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Hour of Power vom 08.11.2020

GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

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

HS: Welcome visitors and church family. It is easy to feel like COVID will always be here. But the truth is it is just one chapter, and it will end, and a new chapter will begin. With the Lord, you can trust that your story will be very good. Always easy? No, but very good. Thank you so much for joining us. We love you.

BS: We're so grateful that you invited our family to be with your family in your home, or wherever it is that you are. It's so hard when lonely times like this can split us up, but we just want you to know that we're thinking of you and we love you, and we hope that today you receive a touch from God through this program, and that you leave feeling encouraged. I just think so many people are already discouraged enough and that the church.. encouragement is a spiritual gift, the Bible says. It means to give people heart, and so we pray that you leave this broadcast or wherever it is that you're watching, with a full heart, with a full cup. We're just going to pray that over you now.

Father, we come to you in Jesus' name and we ask that for everyone under the sound of our voice, that you would do what you do best; that you would save us, encourage us, lift us up, call us, strengthen us when we're weak, give us joy when we're feeling blue. Lord, that is what you do. You're so wonderful to us and I pray that those who are listening would receive a miracle from you today; an outpouring of your Holy Spirit; a refreshing, a renewing. Lord, we thank you and we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

HS: Amen. Turn around to the person in your living room and say God loves you and so do I.

SCRIPTURE – Exodus 3:15-17; 21-22 - Hannah

In preparation for the message, Exodus 3:15 and 21:

God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation. Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites; a land flowing with milk and honey.' And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed. Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians."

Church family, God has a great call for this chapter of your life, no matter your age. Amen.

INTERVIEW – JASON ROMANO

{VOICE OVER: Jason Romano is an author and a podcast host for Sports Spectrum, a site where faith and sports meet. He spent 17 years as a producer at ESPN, where he learned some valuable life and leadership lessons. He explores these in his new book, The Uniform of Leadership, which looks at how we can be servant leaders in our workplaces and communities. Please welcome, Jason Romano!}

BS: Jason hi, welcome. Thank you so much for joining us today.

JR: Bobby, so good to be with you. Thanks for having me.

BS: This is a fun interview for me. I'm a big sports guy and I've listened to your podcast. It's really great and I just love what you're doing teaching on leadership and kind of employing both of these things. But for people who haven't seen you on ESPN or haven't listened to your podcast, tell us a little bit about your faith journey, and sort of how you got here in your walk with God.

JR: I grew up going to church on occasion with my grandfather. I would say I was not a Christian; I just kind of did it to do it because my grandfather wanted me to do it, and would reward me if I went to church with him. But it wasn't until I was 27 years old, actually, as a follower of Christ began that journey, began that walk. My brother Chris who is a pastor, is the one who led me to the Lord, and my heart was open that day. I could spend hours telling you about what took place. But it was one of those moments that was really poignant for me because it went from understanding that church was a thing on Sunday's that I might have done occasionally, to actually beginning a relationship with the Lord. And I had not heard that word before. So it was the relationship aspect of connecting with Christ as Savior was really what kind of opened my eyes to my faith, and I've been on that journey now for 19 years as a believer. The sports side of things, and the ESPN side of things was something that I really desired from an early age and went into a career in broadcasting and kind of pursued that, and before I was a Christian, really went into this journey of trying to accomplish and achieve and eventually get to ESPN.

BS: It's such a great story, too. I love that both your grandpa and your brother played a role. So as you go into, like ESPN and you work in the sports world, it's not always the most faith-friendly environments. Sports can be really family friendly, but I know behind the scenes, especially a place like ESPN, I'm sure it wasn't always easy to be a man of faith, but also successful. But you were successful. How was that like holding both of those things?

