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GOOD MORNING – Bobby Schuller (BS) and Hannah Schuller (HS)

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

HS: And welcome church family and visitors. We are so happy to have you here. Today I felt I was supposed to tell you that God is with you right now. If you have asked Him to come into your life, He is with you whether you feel it or not. And my favorite writer in the Bible is David, because he's so honest in the way he writes, and he says things like God, where are you? Why have you abandoned me? I can count every rib in my body. I'm dying. Where are you? But you see as you continue to read the Psalms that God is faithful in the end to David, and you see that God was with David even when he felt like he was abandoned. God is with you right you, and on a long enough timeline, you will see His faithfulness in your life.

BS: That's absolutely true and it's a good reminder. Let's begin with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you so much that you've called us here. And Lord, we love you. We thank you that your Holy Spirit is in this place. Thank you, Father, that just as we are, we can come before your feet and worship you and lift up your name. I pray for everybody under the sound of my voice that's hurting or that's looking for an answer, or looking for a way through, or looking to be inspired, or just looking for some rest. Father, we pray that you would bring us to those places, that you would usher us into victory and to your kingdom. Lord, we love you and we thank you so much, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

HS: Amen. Turn around and shake the hand of the person next to you and say God loves you and so do I.

SCRIPTURE Matthew 5:33-37 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Matthew 5:33:

Again, you have heard it was said to the people long ago, 'do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.' But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all; either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is His footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need to say is simply 'yes' or 'no;' anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Church family, we are aiming to be people of absolute honesty which also blesses us with enduring serenity. Amen.

INTERVIEW – Colbey Northcutt (CN) – Raymond Daniels (RD) – Bobby Schuller (BS)

BS: Well our guests today are Colbey Northcutt and Raymond Daniels. So these two have been members of our church for about, I think maybe two or three years, something like that, and it's such a joy to finally have a chance to interview them about their faith and their journey and their relationship. These two are world champion karate, competitive karate fighters, is that what you say?

CN: Yes, you can say that.

BS: Okay, martial artists, yes, yes. And we'd just like to welcome them, Colbey Northcutt and Raymond Daniels, thank you for coming.

CN: Yes, thank you for having us.

BS: What a joy. So first of all, you guys are engaged. You'll be married pretty soon here. How did you meet, actually? Did you get in a fight in an alley?

CN: No, that's actually a first. We never got in that one. You know I don't even remember when we met. We've known each other for about ten..

RD: Ten years now..

CN: ..ten years or so just kind of through mutual friends, through competing in different tournaments all over the world, so I cannot tell you when we met; we both can't but we've known each other for awhile.

Honesty is Easier

RD: So we've been dating for three years and we're engaged, we're getting married August 24th, so we're really excited about that to take that next step.

BS: And you're both really like fighters, right? Like your dad actually was like a competitive body builder, strength guy. I think your brother's a fighter, too, or something. It's in the family.

CN: Yes, it did come in the family. It was kind of a requirement for us. So my dad's a black belt. He did do body building and power lifting, but he did train us as little kids. Initially was self-defense, but when we were little, we started together, I was seven and my brother was four. We started doing tournaments and realized we were kind of good so it turned into more of a competitive aspect, and then obviously as we got older, it turned into fighting professionally.

BS: I would feel so bad if a robber tried to come into your house, like when you were about 18 and 16.

CN: Oh yes! I got two brothers, and my dad does it, as well, so it is a family affair.

BS: And faith was a part of your upbringing, right? I mean was your dad a Christian? I can't remember.

CN: Yes he is.

BS: How did that work in terms of sports and competitive and fighting?

CN: He is a Christian, he did raise us to be Christians, so it's something that's been in our household our whole life. So I think being in such a competitive kind of sport of martial arts, it's not something that you would really see most fighters be Christians and be out about their faith. It's kind of looked at as a violent sport, but obviously martial arts as a whole, when you're a kid, it does teach you those values of respect and honor and to respect your opponents, so coming from a traditional martial art, we learned that, as well, also through our faith. So now being a professional fighter, we kind of have it from both aspects, and it's really awesome, I can't explain it.

