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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. Hello.

HS: Welcome visitors and church family. We're so happy that you're here. You know the Bible says that because of God's great love for us, He has made us alive in Christ and given us spiritual authority through Jesus Christ. You are loved.

BS: Amen. We're so grateful that you're here, wherever you are, and we just believe God has a good word for you today. Let's begin with a word of prayer.

Father, we love you and thank you that your Holy Spirit is present in this room and we just begin to relax ourselves and trust in the saving work of Jesus Christ. Thank you, God, that all of our sins are forgiven, that we're renewed and that we're loved by you and so we just come before your throne boldly, not as slaves but as children saying we love you, God, and we pray Father that you'd form us into the image of Christ. It's in His name we pray, amen.

HS: Amen.

HAVEN: Amen. Turn to the person next to you and say God loves you and so do I.

SCRIPTURE – Genesis 19, 23 - 29 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Genesis 19:23:

But the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land. Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorra from the Lord out of the heavens. Thus, he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, destroying all those living in the cities and also the vegetation in the land. But Lot's wife looked back and she became a pillar of salt. Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood before the Lord. He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorra, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land like smoke from a furnace. So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that had overthrew the cities where Lot had lived. Amen.

Interview Bobby Schuller (BS) and Mark Clark (MC)

Mark Clark is an author and pastor who founded Village Church, a dynamic church with a global online outreach and campuses all across Canada. Through his teaching and his books, he seeks to reach those who are skeptical about Jesus and His teachings, while also challenging Christians to go deeper in their faith. His new book, *The Problem of Jesus: Answering a Skeptic's Challenges to the Scandal of Jesus*, looks at who the Savior really was and asks the question, "Why do we keep getting who Jesus was wrong?"

BS: Mark, hi! Welcome! Thank you for joining us.

MC: Thanks for having me, sir. Hello! Good morning to yah!

BS: You're in BC freezing, huh?

MC: Vancouver, yes. It is snowing here. It is cold.

BS: That's funny. Well, we're so glad you're with us this morning and for those who don't know your story, tell us a little bit about yourself and sort of how you got started in your mission.

MC: Yes, I didn't grow up in the church at all, Bobby, so I kind of started exploring Jesus later in high school, and kind of grew up in a home that was somewhat atheistic or agnostic, at least. My dad actually named my brother Matthew but wanted to spell his name with one "T" so that it wouldn't be Biblical and then four years later named me Mark, so clearly he had never picked up a Bible.

And so that's kind of world I grew up in, and so then I started exploring Jesus and I was like man, I started reading the gospels and I was getting into a bunch of trouble and stuff you do in the teen years when you don't know Jesus. And I met Jesus in the pages of the Bible. Augustine says the Bible is the face of God for us now; that's the kind of power it is, and that's what I encountered.

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I started exploring Jesus and gave my life to Him, and then some people came around me and started to say 'I think you should be going into ministry.' And I was like I don't know what that means. And so I started studying the Bible and then came out to BC and did a masters degree out here, and I was going to go on and do some schooling and then God said I want you to plant a church. And so I said 'well why would I plant a church in Canada? No one likes Jesus here.' 16 of us planted a church in my house and just started going through the Bible verse by verse and telling people about Jesus, and telling them that He was the hero. They were not the hero of their own life, Jesus is the hero and people started to meet Jesus, and then the church just kind of exploded and now it's been a bunch of years and we have some campuses across Canada and God has done some really cool things, so.

BS: It's awesome what you're doing in Canada. And I think it's great how, especially in a city like Vancouver that you're able to have such a huge impact. I think it's amazing. I'm really stoked to hear about your new book *The Problem of Jesus*. And you kind of tackle this issue because a lot of people really do take issue with the idea of Jesus, like even if you say Jesus out loud and you're not swearing, it makes people feel uncomfortable. Tell me: Why did you write this book?