JR: It was a push/pull for many years. It wasn't until about ten years into my journey, Bobby that I really understood that work could be worship; that I could actually have a ministry that consisted of me going to work every day at ESPN. For many years, I really thought that this was separate. That church on Sunday's, even after I had become a Christian, that church on Sunday's, maybe a Bible study middle of the week, certainly my prayer time, my time with the Lord reading the word, was kind of that world, that was church, that was my faith, and then going to work was separate. It wasn't until a time in 2010 when a guy named Coach Tony Dungee, you might have heard of him, came to ESPN and I spent the day with Coach Dungee and he asked me a question that changed my life forever. He simply said 'how do you live your faith out in the workplace here at ESPN, Jason?' I had not been asked that question before, Bobby and so I didn't have a real good answer for him. But it was after that moment that I recognized that I wasn't just an ESPN producer who happened to be a Christian, I was a Christian wherever I went, who happened to be a producer at ESPN, who happened to be a husband and a dad or whatever, and wherever I was, that this Jesus walk could be the center of who I was and not just a piece of my life.

BS: I really want people at home to not miss what he just said there. I mean this is so important. For a lot of committed Christians, your walk with God is this private part of your life, but it really needs to encompass everything, and it actually brings joy to your work, doesn't it.

JR: Yes, I was focused on others. I took myself out of the equation in trying to achieve and accomplish, just like everybody wants to when they're working at a place like ESPN. It allowed me to enjoy my job better because I was about service; I was about service to others, just like Jesus said Matthew 20:28, "I came not to be served, but to serve." That's kind of the philosophy that I adopted the last few years that I was there in trying to be the best example of a follower of Christ that I could, and it started with serving my people and my teammates around me.

BS: I think you said you were at ESPN for 17 years, and then you left to go into fulltime ministry. What was that decision like? If you had already been living this out in the workplace, it must have been a tough call to make for you.

JR: It was very, very difficult. I wish I could tell you it was so easy, and God was clearly saying time to leave, but it was hard. I mean it's the comforts of working at a place like ESPN. It paid well; we had amazing benefits and all of these other perks that come from working there. Whenever I think God calls us to do something, it's usually an uncomfortable circumstance. That's just my experience in talking to others, and certainly for me. I just felt like God was saying I want you to do more for me.

I didn't even know if that meant, Bobby, leaving ESPN, but I just sensed that for a couple years and I spent 2016, 2-0-1-6 really just trying to understand what that meant, and all I did was build relationships with other people outside of ESPN. I just wanted to learn people's journeys, wanted to connect with different people, pastors, authors, different people, and through that I figured God will open up a door if it's meant to open up and it'll be pretty clear to me. I had some people speak that into my life, as well, for that couple years. Then the opportunity came to go into, not just ministry, but sports ministry so I was taking all of the skills and the talents and the desires that I had as far as being a sports person, and now I could bring them into the ministry place and be able to kind of do what I had done at ESPN as far as producing and creating content, but now I felt like I could do that for a greater purpose. Listen, it wasn't easy, Bobby. It was a 40% pay cut, it was walking away from ESPN, it was no benefits initially, but like I said, sometimes God calls us to go into that uncomfortable space and take that leap. And now that I look back three years later, I could see God's hand was in it all.

BS: I can tell - you seem so grateful that you made what I would guess is the right choice. That you did.. not that it's the right choice for everybody, but for you in that moment, it took a lot of faith, lot of courage, lot of Chutzpah even. We've been talking about that in our worship service. And this book that you've just written, *The Uniform of Leadership* is so great and so needed right now about servant leadership. Tell people why you wrote this book and kind of what you hope they'll get from it if they read it.

JR: Thank you, Bobby. I mean the goal in writing.. first of all, I never wanted to write books. That was not my call, I felt like. It was really to do production and broadcasting, in that kind of world. God opened up some doors to write a book and if I was ever going to write a book, if you'd have talked to me five years ago, this would have been the book to write because so many people come up to me and say what was it like to work at ESPN? I really wanted it to be a love letter to my time at ESPN, but also not just to entertain people, but to be able to encourage people and help them on their journey's to be better leaders and to put that into their life, to apply that into their life. For me, turning this book into a leadership book was what did that and it really centers around that idea of serving others and coming back to being a light where you are, blooming where you're planted. And that's why I wrote it, really just to encourage others, and to share stories from my time at ESPN.

BS: That's awesome. If you're at home and you have a management team, you're an employer, or maybe you have a sports team, or maybe you have a ministry team, and you want some fresh training on leadership, maybe how to do servant leadership within an organization, I really want to recommend *The Uniform of Leadership* by Jason Romano. Jason, thank you. It's a privilege to have you here, and we're so grateful that you spent this Sunday with us.

