there's this tricky time in parenting, and it probably depends on whether it's a boy or a girl. I think there's this time for teenagers around 15/16/17 where as a child, you do have to control your kids, you have to discipline your kids, you have to say do this, don't do that, but there comes a point when a teenager is becoming an adult that the parent has to take this very scary move of not controlling and manipulating anymore and moving to a posture of essentially coaching, listening, but also really empowering. You have to trust that this person who's becoming an adult can become an adult and can be responsible, and I think that's one of the hardest things that parents sometimes face.

So if you're going through that with your teenager, my suggestion is for everyone, and I know I digress here, for every one minute you tell your teenager to do something, supplement it with ten minutes of listening and start with those ten minutes. And this is a good rule for leadership in general. I think it was John Maxwell who said the famous cliché – people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. And that is true through the posture of listening. How many teenagers can't stand their parents because their parents don't listen to them? Somebody on Twitter to me said something like how do I get my teenager to X, Y and Z, and I was like you probably just need to start listening to your teenager. Because if you get to the point where you're saying how do I get somebody to do this, you're asking how do I manipulate them into doing something they don't want to do. Leaders want to inspire people and form them to desire good things. And you're doing that. You're a good leader, you're a good friend, you're a good parent, you're a good spouse if you're a spouse, and you're good because you've learned that controlling and manipulating is not helping anyone. That empowering and inspiring is the way to live your life with people, and you do that, and that's great.

I think so much of the worry, burdens and sin that we carry in life is based on the deepest psychological need, which is fear of abandonment. All of humanity carries within itself this fear that I'm going to be left alone, I'm going to be outside of the circle, no one's going to care for me, and the reason this fear is so great is because bonding with a loving person is the greatest human need. That's why at Shepherd's Grove every single

Sunday we begin with bonding with the person of Jesus Christ. And we remember that grace abounds, that in spite of all the.. that what I do, what I have, what people say about me, that those things for God don't matter as much. What matters is that I simply trust in him.

So I want to say this to everyone. God is your shepherd, and he won't let you go. So we're afraid of letting go, but God won't let you go.

This is one of the most famous passages in the bible, Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd. I want nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures. You know the green pastures is the idea that green pastures are where the sheep go to eat, and if a sheep lies down in green pastures is because it's so full it can't fit any more pasture in its belly. So it takes like a nap on this really soft.. so it's like saying God has made me full, and he's giving me rest.

And it finishes with this wonderful line: Surely goodness and everlasting love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. That is for you. One hundred percent. God loves you, he's never abandoned you, he will not let you go. Jesus takes on this symbol of being the good shepherd. He says a good shepherd lays his life down for his sheep, and Jesus did lay his life down for you. And you know what? He continues to lay his life down for you even today. What I mean by that is that he teaches a story about a lost sheep, one sheep that goes and there are 99 that are in the fold. And he says that shepherd will not stop until he gets that one sheep back into the safety of the fold. No matter where you are in life, you may be in addiction, you maybe have completely lost your faith, maybe you lost all your money, maybe you lost your whole family, God has not given up on you. He's not let go of you. And you can let go of your past and you can soar and receive the shepherding of Jesus Christ. You can trust in him. He will not let you go! He won't. He's your good shepherd.

Henri Nouwen tells this wonderful story about the trapeze swingers at the circus. When he said he once met with these trapeze swingers, these guys that swing back and forth, and the two most important people are the flyer and the catcher. And the flyer is always the most famous one. He's the guy that goes through the air ten/fifteen feet, maybe he does a flip in the air, he does this amazing stuff. And he talked to the flyer and the catcher and he says you know the flyer gets all the credit, but the real hero up there is the catcher. He said for the flyer, you simply have to extend your arms and trust and just close your eyes that this catcher's going to catch you. Henri said to him, he said so you never want to catch the catcher, right? He said oh no! If you try and catch the catcher, you could break his arm; you could mess up the timing. Simply the flyer needs to let go and extend its arms out, and receive the gift of being caught. And that is the message of the gospel. We're trying to force these things to happen. Today it's time for you let go so that you can soar through the air. And there is a moment when you fly that is exhilarating when you don't know if someone's going to catch you. The catcher will catch you. You'll be safe. Don't try and catch them, don't force anything. Just extend those loving arms and our Father in heaven will catch you. You're going to be okay. You don't have to worry, you don't have to be afraid, and you're not afraid. You're brave, you have courage, you're not afraid, that's not who you are. You're brave. You know, you know God has been there for you. You know he's caught you every time and he will catch you again. It will be okay. Let it go.

So for those of us that are worried, it ends today. You're not worried anymore. You're at peace and you're relaxed. And you're not relaxed because you're dumb, you're relaxed because you're strong and you're smart. You know what other people don't know – the power of God in your life. You're no longer worried about your past. Your past does not define you. Your future is whatever it is you want it to be. You can let go of the sin, you can let go of the mistakes, you can let go of the regret and form a new tomorrow in Jesus' name. So let go of the past. You're not worried about the past anymore. And you're not worried about tomorrow. You're not worried about physical needs, you're not worried about whatever sickness is ailing you, you're not even worried about death. You know that God is faithful even in death to save us.

Hey, you're not worried about tomorrow, you're not worried about the past, and you're not worried about your reputation. So many of us are up late at night because of something somebody said about us. We need to stop worrying about what other people think about us and only think about what God thinks about us. And he thinks the best of you. You don't have to manage your reputation. You're loved by God. You're loved by this church and you're loved by me. You're going to be okay.

Great things are in store for you. Don't be afraid. Don't worry. Smile today and enjoy every breath and every moment God has given you because it is a gift. And I know you do, and I know you will. You'll continue to empower people. You don't need to control people. You'll continue to abandon outcomes and receive the great gift from Jesus Christ. New life every day that you trust in him, in Jesus' name.

And so I want to just pray for everyone this morning, and if you're here today and maybe you're watching on television and you say I don't have any idea what you're talking about. I don't know God, I don't know Jesus, I want to offer to you the forgiveness of sins, and new eternal life. Maybe you say I kind of grew up in church, but I've never made a decision.

You know when I made a decision to follow Jesus, I didn't stand up, I didn't go down, I just made a rational decision in my seat – I'm going to follow Jesus Christ. And so I'm going to ask you who are watching at home and you who are here in the church, lets bow our heads and close our eyes, maybe hold your hands out like this a sign of letting go of all the stuff that's bogging you down. Everything you're angry about, everything you're worried about, everything you're frustrated about we're going to just release that and give it to God.

I ask that the church and everyone watching on television, that everyone pray this prayer with me: In Jesus' name, I come before you, God. Forgive me of my sin. Make me a new creation. Fill me with your Holy Spirit. Equip me for my destiny. Help me to do the next right thing, in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

#### BENEDICTION - BS

You know I hope that you're encouraged today. You're doing better than you think. You're getting stronger than you thought you were. You're already so much stronger than you knew. And God has a great week in store for you.

And so the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you his peace in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.