MC: I wanted to take what I knew about Jesus and what this person that profoundly changed my life and transformed my life and put it in a whole other direction, and gave me joy, purpose, meaning, fulfillment, which is what we're all looking for. Whether you're a skeptic or a believer, it's written for both people because we're all looking for the meaning of life, the purpose. Why do I exist? The joy. And Jesus comes and He offers abundant life. He doesn't just offer rules, He doesn't offer religion, He offers how to be truly human both in the present and of course then to be with God in eternity forever. A quantity and a quality of life, and I wanted as many people as possible to be able to go you know I might be a skeptic and I want to wrestle with the question, so for instance, how do the gospels work? Can we trust these books that tell us about this person of Jesus? Did He even exist? All that, but then also, if I already know Jesus, how do I actually get Him so that He's fulfilling my life and giving me what He offers, which is true joy, but also giving me steel in my spine when the world goes dark; when I lack hope, when something tragic happens in my life, Jesus is going to be the one that carries me through those things, because if we trust to beauty or success or fame or having a good family or whatever, those things will let us down. Jesus is the only one who transcends those things when all those things fall apart.

BS: When you're thinking of a skeptic, are you thinking of like more of the scientific, biological kind of skeptic in the university, like a Hitchens-type person, or are you thinking more of like the everyday working man who just doesn't have time for religion. What type of skeptic are you thinking of when you write this book?

MC: It's both and so the first kind is the kind that would say history doesn't allow Jesus to exist, for instance. I meet people on the street in Vancouver all the time, like 'He didn't even exist as a historic..' so we got to get into a couple academic chapters to be able to go no, He actually did exist and this is why and here's the evidence and this is why the gospels are trusted and all of that.

On the flip side, there's the regular Joe, just your neighbor who probably, to be honest, Bobby, the reasons they don't believe in Jesus have probably very little to do with like all the academic stuff and more to do with like the thing behind the thing. Like what's the fear that if I give my life to Him what my girlfriend's going to say, or what my neighbor's going to say, or what my co-workers going to say. Let's explore that and at least be willing to kind of doubt our doubts and examine the real reason why we don't believe.

BS: Yes, I think that there are so many men, too, who just don't want any more restrictions in their life. I feel like there's a lot of husbands where their wives are totally committed to the Lord, and they're sort of a Christian in name only, kind of, but don't really have a personal faith. I think so often for men, there's all of the restrictions in terms of girls, there's restrictions in terms of like I have to go to church, I got to tithe. They always think of all the stuff they feel like they're going to have to give up. So many men, too, that I know of really are already feeling empty and they don't think of Christ as the answer to that emptiness. They think of it's just more restrictions, more emptiness, more boring-ness. And I think that so much of your book, you really get to the heart of people, not just men. I'm speaking as a man, but you get to people in general who just are feeling that way, and I think it's awesome.

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MC: Yes, I think that we're all looking for an adventure, we're all looking for something that's going to be bigger than ourselves, and whether men or women, and it's like Jesus is the ultimate way to do that. This is not boring dry bones, just believing a bunch of stuff. This is a way to have radical transformation in your life and to go on an adventure that you never could have dreamed of.

BS: If you're watching right now and you are not a believer or you're not really a believer and you're kind of like thinking about following the Lord, or maybe you know somebody in your life that's super skeptic but they would take a book from you, I really want to recommend *The Problem of Jesus* by Mark Clark. I think it will really help them a lot and Mark, we just want to say thank you so much for writing this book and taking the time to talk to us about it, and thank you for the ministry you're doing through Village Church. We just appreciate you so much.

MC: Awesome. Thank you so much, I appreciate you, too.

BS: God bless you. Thanks, brother.

MC: Thank you.