JR: Bobby, thanks so much for having me. You're awesome and it's been an honor. Thanks.

BS: Thanks, God bless.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Please stand with us, hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord, and let's say this creed together as we do every single week: 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 "Take a Chance!"

Today I want to talk in this chutzpah series, I want to talk about the importance, especially during this time, of not giving in to the path of least resistance. You are talking to someone who is tempted by this all the time. I'm sure you are, where there's like two paths you can go, and one is so easy and no one will know. I can reach for those Doritos and crawl up on a couch and watch Last Dance, which is amazing, by the way. It's a great, great show. And then there's this other path. I can get out of bed and I can do the thing I'm supposed to do. I can answer God's call. And yes, sometimes we need rest, absolutely, and a lot of times we need refreshing, and a lot of times we need retreat, but my sense is that during this COVID pandemic, there is such, at least for me, a strong temptation to always give in to the path of least resistance, when the other path so often has so many great rewards, very often because everybody else is being lazy, everybody else is taking the path of least resistance, it's so easy to miss out on the amazing opportunities that lie before us.

Of course these two paths are something that are common throughout the whole Bible: paths I lay before you, a path that leads to life, and a path that leads to death.

I remember there's this great pastor that I've always enjoyed, and he's kind of sometimes always pushing people – Francis Chan – always pushing people to go a hundred percent for God; live all their lives for God. And he had an elder that came to him and he said 'Francis, we really appreciate your heart, but there's a middle road. There's a moderation that people really should try to achieve.' And it's funny to hear it through Francis' eyes because he goes, oh there's a middle road. I thought there was a wide easy road that led to death, and a narrow difficult road that leads to life, but apparently there's like this middle road.

It feels that way sometimes. Let's just do what everybody else is doing. Let's just be like everyone else. Let's just take the easy road. When before you lies yes, a difficult road, yes, something that's hard to do, yes, something that's harder to do now than it was a year ago for many of us, but take that road. Take a step onto that path and watch what God can do when you decide you're going to do the next right thing, even though it's hard. Joy and meaning in life come from taking responsibility. I think this is something that many people in our modern age have forgotten. That when we give up responsibility, we're also giving up a tremendous amount of meaning.

And this is true also when God calls you to do something, that even though it's hard, even if it means sacrifice financially or sacrifice of your time, you believe it's from the Lord and you do it and you take a step in that direction, you're going to find an immense amount of meaning in your life.

Don't miss out. Don't try and be in a perpetual summer, even though COVID is sort of just offering it to you in this way. Just turn against that, and decide that you're going to find a way to continue to make progress in your discipleship. To continue to make progress in your business, in your relationships, and to go in the direction that God has called you to do.

I remember, speaking of summer vacation, when I was in high school, I went to high school in Tulsa, Oklahoma, a school called Broken Arrow, we were on the eastern outskirts of the city, and we had lots of fields nearby. Summers in Oklahoma, they're not just hot, they're humid. So not only is it hot outside, it's like imagine going out to hundred degree weather but you also have like a blanket, a quilt around you, and you're breathing in the blanket, and it's brutal. In the summer, I'm lying on my couch and the air conditioning's going, and the fan is blowing, and I've got my Coke-a-cola, and I'm watching my show, and my friend Josh, who was a neighbor, loved to go fishing. And almost every single time when he called me and he wanted to go fishing, I was thinking no way, it's hot out there. I've got my Coke, I got my air conditioning, I got "Days of Our Lives," or whatever it is on in the summer.

I remember when I would say yes, I would look back when I was tempted to say no and go man I'm so glad I'm out here fishing. I'm so glad I'm out here with my friend. I'm so glad I made a decision to do this thing. I made a rule with myself: anytime Josh called me in the summer to go fishing, unless I was an emergency or something, I would say yes. I would never allow TV and air conditioning and a Coke-a-cola to beat out a day fishing with a good friend.