BS: I know, I experienced that, too, when I was a kid. My dad put us in Tai Kwan Do, and it was very much the first thing a new student learns is self-defense, respect of your opponents, protecting people, like there's a whole code of honor that's a part of it, and I think that lines up very nicely with the Christian ethic, and there are probably a lot of MMA and karate, different fighters, that faith is a really important part of life, don't you think?

CN: Absolutely.

RD: Definitely, definitely. I think sometimes it gets lost in translation because of the aspect of the sport, but the philosophy of the martial arts is what it's all about. We do it on a daily basis with our martial arts studio in the city of Orange and stuff. And so we try and reiterate that to all of our students, as well.

BS: You train a lot of kids, too. I think what's so great about martial arts is we were talking about this downstairs, life is a fight. And so when you're learning to fight literally, it's really, in a way, training you for life isn't it?

CN: Yes, absolutely.

RD: Yes, it's training you to not only have faith in God and have faith in God's plans for you, so you're constantly having that battle each and every day, so we're able to go out there and do it on a grand stage, so to speak, and show our faith and our ability to fight through adversity.

BS: That's awesome. Now you used to be a police officer, right?

RD: Yes sir.

BS: So what happened for you that you left the police force and then now you're a successful professional fighter? I mean how'd that happen?

RD: Well I had aspirations to be a police officer when I was a young man, and I grew up really admiring law enforcement and I became a police officer at 21 for Long Beach police department. And I did that for a number of years. I had a great time doing it, but I did it because I wanted to really help people, and then I found that being a police officer you are able to do that, but you're not able to touch and influence as many lives as you would think that you would be able to. So I had a talent and a skill set as a martial artist and as a fighter, so I had to step outside my own personal comfort zone and step out on faith to pursue the career of a professional fighter and to leave the law enforcement behind. So it was a very scary thing at the time, honestly, to be able to leave a very comfortable career to go out and pursue a dream and to be able to put myself in a place where I could be able to fellowship with more people and touch more lives in a positive way than I could as a police officer.

Honesty is Easier

BS: And you'd say, too, like I mean that's a message you want to get across to your audience, which is big, to pursue those dreams; to not be afraid to leave the old behind, to pursue something good, even if it's something really noble like being a police officer.

RD: Yes, I think a lot of times, people are worried about what people are either going to think or what people are going to say about them, so they're afraid to step out on that faith and to pursue it as something that God has blessed them with. I believe that you have a talent and you are blessed with some skill set and ability and it's your give back to Him with what you do with that. And so that's what we try and do with our opportunities as professional fighters.

BS: How did you guys find the church, by the way? That's something that I was curious about.

CN: I love telling this story. It's so funny because I've been living here now for about three years, and when I first moved here, I'm from Houston, Texas, so I went to Lakewood Church with Joel Osteen, he's my pastor, been there for years. And so we were watching his message on TV and as soon as the message was over, you came on TV with Joel and Joel introduced you and said hey, this is my friend Bobby. Stay tuned, watch his message. We did, and the very next Sunday we found your church and we have been here ever since.

BS: It's a great story. One thing about that, it speaks a lot to Joel, because that thing that they put on is at the end of Joel's show, not the beginning of ours. In other words, it's like a gift from them to us. It was interesting because when I first started pastoring here, and it was in utter crisis, I mean we didn't know how to fix the problems or financial problems and wounds and all this stuff, and I called a lot of pastors of big churches and things, I couldn't get a call back from anyone. I had one big pastor that's actually preached here before. His secretary said you're not a big deal anymore, and he only works with people who are a big deal. So that was a real thing that happened. One of our congregants had called his office. So this was the kind of thing that just feeling as a young pastor, rejected and I never reached out to Joel. He reached out to me. And so through a friend of ours, Phil, he said wants to meet you and talk to you, and just super encouraging. He like gave me his cell phone, he texts me, we became friends and then they offered to do this thing at Lakewood, like let me promote your church. So even though they are totally different tradition than we are, it was such a great thing to show that churches and different denominations and groups really, how much you can do just when you support young leaders and make a difference. It really gave me so much strength, because at the time, Joel was, still is bigger than any of the other pastors I was reaching out to, so it was really a cool thing.