Declaration – Bobby Schuller

Would you stand with us? Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord. We're going to say this creed together as we do every 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 "Pillars of Salt"

About a year Pastor Jentezen Franklin told me a story that I immediately told this church. I changed my sermon and wrote it about the story that he told me. I'm going to tell it again today because it's one of those stories that stuck so much in my mind that I continue to think and meditate on it, and it's been very helpful for me and I think it could be helpful for you. When I first heard this story, I thought truly this has got to be apocryphal. This can't be a real history. It's actually, according to Jentezen and other sources, a true story. It might be embellished a little, I don't know, but it was first told by professor Russell Conwell at Temple University in a famous lecture he gave in the mid 1800's, and it's a story about a man named Ali Hafed. There was a man named Ali Hafed who owned a pretty large farm a long, long time ago, and it was in that place he had his family and he was a very content man. He had a beautiful wife, beautiful kids, a wonderful community, and was, for the most part, a well to do man who was content with his life. And one day a Hindu priest, who was an itinerant preacher, came to his farm and sat with him and he welcomed him, of course, in his house and stayed with him for a while. And they began to talk about wealth and treasure and about the origin of the universe. And this priest told Ali Hafed about diamonds, something he'd never seen before. He said there is silver and there's gold, but the most precious of these is diamonds. He said Ali Hafed, if you found a diamond the size of your fingernail, you could buy 12 of these farms. If you had a handful of diamonds, you could buy the whole county. And even still, if you had a diamond mine, you would have so much wealth you could claim titles and probably become a king or a ruler. And that night Ali Hafed went to bed dreaming about finding diamonds. The next morning, he woke up and he found the priest and he asked him where can I find these diamonds? I need to find them. And the priest said they're hard to find, but they're out there. The only place you can find diamonds, they'll always be on a riverbed with white sand between two mountains. That week, Ali Hafed sold his farm. He took his beautiful wife, his beautiful kids, and took them to his friend's house or his parent's house, I can't remember, where they would stay. And he took the money that he sold from his farm and he decided he was going to set out and find diamonds. He began first in the Mezzanine mountains and traveled all through Syria and Palestine. He went through Europe. And after he had completely run out of money and his clothing was ragged, and he had nowhere else to go, he wound up in Spain at the pillars of Hercules, at the mouth of the Mediterranean Sea, and looking upon tidal waves coming in through the straight of Gibraltar, he wrote a letter to his family and he threw himself into the sea. When the family got the letter, it didn't say I'm sorry I left you, I'm sorry I threw away our lives, I'm sorry I abandoned everything that my family had built, he said "there are no diamonds anywhere." Well, the man who bought the farm and continued to tend, one day as he was plowing the ground, he was so annoyed by these big black rocks; they were always getting in the way as he was trying to plow the field. And he found one that looked strange and he liked it, and so he took it and put it on his fireplace mantle.