This is how we should be when God calls us. When there's this thing that we feel that God needs us to do, when we're called to do the next right thing, even though it's difficult, when we're called to be with our kids or our wife or when a friend needs us, and there's just this lethargy that comes over it, but join the club. I'm there! It's hard, it's very hard sometimes to do the next right thing. Make a choice today that when that time comes, and it will come, this week even for many of you, make a decision that even though you don't feel like doing it, you're going to move in the direction of the right thing because God has a reward in store for people who make decisions like that.

That's the kind of person you are. You're not a lazy lethargic person. Maybe you're feeling that way during this time, but I believe you're the kind of hard working, smart, responsible person who can make a huge difference in someone's life during this time. People today need people like you. Joyful people. Giving people. Hopeful people to enter into their lives and encourage them and hold their hand and help them get out of bed, just as you got yourself out of bed, and I believe God's going to do that for many of you this week. All that to say let's talk about Moses. The text today spans over two chapters, and there's this great story about Moses. It's interesting his life; his, I think, is my favorite story in the Old Testament. It's one reason I always come back to Moses. Moses, we know many of us how he was born as a Hebrew but adopted by an Egyptian princess, and grew up a wealthy prince with all sorts of power in the court of Pharaoh. In the bronze age, the Egyptian empire was one of the wealthiest and strongest empires that ever had existed in human history.

And here is Moses growing up in that court. Amazing. He's full of wealth and the best meals, probably had girls and he had all sorts of entertaining things available to him, and probably took advantage of those things, enjoyed them.

One day, he starts to get this sense in his heart that although on the outside he's an Egyptian, on the inside he's a Hebrew. And he sees his Hebrew brothers and sisters being enslaved, being taken advantage of. Maybe he equates and realizes, man, the food I'm eating on my table, the wealth I'm enjoying every day is the result of my own people being enslaved. How can I live like this? And begins to feel a stirring, until one day this Egyptian prince, who's a Hebrew on the inside, sees one of his brothers being taken advantage of and beaten by an Egyptian soldier. And Moses, being in some ways heroic but in other ways cowardly, murders this man and buries him in the sand and he thinks he's done a good thing.

The next day he sees his Hebrew brothers arguing with one another and he tells them brothers, why are you fighting? And they say will you kill us like you killed that Egyptian? He finds out that people know that he murdered this Egyptian soldier, and his step-father, the Pharaoh is going to come after him. And so now he doesn't know what to do. Or maybe it's his grandfather, wasn't it. Yes, it would be his step-grandfather. Well anyway.

Moses flees, and he flees to the land of Midian. Now I want to pause here for a moment because age is an important part of this story. When Moses flees Egypt to the land of Midian, he is 40-years-old. Okay? He is 40-years-old. And the land of the Midianites, which is like northwestern Arabia, is sort of, in many ways, there's some evidence that shows that many of the Midianites maybe were worshipping Yahweh. It's interesting that there are actually Gentiles in the Middle East who were descendants of Abraham, who like Balaam, for example, seems to know and worship Yahweh, but he's not a Hebrew. The Midianites were the descendants of Keturah, who was Abraham's second wife after Sarah died, and it seems that they're worshipping Yahweh, although that's from extra Biblical texts. And when Moses flees into the land of the Midianites, he sees these girls who have sheep and they're trying to water their sheep, and there are these other shepherds who are big burly men, and they decide to push the women away from the well where the sheep are drinking from the water. Moses, this Egyptian, intervenes and helps them water their sheep.

These girls go back to their dad Jethro and they say this Egyptian rescued us and he helped us! And Jethro goes invite him to dinner! And then this long thing happens where Moses marries Jethro's daughter Zipporah, and now he's found his home. And 40 years later, 40 years later, he arrives at the Sinai.

Now before I continue this story, think about that. He's a 40-year-old prince who flees Egypt, and another 40 years goes by before his experience in the burning bush. When Moses arrives, just think about this: I think he thinks his life is over. You might be watching and go hey, hey 80 doesn't mean my life is over. The average life expectancy in America is 78.54 years old. The average life expectancy in the bronze age, because I looked it up, I know, is 26. If you live to be 80, that's really good back then. If you escape the many plagues and wars and murders and injustices and all the other things that can happen to you, and you make it to 80, you're doing pretty good.