CN: Its really cool, like God puts certain people in certain positions for a reason, and we were talking about this downstairs. We've never seen that message again. Ever. So we totally believe that we were meant to see your message and are meant to be here for a reason.

BS: That's awesome. Well we believe it, too. Well thank you guys so much for your message too, and we hope to continue to encourage fighters and other people to talk about their faith and encourage others and mentor others like you do, being that I can't wait to see what your kids are going to be like. I think they're going to be super heroes! Be amazing! Colbey Northcutt and Raymond Daniels, thank you guys so much. We love you and look forward to doing your wedding pretty soon.

CN: Thank you for having us.

BS: God bless you both.

CN: Thank you.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Friends, will you hold your hands out like this as we say this 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. Amen!

MESSAGE – Bobby Schuller "Honesty is Easier "

Well today we're talking about serenity that comes from being a person of integrity; of being somebody who does their best to go above and beyond; to be honest in speech, in word, in deed, not legalistically, but that you're just overflowing with honesty because it's what you love, it's what you believe in, and that you understand that there is a great reward for honesty, and there's a great vice or I don't want to say curse, but it is a curse if you fall into a life of deception or bending the truth or mask wearing. That an honest life leads to intimacy; an honest life leads to trust.

Honesty is Easier

If you want to be a great leader, you have to be known as an honest person. Nobody wants to follow somebody that's secretive or is somebody they're not sure they can trust, or not sure that the person who's talking to them is really being forthright about where we're going or what we're doing. In fact, when you're following somebody that's dishonest, it can feel like you're competing with them; that you're not on the same team as they.

So it's so important that in our leadership, in our families, in our intimacy we understand that the truth sets us free, but that deception is at the core of the kingdom of darkness, and this is going to be a spiritual truth we're going to talk about today. That the kingdom of darkness is not founded on hate, even though it's hateful, the kingdom of darkness is not founded on violence, even though it's violent, the kingdom of darkness is founded on deception. It only thrives when God's people participate in deception – deception of any form. And that's why we want to be careful that we become people who our yes is yes, and our no is no. It's good for our marriage, it's good for our life, and it's scary, scary, scary when we haven't lived that way in the past. It's a skill, actually, and we're going to talk about that today. Now first of all, all of us have lied, all of us have deceived in our lives. In fact there was a recent study that said the average person in a conversation with a new person is going to lie three times. So when you actually study it, you find that most of those lies are sort of, I want to call them polite lies; they're friendly lies, like oh you look lovely today. Find out later they didn't think that. Things like that.

Many of us, we do this kind of a thing in life, and it's easy for some of us to find ourselves doing what's called compulsive lying where you lie and you don't know why. It's easy for some of us to lie, for example, to get out of stuff. You have something that somebody asks you to do tonight and you have nothing going on, but you don't really feel like going.

And so I want to talk about those are some of the first steps that happens to becoming a deceptive person, and becoming totally ensnared by darkness and totally shutting off your life to God's blessing and God's favor.

Have you ever been caught in a lie, by the way? What a horrible experience that is. If you've ever been a kid, you've been caught in a lie. And if you've never been a kid, then you have super powers and I want to meet you.

Actually there was a guy, I just saw it recently, there was a viral video that went around of this 28-year-old man on an airplane that got into some argument with a neighbor, and they started going back and forth. And I guess as a way to flex, this guy says to him 'I own six houses and I make four million dollars a year, and I have an IQ of 176' or something like this. So the original video says "millionaire gets kicked off of a plane." But then Inside Edition did like a sort of look into this guy's life, finds out he doesn't own any properties, he rents an apartment in Orange or something, and no he doesn't make very much money at all. He works at a mortgage company or something.

