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Get Your Hopes Up

Hour of Power 13.06.2021

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: Hello visitors and church family. We are so thrilled that you're here, and our prayer is that you would leave here with more of God's zoe or life or miracle power in your body than when you came. We love you.

BS: Yes, we're so grateful you're joining us, wherever you are. Today we have the cool experience of hearing an interview I did just a few days ago with Tim Tebow so we're going to hear that, also Haven's going to be singing today so that's pretty good. Someone said on Twitter 'I want to hear Haven more' and I was like great. Let's do it. You ready, Haven?

HAVEN: Kind of.

BS: Good enough for me. Anyway, we're just so glad you're with us, wherever you are. We're so grateful to be gathered together in the name of Jesus. Let's begin with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you so much for all you've given us, and we are just opening our hearts today. We're going to let go of bitterness, we're going to let go of grudges, we're going to let go of fear, we're going to let go of all these things that tie us down, and today we're going receive from you. We lift up your name. Would you receive this offering Lord? We pray this all in Jesus' name, amen.

HS: Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Luke 17, 11 - 19 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Luke 17:11:

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him — and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well." Amen.

INTERVIEW – Tim Tebow (TT) with Bobby Schuller (BS)

Tim Tebow is a former athlete who played in both the National Football League and in Major League Baseball. After stepping away from sports, he focused his passion on helping others and established the Tim Tebow Foundation in 2010. This dynamic organization aims to bring faith, hope, and love to those who need a brighter day in their darkest hour. Also an author, he has written several books and recently released his first children's story, Bronco and Friends: A Party to Remember, which teaches kids about the importance of embracing their unique qualities and abilities.

BS: Tim hi, welcome! So nice to have you on the..

TT: Thank you.

BS: ...program and sorry we couldn't have you in the church with COVID and everything going on, but we're so stoked you're joining us from Florida, so welcome.

TT: Of course, thank you so much for having me. I appreciate it. I like the suit. Fashion game on point. Appreciate it.

BS: Hey thank you!

TT: Glad to be here with you.

Get Your Hopes Up

BS: Thanks so much! Hey so most people know your name, but for those who maybe don't know, like my grandma, for example. Tell people who you are and sort of why you're well known.

TT: Well first of all, what's up grandma? Hope you're having a fantastic day. I don't really know what to say. I would just say I'm someone that I've been blessed with the platform from sports, but more than that, my heart is to love Jesus and love people and fight for as many people as possible, and try to proclaim Jesus' name everywhere I go, with everything that we do, and help as many people in the process, and that's my mission, that's my calling and specifically it would really be to enter chaos, enter darkness and bring the light of Jesus.

And specifically that's where I feel a call when I was 15-years-old, to enter hard places, for those that are abandoned, for those that have been abused, for those that have been thrown away, for those with special needs, for those being trafficked, to be able to enter those hard places and be able to love them, care for them, and like the intro said, to bring faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love. And so that's what we want to do is we want to bring God's form of agape love to those in hard places and the best definition I've ever heard of that is to choose the best interest of another person and act on their behalf. And that is my goal, that is my purpose and that is my plan to do every day that I'm blessed.

BS: That's awesome. Tim Tebow, that is a great.. you sound like a preacher! And if I were you, I would have started with the Heisman Trophy, but you're a lot more humble than I am. I think that's really great. You've had such a successful career in sports and in football, and baseball also, and now you really have a heart to reach the hurting people. How did that transition happen? What was it like, because you said you started when you were 15, so you had sort of this passion for ministry before you were well known in sports. How did you make that transition?

TT: When I was 15, I had the chance in a very remote island in the Philippines because the Philippines are made up of thousands of islands. I had a chance to meet a boy who was born with his feet on backwards in a very remote village, and his village looked to him as cursed, as less than, as insignificant, as a throw away. But God really pricked my heart in that moment that he wasn't a throw away to God and he better not be a throw away to me. And I know that day that I fell in love with that boy, but I also fell in love with every single boy or girl like him around the world, and I still knew that I loved sports, and I wanted to pursue sports, but that day sports didn't matter quite as much, and it didn't have the same sting. Right? I still loved it, I still wanted to be as good as I could, but I knew it wasn't my ultimate calling or purpose or passion. I still wanted to win. Listen, I've never showed up to a game and wanted to lose. But I knew that there were more important things than just winning or losing, and really specifically it was that moment, that day that really changed my life, that when I had the opportunity to start my own foundation, after I finished college, that was the first thing I did when I graduated was we started the Tim Tebow Foundation. And when I wrote the mission statement to bring faith, hope and love to those needing a brighter day in their darkest hour of need, it was one of the easiest things that I've ever done because all I did was I thought about that boy in the Philippines, and I thought what did he need? Where was he? He was in his darkest hour of need and he needed faith, hope and love, and he needed it now, and he needed us to fight for him. And that's really where that passion started, and so I wanted to use a platform that God had given me through sports, and even during sports, to be able to take that platform and turn it into purpose, because if all you do is you win or lose a game, it doesn't really matter. People are going to forget that and that doesn't last for eternity. And yes, I agree, I think the Heisman's awesome, but guess what – the Heisman ain't coming home to our forever home, right? In heaven. But we need to have a mindset of what's going to last forever, right? And so why we think that's cool, it's not as cool as having the chance to tell someone about Jesus, it's not as cool as being able to lift someone up, it's not as cool as being able to rescue someone out of trafficking or pick up an abandoned child. Those things, right? In our society, they don't seem as cool, but they are a lot more cool and they're going to last a lot longer than any championship or trophy ever will.