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Years later, that same Hindu priest who was always traveling, came to town and he saw this rock on the fireplace mantle and he held it in his hands, and he said has Ali Hafed done it? Has he found them? Has he brought them home? And he went to the farmer and he says do you know what this is? This is the biggest diamond I've ever seen. Ali Hafed must have come back! He must have found the diamonds! And low and behold, Ali Hafed, the farm that he sold were the famous, later, mines of Golconda, one of the largest diamond mines in the world. I believe some of the precious jewels from the crown jewels might be from there, I don't totally know. But what an irony. This is why it's unbelievable, isn't it? It has to be a legend, but it's not. That this man was sitting on a diamond mine and sold it and abandoned his family and his life. It's one of the worst historic ironies. And the reason I think about this a lot is I think it's an absolute metaphor for how many of us feel in an age that is obsessed with money and fame and making a name for yourself. There's nothing wrong with those things, but when we're obsessed about it, we sometimes forget that the best kind of life is the one that God always has for us, and that very often when we abandon our friends or our family to go chase our dreams, we forget that maybe, just maybe, our very dream was right where our family was. Imagine that, that if he had only been obedient to the word, and if he had stayed where he was and continued to plow his ground faithfully, he would have become a king. Well anyway, the kingdom of darkness is founded on deception. It's not founded on first wickedness or malice or any of these things, the kingdom of darkness is founded on deception. Satan, to make us weak, wants to destroy the word of God in your heart. He wants to destroy the truth that you know. He wants to for what you feel in your stomach, he wants you to abandon what you know in your head and your heart is truly good and truly right. I want to tell you today you will not be deceived by the enemy. In fact, I just proclaim over your life that you will not be confused by Satan, but you will understand truly what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil, and most of all, what is true and what is false. I can't believe I'm saying this, but today I'm preaching on Sodom and Gomorra. Hannah likes to ask this question sometimes when we're with friends. She said what was a way in which God showed up in your week. And my answer seemed very pious. But it was that even when you study something like the story of Sodom and Gomorra, you find God's mercy, kindness, friendship, that God is truly a God of love and mercy. And all of the word of God is life-giving if it's understood rightly. Well anyway, I think Sodom and Gomorra is one of the most misunderstood texts in the Bible, and worst translated in most English texts. I don't know about some of the other translations. Really, the story begins the chapter before all of the death and carnage begins. It begins when Yahweh is walking by Abraham's tent and he's actually on his way to Sodom to investigate. And there He stops at the entrance to Abraham's tent and Abraham, seeing Him in three persons, so as Christians we want to make this the trinity. It's probably not fair. I don't really know how to read this part of the text. But its three.. its God but its three people. It's probably God and two angels. But anyway, He appears at the tent and Abraham, knowing the Lord, falls down on his face and welcomes Him in a spirit of hospitality, which has always been one of the truest and best virtues of the Middle East. Some of the most hospitable people in the world. And it's, even in those days, central to a person's goodness and faith that they are welcoming to a stranger or especially a friend. And so, Abraham immediately brings water and he welcomes the guests who are the Lord to wash their feet and to eat, and it says to be refreshed. And in fact, he kills a fatted calf and cooks it and serves it to the men, and they enjoy a meal together. And this is important because the scriptures go a long way to show how hospitable Abraham was to the Lord. And the reason is you're going to see later how inhospitable, anyway. They spend the day together and evening starts to come, and the Lord says to Abraham shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? He looks at Abraham and he says the outcry from Sodom and Gomorra has become so great that I have to go down and see if the evil is as bad as what they say. The first mistake that people make about this is that this is a judgement against sexual immorality, and its actually not. Clearly the Bible has things about restrictions on our sexual lives, but this has way more to do with violence and violating people. And in fact, it's interesting that there have been so many people crying out to God for justice against Sodom and Gomorra. Very often we look at the one side of God's grace as protecting and loving us and caring for us, but it's hard to feel like God really loves us if He doesn't punish the wicked. And when I say the wicked, I mean the violent, the evil doers, the people who abuse children and women. That God is just and there is a point where He will set things right. And how many mothers and fathers and children cried out to God – Lord, how can you allow Sodom and Gomorra to violate and kill my daughter or my son or my brother. That finally the Lord says all right, I'm going to go down and I'm going to see this city, and I'm going to see if it's as violent and evil as those who are crying out to me say it is.