And can you imagine what it would feel like to be someone like that that loses your temper? You have no idea there's some passenger filming you just spewing out lies. And then to have millions of people see this video! I don't know about you, but it's like the worst thing I can think of. It's humiliating. It's like one of the worst things to be is to be known as a liar. Who's going to follow you? Who's going to trust you? Who's going to be your friend?

Okay, so Jesus said it – the truth will set you free, and that is true. That if we walk in truth, we walk in freedom. We walk in honesty, we walk in freedom. And we can develop skills on doing things like saying no and being honest without being offensive, without being mean, we can get out of things by simply saying I don't feel like going. But you can say I don't feel like going in an honest way. Everybody's been that way before. Or whatever it is that you catch yourself deceiving people. The truth sets you free. And if you want to have a serene mind, if you want to be a great leader, if you want to have a great community, it must be built on trust and trust is built on living honestly.

If you have your Bible's, open up to Matthew chapter 5. Today we're going to read the important part of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus talks about the yes being yes and the no being no. He says, "Again you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, do not break your oath but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made." Okay? So that's Jewish tradition, that there's these oaths and if you make an oath, you do it. But Jesus says no, go a step further. He says, "But I tell you do not swear an oath at all. Either by heaven for it is God's throne, or by the earth for it is His footstool, or by Jerusalem for it is the city of the great king. And do not swear by your head for you cannot make even one hair white or black" because first century they didn't have hair dye. "All you need to say is simply yes or no. Anything beyond this comes from the evil one." Now did you catch that last line? Anything beyond a yes, anything beyond a no comes from the evil one – it comes from Satan.

Honesty is Easier

That for God, there's something about deception that is utterly satanic and we don't want to be fooled by it. It's interesting the way that Jesus is talking here. First of all, oaths were an important part in Jewish society about making contracts.

To actually create a written contract was very rare in the first century near east because actually frankly it would have been very expensive. There are some estimates, for example, in the books of the Bible about how much they cost. On the low end, they say that Paul writing his epistles, for example, would have cost eight hundred to two thousand dollars, as much as the high end at forty thousand dollars to write one epistle. And that's because of the cost of ink and paper and secretaries and all these things that you needed in order to compile things. It was just incredibly expensive, arduous and difficult.

So what was typically happening in a business place, nobody wants the overhead of writing expensive contracts, that in those days, you wanted simply to have an oath, and the way that the oath was made that this was final, I will buy ten camels for a hundred shekels, is when you shake on it, you swear to God, somehow. You swear by God that you will do this thing.

So for example when you do that, God is brought into the transaction, and then if you break the deal, you go before the court and you say your honor, he swore by God that he would give me a hundred shekels for ten camels. So invoking God in any agreement made it a verbal contract. So it's an important part of the legal system of Jesus' day.

But what's the problem there? Eventually people just start swearing all the time, and I think, this is my opinion, I think business people created this thing, in business we'd call it optionality – a way to get out – and that is you would swear by God's city, Jerusalem. Or you would swear by God's earth. Right? Or you'd swear on your head. And so by making these oaths, if you break the contract, you now have the option to get out where you go before the courthouse, you say yes, I mean I swore but I didn't swear to God. I swore to Jerusalem. Jerusalem's not God. And what happened is this developed a type of optionality, a type of evasive swearing during the first century.

So what Jesus says is just stop making oaths. Just be an honest person. And so what we want to become is the kinds of people that we're just known for being honest.