So often when we think of Moses going to the burning bush, we picture a middle age or even sometimes a young man being called to the burning bush. It fits our American narrative, doesn't it, that the young dreamer going out to find his new thing, but Moses was an old man when he started his calling. I found this picture of a middle eastern man in his 70's and this is maybe what Moses looked like; weathered, been through a lot, away from home, away from his mother and his family, and they don't know where he is, and he's disappeared, a fugitive. And he's been a shepherd for 40 years. Can you imagine from 40 to 80 years old, just a shepherd and out of nowhere comes this burning bush.

When we think of Moses, think of an old man. Not a young man full of hope and dreams, an old man that's winding down his life. That's what he thinks he is! And when he sees this burning bush, the rabbis make a big deal about this. They say that one reason God waited until Moses was 80 was because they needed a man who was patient enough to observe a bush that was burning but wasn't being consumed. In the desert to see a bush on fire is perhaps a rare thing, but not super rare, and you just see a bush burning and you move on. But to see a bush and continue to watch it and notice, takes several minutes to realize it's not actually being consumed. Moses approaches this bush and he sees it, and out of the bush comes this voice – Moses, Moses. Moses says in an old ragged, tired voice, says here I am.

And the voice is the voice of Yahweh and He says Moses, I have heard the cry of my people, the descendants of your forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and I want you to go to Pharaoh and to tell him from me let my people go.

This is what's amazing to me about this story. We often miss it. It almost, when you read the story, feels like.. what is that comic group from England the Monty Python. It feels like a Monty Python skit because God keeps telling Moses all the great things that are going to happen, and Moses basically says four times he shouldn't be the one, he shouldn't go. God says I've heard this cry. Go to Pharaoh. And Moses says who am I? He's thinking I'm just this random fugitive that's a shepherd. Who am I that you would.. and there's a fear in his voice. I'm an old man! I'm this guy, I'm out here in the middle of nowhere.

What does God say? I will be with you. I will go with you. You won't be alone. And when you go, I'm going to take you and your people into a land flowing with milk and honey, and when you go, your sons and daughters are going to be regaled with gold and silver and wealth. And this is a great opportunity to bring freedom and life to your people.

And then what does Moses say? This is excuse number two: they're not going to believe me. What if they don't believe me that I saw some burning bush, this random guy in the desert. They don't know who I am. What if they don't believe me? And then God says to him, okay take your staff and throw it down and it turns into a snake and then pick it up and it turns back into a staff. And stick your hand in your cloak and it's these miracles. He does all these miracles and then Moses says all right, but what if I'm not eloquent? He goes I'm not good at speaking, I can't talk to people. I have this stutter and this speaking thing, and then God says to him, who made mouths! I'm going to help you, okay? You're going to go and you're going to speak and I'm going to bring your people into this amazing place flowing with milk and honey. Haven, when Hannah was reading, she said what's milk and honey mean? I said it means it's delicious. No I said milk and honey is a Jewish euphemism that means it's a land that has both pasture for cattle and sheep, and farmable land. I don't know why honey is associated with farms, but it's a euphemism from those days. That's what it means. Okay. He says who gives humans mouths? And then finally Moses just says pardon your servant. Just pick someone else. He just says it plainly. And then it says the Lord's anger burns. He goes (ROARS) He's just like so angry. And then there's like this awkward moment, and then it seems like God goes all right, what about your brother Aaron? It's literally what He asks. What about your brother Aaron, who by the way is 83 during this time. What if he speaks for you? And then Moses never replies. You never even see a reply from Moses. He just goes and tells his family he's going back to Egypt. The reason I bring up this story is this is me. This is you. And when you've been doing the same thing for 40 years and you're good at it and it's the thing you do and you're just kind of, maybe you're winding things down and you thought you were going to retire, or you thought, I don't know, whatever it is, and then this big thing comes into your life, no matter how old you are or how young you are, it is so easy, especially now during COVID to just go – pick someone else, Lord. Or to say not right now, Lord. Or to say I'm not good at that, Lord, or I don't have the time, Lord, or what about money. What about this. What about that. It's so easy when a great opportunity comes your way, when God calls you to do something, or especially when it's the moral, right, good thing to do for your neighbor, for yourself, to just go no, I don't need that, I'm not going to do that right now.