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Well, many of us know the story. The angels arrive, so God says I'm going to destroy the city if it's as evil as they say it is. And Abraham knows its evil, but his brother-in-law's and his family is there, and he says are you going to wipe away the righteous with the wicked? And there's this negotiation, of course, that Abraham has with the Lord. What if there's 50? The Lord says no if there's 50, I won't wipe it out. What if there's 40? What if there's 30? And it goes on and on like this. Well eventually God says, I believe the number is 10, I have to read it again, that if He finds 10 righteous men or righteous people in the city, He won't wipe it out. And the angels arrive and Lot is waiting for them at the gate. I don't know why, but he sees them and he's clearly worried about them. And so he gathers them, Lot is a visitor in Sodom, and he takes them to his house. He just got this home, his two daughters and his wife are there, and he tries to care for Abraham. Now this is important. When the Bible was first put together, it was put together as an oral tradition meaning that people memorized it, and they shared it with one another over generations before it was written down. And there are many parallel oral traditions. So, this part is not in the Bible, but it's a very old oral tradition and it may not be true. But the story goes that when the guests arrived to Lot's house, Lot's wife refused to offer them salt. Now salt is a sign of friendship and welcoming and hospitality. And that in fact when she was rebuked by her husband and she said I don't have any salt, he said go out and get some, that as she was going out asking for salt, she made aware to the neighbors that these two angels had come. And this was, in many ways, part of Lot's wife's sin. That in a place of hospitality where like Abraham, you welcome anyone, and especially the Lord! And you wash their feet or you offer to wash their feet and you give them fresh water and you give them wine and you give them food and you give them bread and you give them salt that you know that they are welcome, and that they are loved and protected in your house. Well anyway, a mob begins to form and this mob of men surrounds Lot's house and begin banging down the door because they want to violate these angels. They keep saying send these angels out. I don't know if they know they're angels, but send these men out. We want to know them, is what the passage says. A part of the scripture that's truly misunderstood is that it reads like Lot then offers his two daughters in lieu of the angels, but that's not what really is happening, actually. It should be translated like this: you might as well take my daughters. So, Lot is not actually offering his daughters in this part of the thing. It would be like if like some guy went to the bank and in the mortgage company, the mortgage says I'm taking your house. And the guy says well you might as well take the food off my kid's plates, and might as well take the shirts off my kids back. Lot says to these men, you wicked men, you might as well take my daughters. You're not going to take my guests. It's Jewish hyperbole. He's not actually saying. It's important, isn't it? So finally, these angels, the only reason they're here is to see if this is a wicked place, have clearly had enough. And they look at these men, they cause them all to go blind, and they look at Lot and his wife and his two daughters, and they say 'flee for your lives. Do not look back and do not stop. We are going to destroy the cities of the valley.' And Lot is just staring at them. They're all frozen in place and I love the story that it's like none of them are even moving, and so the angels actually take the family by the hands and protect them now and guide them out of the city and guide them to the gates and say head towards Zoar, the neighboring town. Don't look back, don't turn back and don't stop because at sun up, I'm going to destroy the city. Now we often understand Lot's wife as they're running to the city of Zoar, and they know that the terror is coming, she sort of looks back like this, and then (BOOSH) turns to salt. Like it's this crazy thing. But actually, 'to look back' in Hebrew in this context actually means to go back. So if you do it in the context of go forward and don't stop, don't look back, don't look back means don't turn back, right? So as she's running, she doesn't (BRRRRRR) like this. Most scholars believe that actually what happens is as she's leaving her hometown, the place where all her friends are, nothing bad has happened yet; there's nothing sizzling, there's no clouds forming in the sky, they just are trusting that at dawn this horrible thing is going to happen, that what the angel said is true, she sees her family running through this town, and as she looks back, it really says that she goes back. In other words, she abandons her family. Her daughters and her husband are going here, and she decides I am not leaving my.. who knows, did they get in an argument or a fight or she just didn't want to leave? All of her stuff is back there, all of her clothes and food and money and everything that they forgot, all the family pictures, they're all back there. I am not going to Zoar. You go, I am going home! And she begins to head back. She abandons her family for whatever Sodom is. And it says that she was turned into a pillar of salt. Now this is just my imagination, take it or leave it, okay? But this reminds me as a history fan, very much of a historic event that's emblazoned, especially in the medieval and ancient era of Europeans, of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in the first century is a volcano near Napoli in modern day Italy today.