This idea of no oaths, by the way, which is very common in Quakerism, actually predates Jesus through one of the three major Jewish sects, the Essenes community. So many of us, we're familiar with the Pharisees and the Sadducees because they appear in the Bible, but very often we forget that there's this group called the Essenes. Here's a picture of Qumran. Qumran is a city where the Dead Sea scrolls were discovered, and this is where many of these Essenes guys lived. In Jesus' day, there were many of them, probably as many as four thousand, and they made all sorts of rules like they made a dedication to poverty. They would not partake in sacrifices. Actually it's interesting because they're one of the first groups to be anti slavery. And they had ritual bathing every morning. And what was interesting about these people is they actually lived and worked in the cities, and then they would sometimes come back to these communities, but one of the most important things they were known about was that they would not take an oath for anything. And by the way, everybody knew they didn't need to.

There were four thousand of these people, they always dressed similarly because they could only make their own clothes and they all kind of looked the same, like monks, but everybody knew if an Essenes says something to you, he means it. He will never break his word. What if Christians had that kind of a reputation? What if someone was like no, he's a Christian, he goes to church, he doesn't need to swear, you can count on him. If he says he'll be there, he'll be there. If he says he'll do it, he'll do it. If he agrees to something, he'll do it. He is above the fray. He is honest. He is above reproach. And the irony is that's exactly what Jesus is asking us to become.

So the Essenes were definitely known for this, and in fact Josephus says, "Whatever they say is firmer than an oath." Isn't that interesting? So everybody just kind of knows this. The Essenes themselves had a saying that said: "he who cannot be believed without swearing is already condemned."

So for them, just being honest no matter what, even if it was sometimes hurtful, even if it meant that they were going to lose out on something, even if it meant that they weren't going to go as far as the person they're competing with, they are going to be honest and they always did it, no matter what, and it was something they were committed to. It's something we should be committed to, too. Don't you agree? Can I get an amen? That for church, for people, that we should be dedicated to being people of integrity because it's good for our family, it's good for our relationships, it opens up heaven and pours out blessing on our lives when we sacrificially act honestly in life.

Honesty is Easier

When we lose something, we lose out on something, we fall behind because we were honest, we said the right thing, I believe God sees that and rewards people who believe in honoring God before honoring men; who believes in doing what pleases God rather than what pleases society.

That we're just always going to be honest even if it hurts us or harms us, amen? That is how you open the doors to intimacy with God and with your neighbor, and get freedom in your life.

And by the way, Satan knows that and that is why Satan not only tries his best to deceive us, but also to get us to participate in deception to gain power and influence. The kingdom of darkness is founded on deception. You get rid of deception you get rid of the kingdom of darkness. It's that simple.

This brings me to a very dark story, probably the darkest, most shocking story in the New Testament, the story of Ananias and Sapphira. It's a story that bothers Christians because we always think of God's wrath, God killing people, for example, as being kind of an Old Testament thing, and so when we see God strike down these two people, kill them, it shakes us in a way because it messes with our theology and other things. Raphael painted this painting, the famous Death of Ananias. It's something that people think about a lot when they think about the book of Acts, about God's power. I remember hearing another preacher, he talked about how he would have preachers that would come and he'd say "the days of Ananias and Sapphira are coming!" trying to strike fear into the congregation. And what's interesting, for those of you who don't know the story of Ananias and Sapphira, in Acts chapter 5, God's spirit is moving with so much power in the church. There are miracles happening and people are coming to faith every day. And everyone is so alive in this that they just kind of create in the Jerusalem church almost like this commune type group. Everybody sells their stuff, they all sort of pile it together, and anybody that's in need can pull almost like the Essenes community, they become almost like a monastery or something. And all sorts of people are coming in. Well there is this couple, a married couple Ananias and Sapphira who sell all of their property, and they bring half the money, not all of the money, to the apostles and secretly hide the other half. Well God reveals this to Peter and He says first to the husband, Ananias, who's there alone, is this all the money? And he says yes, it's all the money. And he says no, you lied to the Holy Spirit and then boom, he dies. And so it's this like whoa. And so these young men carry Ananias' body out and bury him, and then Sapphira, being a part of the ploy but not knowing that her husband was dead, then comes in and Peter says the same thing to her. He says is it all the money? And she says yep, it's all the money. And boom.. actually there's this haunting line where he says "whoa to you. Hear the feet of the men who buried your husband. They're coming for you." Boom, she dies so there's this very like dark passage about God's wrath in the new covenant.