I want to encourage you, my friend, that there is going to be a time.. decide now, maybe you're feeling good right now and you're not feeling that calling. Decide now that when the moment comes, that an opportunity comes and you don't feel good, you don't feel like doing it, you don't feel like getting out of bed, make a decision today that when tomorrow comes, you're going to say yes. Make a decision today that when the week comes and an opportunity is laid before you, you're not going to make an excuse for yourself as to why you can't do it or why you're not going to go after what God wants you to do. If you make the decision today and you remember it, then when that opportunity comes, you'll say yes and you'll be glad you did. You'll be glad you did. You'll be glad you, like Moses, did what God called you to do. People need you. People need you. They need people like you. People full of joy, full of life, full of vision. And the more you take steps in the direction of these types of things, the more you break free from the bondage of the law of inertia.

You know the law of inertia? It's one of Newton's laws. It says something like objects in motion stay in motion unless acted on by an outside force. Objects at rest stay at rest unless acted on by an outside force. Look at your kids. This is a perfect example. Look at people that you work with. There is a saying that goes if you want something done, give it to a busy person.

There is some truth to that! That people who are doing things and are active in things, are really good at doing more things. And people who have not been working, becomes very hard to do something, even that first thing because they lack the momentum and they lack the discipline and this ongoing thing.

I want to encourage you not to give in to that law of inertia. Or, maybe, let me be the outside force acting upon you, telling you today get up! Brush yourself off and go do the thing that God's called you to do. Don't wait any longer. Don't make excuses. Don't miss out on the great destiny God has for you. Go after it. It's not too late. You're not too old, you're not too anything. You're not too young, God's going to do this, I believe, in your life. There are so many excuses we're going to make during, especially COVID, but when an opportunity comes before us that's difficult, or a decision comes before us that's a character issue that's difficult to make.

One thing that many of us are going to say is well everyone else is kind of lazy, too. This is a great opportunity to catch up on my favorite show. This is a great opportunity to beat my favorite game. This is a good opportunity, whatever, to be lazy because nobody's going to give me a hard time for that. Nobody's going to shame me. And let me just say to you it's a great opportunity for you to do what no one else is doing. If you do what everyone else is doing, you're going to get the same results everyone else is getting. See, God doesn't want you to live a normal, plain Jane life. God wants you to do some of the most amazing things that only you can do, that are just right for you. And you have to do lots of little things before you start doing lots of big things.

So don't look at everybody else and say well my friends are doing this, my family's doing thing, its okay to do this during this time. Don't allow yourself to be weak-minded in that way. You are not that person. Be the strong person you were born to be, to get out of bed and get ready no matter where you are in life, and do the thing God has called you to do.

Do not allow yourself to become a victim of Procrustes. You guys know the Procrustean bed? In Greek myth, there is a villain named Procrustes who is on the sacred road to Athens, on the mountain pass, it's a very difficult part to get to Athens. And Procrustes would always invite travelers to come and stay at his inn. And it's a myth, Procrustes has this bed, and if you don't fit the bed perfectly, he's going to help you out by if you're too tall, he'll chop off your legs so you fit perfectly, and if you're too short, he'll stretch you out. And this has become an analogy to what so many organizations and cultures do to people. That in an attempt to help them, various organizations harm people in trying to make them fit the perfect mold that is the Procrustean bed. Schools sometimes do this. Religion sometimes does this. The government is now kind of starting to do this to some people. Political institutions are beginning to do this. All sorts of families and sub groups and sub cultures try to do this to you, fit the mold. If you're too short, stretch it out. If you're too long, chop it off. And that is not you. Don't worry about being like everyone else. Don't fall victim to the Procrustean bed. Only ask yourself this question: is what I'm doing the right thing? Is what I am doing honoring God? Is what I am doing true to who I am? If the answer is yes, don't worry about the other things. Do what is wise and do what is good, and that is all you need to do. And if you do that, you'll be going in the right direction. Trust me, friend, don't fall a victim to Procrustes. Don't sleep in his bed. You'll be disappointed if you do, and so many people are.