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And its erupted many times, I think the last time was actually 1945, but it's always been little. This was a huge eruption. Scientists are still studying it today. But when this happened, this eruption was so massive. I read one article that said the thermo energy that came from the volcanic explosion sent a cloud into the sky 21 miles high. So I think a plane flies at about 7 miles high. Mt. Everest is about 5 miles high, so it went just as high as it can go. This volcanic ash, rock and lava went everywhere, and the heat from the explosion was a hundred thousand times more thermal power than the bomb in Hiroshima Nagasaki. It's like a hundred thousand nuclear bombs go off at one time in the ancient world. We get eyewitness testimony from a famous contemporary named Pliny the Younger whose uncle Pliny the Elder, who was also a natural philosopher and a soldier, died during this eruption trying to save people in a rescue mission on a boat. He was taken down, as well. But because of this, there are archaeological sites around these ancient dig sites around the volcano, you can find images like this, very haunting, scary images of people who were crystalized because the heat was so intense. So again, this is just Bobby's imagination, but I often wonder if the pillar of salt was just that Lot's wife was just crystalized by the heat. I don't know. I love imagining stuff like that. In fact, there is an image in Jordan. So, this is on the Jordanian side of the Dead Sea, and they call this statue Lot's wife. Of course, it's not really Lot's wife, but it's an eerie image, isn't it? It almost looks like a rock looking over the sea. I will say, though, that the rock in this mountain is 80% salt. Anyway. This image is a reminder of a life that turns back from God's purposes. Very often, we think that God calls us to do things because it's just the right thing to do, or it's the moral thing, or there's a sort of duty in it. But anytime God calls you to do something, it's because He loves you and wants the best thing for you. Everything God tells us to do is for our benefit. God is your dad who loves you. He would never send you or ask you to do something that would harm you. God is good and only good. He only wants good for your life, and not evil. So, when we obey God and do what He called us to do, even though in the natural it doesn't always seem like the best thing, you can trust that where God is sending you is for your benefit, for your blessing, and for your goodness. We will not be like Lot's wife. We will not be an image of what not to do. We will move towards the place where God is sending us, away from destruction, and to safety and to goodness. You see life is so, so full of moments where Satan says to you, did God really say? Did God really say Gomorra would burn? Did God really say not to eat of the apple? Did God really say? Did God really say He would heal your family? Did God really say that you were saved? Did God really say that if you only trust in Him you'd go to heaven? Did God really say that you're going to have victory in your life? And so often, like the Israelites in the desert, they say we don't want the Promised Land! Send us back to Egypt! And the Lord says thy will be done! Trust that what the Lord wants for you is good and only good all the time. God is not angry at you, He's not about to punish you, He doesn't trick people. That's what the enemy does. God's message is totally life and light and truth, and Satan is only deception, confusion and double-mindedness. So, when God calls you to do something, do it and don't turn back. And don't abandon your family. And don't abandon the things that are most important. So often the victory in your life is paired up with right where your boring responsibilities are. Right where the thing that God called you to do today is. Like the man who left his family to find diamonds, if he'd just stayed with his family, he would have been a king. Trust that what the Lord has in your life is good, so don't turn back. Don't abandon your faith, don't abandon your family, don't abandon your dreams, in that order. You know it's interesting, and I'll just finish with this story. When Hannah and I were in Tulsa and I was finishing business school, I was planning actually to go into finance, of all things. And praise the Lord, I didn't do that because that was in 2005, and 2007 was looming, so I would have had just a budding career and I would have lost everything at my new job at wherever, hopefully not Lehman Brothers. And we really felt, it was interesting as we were dating, we'd talked about business, real estate, these types of things. I was working for an investment company at the time. And I remember when we went to the Crystal Cathedral, people would ask me all the time because my name is Robert Schuller, will you ever be a pastor? Will you do this? And my answer was always like, I love the Lord, I love my faith, but I'm probably not going to do that, especially not at the Cathedral. I remember it was at our wedding. We had the wedding; it was in one of the most amazing times in my life. I got to see both sides of my family there together, which was like one of the first times; I think the first time in my adult life that it really happened in a good way. And the whole event was just so life-giving for both of us. And it was that day I think both of us really started to feel, our wedding day: what if God called us to minister here? It's interesting because later, we would enter into ministry, we'd come back to the Crystal Cathedral as college pastors and begin to lead this ministry, and Hannah and I did it together.