To take a quick detour, it's so important to understand, first of all, that although the Bible doesn't say it, most Bible commentators say Ananias and Sapphira were not Christians. And this is something we assume. We assume because they're giving money to the church that they're Christians, but the scripture doesn't say they're baptized or they're Christians or they made a confession of faith. And the reason this is important is that for us as Christians, even though we sin and we make mistakes, when God's.. so we're getting into deep theology here.. when God's wrath comes upon us, because of our baptism, that wrath moves to the cross.

And that's why the cross and resurrection is so important. That's how we're saved is that all of us have sinned, all of us have made mistakes, all of us have done these things. So this is why there is people dying a lot more in the Old Testament than the New is when God's wrath comes upon a Christian in terms of like death and punishment, it goes to the cross. So Ananias and Sapphira not being Christians, when they came into the church, they didn't have that sort of protection over them. And I think this is important because I know God doesn't strike down Christians and that's something that we can rejoice about. But even more important, it's important to see a lesson that there was something about this thing that they were doing. Now first of all, it's not greed. Although greed's bad, right? It wasn't greed, it was deception. Peter even says to Ananias – you could have kept the money yourself. It would have been fine. If you would have just given us a gift and been honest, that would have been great. But instead, he said you lied. You lied. And you lied to who? To the Holy Spirit.

And so there's something weird about this that when I read this passage, I believe Ananias and Sapphira saw a big pot of money, and that in their selling of their property, it was a ploy to gain control over all this wealth and over all of this community. And that there's something about Ananias and Sapphira that if God had not protected the church from them, I think that what they were doing might have destroyed what was happening in that community. That there's something about lying, something about deception that destroys intimacy, it destroys trust, it creates confusion.

Honesty is Easier

And here's what's crazier is there are people who come against the church in the book of Acts and they kill God's people. There are people who come against the church and beat them up. There are people.. the church itself has all sorts of persecution, many of them become enslaved. And yet this is the time where God acts with wrath. And what I read when I see this is just simply God doesn't protect the church from violence, but He does protect a church from deception. In other words, where as violence can harm the body of a church, its deception that can kill the soul of a church. And this is why it's so important for God that He protects His people from deception, from the work of Satan. And this is why we, as God's followers, should be committed to never partaking in deception of any kind; to always be honest and when we make mistakes, to just fess up and ask for grace and mercy. Everybody understands, I think. It's so important that we understand that the kingdom of darkness is founded on deception, and that little deceptive things to gain power in a church or family or anything else, can actually cause incredible harm for generations. So we don't want to do it.

So that's why for us as believers, it is so important that we understand for God that it's like the first thing God wants is just honest people. You also see this in the New Testament: God getting upset at the Pharisees, not because they're rigid, but because they're liars. Because they pretend that they're doing all the stuff that they're telling other people to do when they're not. There again, deception destroying God's people.

All right. Let's make this more positive, shall we? See the key is not just to see the danger of deception, but to see the freedom that comes with being a person of integrity. Sometimes being a person of integrity is scary. Sometimes it means blowing a whistle at your organization. Sometimes it means confronting people. Sometimes it means sharing something in your closet that you don't want someone to know. Sometimes it means being honest about your emotions and feelings. And so in almost every case, when we've been hiding something, honesty requires courage, but there is such a reward in that, and the reward is freedom – freedom and life, and by the way, it's also the best way to lead. If you want to be a great leader, if you want to be a great dad, if you want to be a great husband, you want to be a great mom, you want to be a great wife, a great girlfriend, a great employee, whatever it is, or employer, whatever it is that you're called to do, you have to be known first as an honest person. People need to know that your word is true and that they can trust you, and that they know where they're going because you told them.