Another excuse so many of us make is God doesn't want to do great things through someone like me. Again, it's that Procrustean mindset that maybe you say to yourself too often, I'm too old. I have a great friend that I think should go back into ministry and he just says oh, I'm too old. No one wants a pastor like me. I can see him struggling with this. And there are other people who are young, teenagers who I think man, you should do this thing or that thing, and they're like oh, I don't have enough experience, or no one wants to hire me to do that. I always think have you tried? Have you kept trying?

Don't allow someone to say you're too old or don't say to yourself I'm too young. Or don't say to yourself I'm too poor. I think sometimes.. I've been poor before, and it's hard to break free of a lot of the habits of your community because when you're poor, you sometimes can kind of commiserate with your other friends, and you feel weird when you start to break free from that. Don't allow people to say or don't say to yourself I can't do it because of my race, or because of my gender. You can do anything God calls you to do! Did God say that? Did God say you can't do it because of your age or because of your race or your gender? Did He say that here? If it's not here, it doesn't matter. If He said you can do it, you can do it. You can do it. And just trust that even though you're going to make mistakes, God has such a great plan for you. I'm so proud of you. It's okay.

I know you've made mistakes, I know you have a past, I know you've got stuff that you're struggling with. God doesn't call perfect people. In fact, very often when He calls us in our messiness and sometimes our sin and we still decide to go in the direction He's called us to do, He begins to work out those things on the journey with us, and that's a great thing. Don't beat yourself up. You're going to do a great job, and you'll never know unless you try.

See this is something else I think about. I have this thing; I tried to give it a name. I was like what do I call this? It's this principle I sort of live by, and I just decided to call it the principle of washing out regrets. There are so many times that, yeah, it's probably not going to work out, but what if it would have, and then I'll never have known. What if it would have and I'll never have known. And there was like very little downside.

So an obvious example, you're like what does that mean? Like an obvious example on a small scale is like when you're a road trip, and you go to In-n-Out, and everybody gets out and they order, and everybody goes to the bathroom except for you because you didn't have to go. And then everybody's loaded up back in the car and you're eating your burger, and the car starts, you're about to leave and you have to go just a little, and you're like should I go? I only have to go like 20%/25%. That's going to be a huge inconvenience to everybody else. Go! Right? You go, you got to go because if you don't do it now, 30 minutes from now when you're dying, you're going to be a huge inconvenience to everybody. There are things in life that are like that, where it's like I don't know, should I do this? Think about how much regret you're going to have and how much peace you're going to have, even if it doesn't work out, how much peace you're going to have knowing, well at least I tried. At least I know now it wasn't meant to be. At least it's okay. And even still, you will have learned something from that experience.

See this is what it means to fail well. You can't succeed before you fail, you got to fail lots and lots of times before you succeed. It's true of playing piano, it's true of riding a bike, it's true of everything in life. You can't expect to just come out of the gate a winner. You have to start off a loser like everybody else, and you got to get there. You got to get to that place, and be okay with the fact that I am just not going to worry about failing. I'm going to continue to fail well, to do good at continuing to pursue this thing that I'm supposed to do. Don't allow that final excuse – what if I fail? What if I fail, this type of thing.

Some other things I just want to say, so many people, from a financial standpoint or others, are waiting for the government to save them. Friend, the government is not going to save you. If the government sends you a check, or wants to help you, that's great. Take it. It's a great opportunity. But have you ever been to the DMV? Or a courthouse? Or the post office? This is the way the government helps people.

I remember when we were at our post office near Costa Mesa, I was waiting in line for a long time, and I had this just little package I had to mail, and there was one guy, and then one person went, the next person went, the next person went, and then finally it was my turn, and just as I go up, he like puts his little sign in the thing, and he says sorry, I'm taking a lunch break. He takes his little lunch out and begins eating, and then like sits back and begins to play Pokémon Go on his phone. See this is the thing. So many people right now are just.. and I understand, it's a hard time financially, but they're just like I need that \$600 a month right now, or \$400, or whatever it is. I hope you get it, I hope the government helps you, but you don't need the government. You don't need any of these other things! All you need is the Lord. I just believe that if you can believe, that the destiny, that your destiny is your own to get, and not waiting on someone else, or some organization, or waiting on your pension, or waiting on your company, or waiting on anyone else, but you decide to take your own life in your own hands and walk with the Lord, and go after what He's called you to do, you'll be so glad you did.