Pillars of Salt

But I will say with a lot of embarrassment that as we got busy, as she had a graphic design work and we had kids, it started to be less and less Hannah and I leading the ministry and more just me leading the ministry. And that's very common, right, where the husband is the pastor and the wife does wife things. And that's how it was for a few years, and can I tell you that those are some of the least successful years of ministry in my life, were the years where I did it alone. I remember once when I went to.. as a pastor, in many traditions, I would go to different pastoral conferences. And to be honest, I started to hate them because they all felt like.. I'm trying to think of a non-crude expression. I've got like three in my mind, but they felt competitive. They felt like every pastor was comparing the height of their steeple, we might say. And it felt gross, in a way, and I didn't like that spirit, and I started to see how a lot of young married pastors, how their wives were oftentimes getting sick or having digestive issues, or weren't able to have children, and this was just like this common theme that I was seeing over and over and over where I would almost guess that every time I met a young pastor, either his wife was having major digestive issues, she couldn't have a child, she was having migraines, or their marriage wasn't going well. And then, I went to this conference that I was invited to by a dear friend of mine, a pastor, Phil Munsey, and it was charismatic pastors, and in the charismatic tradition, you lead as a couple. And I saw the exact opposite when I went to this thing. A room full of pastors and their wives or husbands, all together, and I was there by myself. And everybody was like Pastor Bobby! And they all seemed happy and they all had successful ministries and nobody seemed to be competing or comparing, and they were like where's Hannah? Where's Hannah? To the point where I started to be like I didn't invite her. I just thought I'd get away for the weekend. And what I realized, I started to concoct this philosophy that I still kind of have today, that families that lead ministries seem, and this is not in all cases, but families that lead ministries seem to have something let's say special about them. And Hannah and I, we started talking, and I was like we need to do this together, and that's when the breakthrough really started happening is when it wasn't me leading the ministry, it was me and Hannah leading the ministry. To the point now, whenever we meet with social media, like our team or we have mailouts, I'm constantly saying don't put a picture of just me. Put a picture of me and Hannah. Put a picture of me and Haven. Put a picture of Hannah and Haven. Put a picture of Cohen and Hannah and Haven and me. But never just me. As little as possible, let it be us. I remember a couple years ago realizing that in this journey for me, I was praying about it and I really felt that the Lord said that He didn't call me to this. He called us. He called us. For this season, we lead together. My grandma and grandpa led together. In the Bible, in Romans chapter 16, you know who Paul says is the greatest apostle of them all? He doesn't name one person, he names two: Andronicus and Junia, a married couple. They are the greatest apostles among them all. And there's a reason. There's power in your family. Very often you'll find that the success you're looking for is right at home – with your kids, your children. I believe that what God is doing in my ministry is not in my ministry, it's in our ministry. It's me, it's Hannah, it's Haven, and yes, it's even Cohen. And all of us as a church, absolutely. What I mean is.. Hannah said and all of us as a church. See this is why again, only reinforcing the point. That I just believe that very often we abandon the most important things in our life to get other things that are super important, like a diamond mine. But the diamond mine is very often right where the most important thing is. Some of us aren't married and don't have kids, and that's okay, but in our heart, we know what is the most important place in God's eyes to be, and I want you to trust that to increase your faith and believe that if you continue to pursue what's most important in your life, that God will continue to help you get closer to those dreams that you have. God wants dreams for your life. I'm going to believe that for you. Amen! Well thank you Lord. We trust that you love us and that you've called us and we thank you for our family and for our friends, and we pray, Lord that you would help us not be deceived by Satan but to understand truly where we're supposed to be. Lord, I think any of us would say if you spoke clearly to us right now, if you showed us who we're supposed to become, if you showed us where we're supposed to go, we would go there and not turn back. So Lord, give us a word we pray, and reveal it in our hearts, and we ask it all in Jesus' name, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

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.