And so there are just three things I want to say, just three quick tips that I think will make all the difference in the world. The first is if you're carrying a house of cards, which is what a hidden lie always turns into if it's a big one; you need more lies to keep it going, right? So you put up one little lie and then the other and you make this little t-pee, and then you got to do another one, then you go here, here, and it just becomes this house of cards that you're hoping no gust of wind comes or you don't trip over something. Just come clean. I can tell you that there is just incredible freedom in coming clean with whatever it is that you're holding. And I promise you things will not get easier. I promise you they'll get harder right away.

But this is why I think of coming clean as spring cleaning. You ever done a spring cleaning in your house? Anytime you do spring cleaning, everything's coming out of the drawers, everything's coming out from under the bed, that closet that you can barely close because towels and stuff are coming out. I have one of those. It's like you pull everything out and everything looks messier. But that's what you have to do in order to get it truly clean. That's what it's like coming clean with whatever it is that you're hiding. So think of it as spring cleaning. I promise, though, in the long run it actually will get easier.

Number two: if you struggle with little petty lies, I think we should all make a commitment to just not do that. To never do that. Even if you think it's not a big deal, just don't participate in it at all to the best you can.

And I want to employ something that we had when we were kids called the five second rule for food. Remember that? If you drop candy, if you drop your pizza, if you drop a banana, you drop an apple. Actually we agreed bananas are out. You can't do bananas because it's kind of sticky and it'll grab things, but anything that's not sticky. You got five seconds so you can pick it up off the ground and you can eat it.

So if you catch yourself saying no to this or yes to that, and you say no I've got this thing I've got to go to, or no I've got to work tonight, you've got five seconds to fix it and it's not going to be a big deal. Nobody's going to care. Actually no, that's a few days, actually I'm feeling really tired, I'd like a night off, is it okay. And people get it, its fine. So get it? Five second rule. If you catch yourself, turn it around. Don't let it take root in your life.

Honesty is Easier

And then finally, and this is the last thing. This is super important for leaders. And this is important in your job, really, is learning how to practice what's called the positive no. Very often I think we say yes to things we don't have a yes to say, or we're not good at saying no, and so we lie to get out of things at work or whatever. And this is from William Ury. He's a guy that also wrote the book Getting to Yes. But it goes like this.

Let's say for example your boss says hey can you come to work on Friday night? You want to give a yes, then a no, then a yes. It's like a sandwich. So for example, hey Bobby, can you come and work on Friday night? The yes is yes I'm happy to work extra hours, or you're saying yes I'm going to my daughters play tonight, so you say I am happy to do some extra work, but I need to go do my daughter's play tonight, then a firm but gracious no, so I'm so sorry I can't make it tonight because I got to go to this thing, but then a yes again. But yes, let's find another time I can come in, if that's something you're okay doing. Does that make sense?

This is a great skill for leaders, by the way. It's like a yes, no, yes sandwich. Yes, so hey Bobby, can I throw this pie in your face? Yes, I enjoy pie and I enjoy having fun. No you may not throw this pie in my face, but yes Chad Blake is available. For example. Stuff like that. So it's important that we learn that as a skill, you don't have to pun it off on somebody else, but it's a great thing to get a hold of.

The most important thing is that living an honest life, being a person of integrity is so much better than getting ahead. Living an honest life, being a person of integrity is so much better than shortcuts. It's so much better than whatever reward sneaking and all of that stuff you think can give you, and being honest with the people in your life: your spouse, your friends, your parents is so much better than living in hiding. This is the best way to live life is to be honest with God, to be honest with your neighbor, and watch as it brings you tremendous serenity and freedom. You can do it. I believe in you. Be brave. You'll get there.

Lord, we thank you and we love you and we trust you, and we pray in Jesus' name that you'll help us, Lord, to do this very scary thing, which is to live honestly and act honestly and speak honestly in every part of our life. Lord, we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

Hope you had a good time today! And hope that today is a day of rest for you. Hope that you hear a word from God. I want to encourage you to not engage too much with screens and try and just be with the people you love, enjoy good food, enjoy the great weather.

And now 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.