God has given you way more power than you give yourself credit for. Way more power. Way more and so much of taking these risks and stepping out of the boat in this way, is understanding I had this in me all along. And you do. I'm proud of you. You're going to do so, so, so great.

Finally, think about this. Blaise Pascal who was a mathematician, but also was a deep believer, had this thing called Pascal's Wager, and this is how he came to faith. He said okay there's basically I have four choices: God exists, God doesn't exist. I believe in God, or I don't believe in God. If God exists and I believe in Him, and He really does exist, I'm going to have eternal happiness in heaven. If I believe in God but He doesn't exist, nothing happens. If God exists and I don't believe in God, its eternal damnation in hell. But if God does not exist and I don't believe in God, nothing happens.

It's interesting when you read Pascal, this is how he made like a personal decision to become a Christian, and he writes later on that it didn't affect much in his life. He had to actually receive a touch from the Holy Spirit. But still Pascal's Wager is, in a way, that way of thinking about how so often in life we are just setting up so many regrets because we just are taking the path of least resistance. We're giving in to the comfort of bed, giving into the comfort of air conditioning, procrastinating, I'll do it tomorrow, I'll do it next week.

Meanwhile, there are people who are hurting that need you. There is a destiny that's calling, and its going to keep calling out to you, and every day there is going to be this thing in the back of your head wondering what if I had done that? What if I stepped out of the boat? What if I took a walk in the difficult path, especially in a time like COVID when very few people are doing that? What if you were different? And you are. You are different. You're unique. You're the only you that's you, and God needs you today.

When the time comes this week, or next month, and you know you need to do the right thing, and it will be very hard for you emotionally to do it, do it. Don't do it tomorrow, don't do it next week, don't even wait a minute, don't even wait a second, just do it. Do it and go for it and watch how God will use that to develop in your life.

Many of you are on the fence about your faith, and many of you, you're like I don't know. I like church, I like Hour of Power, (of course you like Hour of Power), that's great. I like these types of things. I don't have anything against religion. My girlfriend's a Christian, or my parents are Christians, and I think it's good and its noble, but it's not for me. I want to say to you make a decision today to follow Christ. It's good to pray a prayer and I think that that can be a good way to do it, but really at the end of a day, becoming a Christian is just making a commitment to follow Jesus. It's just deciding today, I'm not going to be lukewarm. I'm either going to be hot or I'm going to be cold. I'm either going to do it, or I'm not going to do it. Stop waiting. Make a decision today to go after God with all your heart, and watch what He can do. If you give God just a little bit of faith, He's going to give you a great destiny, a great life, a life full of yes, mistakes and shortcomings and struggle, but on the back end, a life full of meaning, full of purpose and full of joy! That's what life means when you follow after Christ with all your heart, and it means eternal life. None of us know when the end is coming. For some of us who are young, it could be tomorrow. For some of us who are old, it could be years from now. At the end of the day, stop waiting to make a decision to become the person you were called to be. Choose the Lord today. Make a choice. Make a choice and make it now, and watch as God will do great things in your life.

Father, we thank you and we love you so much. Thank you that you're so patient with us. Lord, I thank you that even though many of us have felt like we missed out on our destiny, when we missed out on our calling, or that we're too far gone to be used by God, or maybe we have too many doubts about the Lord or about faith, I know, God, that if even one percent of us believes and 99% of us doubts, you can use that 1%. So we give whatever percentage of our heart we can, so that someday we can give it all to you, Lord. I pray for everyone under the sound of my voice who is wrestling with a decision to follow you, or to do the next right thing, Lord, we thank you that you can use all things, both our victories and our losses, to develop us deeper into the types of people that you've called us to be. More than anything, we want to be disciples and learn from you, Lord. We love you; it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

Thank you for joining us. And for the benediction, 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 peace, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.