BS: Amen. Wow, what a great word. Did you ever have a chance to go back and find that kid? I mean this person that inspired you to do all these great things?

TT: I have been to the Philippines many times. I was actually born there and we lived there for 5 years when I was growing up, and we've been there many times. I have not had the chance of seeing Sherwin again. That was his name. An incredible young boy. I have not had that opportunity, but there is a hospital now the Tebow CURE Hospital now in the Philippines that take in every boy and girl like that free of charge and bring them in and give them physical healing, but also spiritual and emotional healing and so that was a big inspiration.

Get Your Hopes Up

You have so many times in the Philippines and other countries like it, they don't have the access to some of the medical care that we have here, and so now every boy like him gets a chance to come to the hospital and get that physical healing so they're not looked at as cursed, but they also, more importantly, get to hear the good news of the gospel.

BS: Amen, that's awesome. Well you don't have children yourself yet, I know you hope to someday..

TT: Not yet, not yet!

BS: ..but you have such a heart for kids, though, and I love that. I mean we have a heart for kids, too. And you've written a couple books already, but in this kind of line of just loving children, especially children that are kind of like this child you spoke of. You wrote this great book that's out now called Bronco and Friends: A party to remember. So tell us a little bit about your book.

TT: Well this was very near and dear to my heart, and I really.. I wrote it to all kids, but specifically kids that feel a little bit different and feel unique and maybe feel less than, and feel discouraged, right? And I want every single boy or girl that reads this book or has this book read to them to know their worth, to know their dignity, to know their value and to know how loved they are. And so really the story of this book is how every single one of these animals is invited to this grand party at the end of it. But they have to be able to find their puzzle piece that's going to play into the bigger puzzle because if not, you can't get in. And so the main character Bronco helps all these other animals that have strengths and weaknesses, have abilities and disabilities, just like all of us do, and he helps all of them have the chance to get into this party, but he can't find his puzzle piece, but at the end, he's able to get his puzzle piece because really his purpose was to help everybody else find theirs, and so he's able.. And really the moral of the story is we all have a piece to play in God's grand puzzle, and sometimes we might feel like it's our strengths or sometimes we might feel like we have weaknesses, but God can use them both. Sometimes we have abilities and sometimes we have disabilities, but God can use them both. And literally the book ends with you are unique, you are wonderful, you are special, and I want every single boy or girl to know that, that they are unique. They are one of one, they are created in love, by love and for love, and God has amazing plan for their life. They are special. God has an amazing plan for their life and they are wonderful. In Ephesians 2:10, in Christ Jesus we are a masterpiece. They are a masterpiece in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared long ago. When we really understand that verse, God wrote a poem about their life before they were ever born and He calls it a masterpiece in Christ Jesus. That's how we need to treat every single boy and girl, and that's what they need to know, is they need to know the love of God for their life, and the specific plan God has for them because that changes a life, the worth and the value because so many times in our society we want to teach our kids to compare and contrast and you need to look like this, you need to act like this, you have this ability. No, you need to be exactly who God made you to be because He created you the way that He wanted you and He's never made a mistake, and it's not going to start now and it's not going to start with them. When we're able to encourage every single boy and girl in their worth, in their God given value, ability, and purpose, then I believe that we'll be able to set the next generation up for not just success but significance and that's a lot more important than success.

BS: Amen. What a great word. It's so interesting to hear somebody from the competitive world of sports, so much comparison, so many prizes. You have to be like in the top 1/10th of one percent to even get through the door, and I think it means a lot when someone like you says things like that, especially to kids who probably feel, or anybody, who feels like caught.. actually, it's interesting because when I got this book, our son who's nine years old, actually is recovering from a brain disease, and so he's more like a two-year-old, and so it's been hard for him. He loves animals and it's hard for him to play with other kids a lot of times, so I was even telling Hannah, I already told the team I was like I'm keeping this book. This is for Cohen. But I love the message because for our son, that's exactly where he is, probably, and a lot of kids who have maybe special needs or maybe just socially don't feel like they fit. I think Christians, especially, need to have that message that like God uniquely loves you, just as you are. You don't have to be any different. I just love that message and I love this book: A Party to Remember by Tim Tebow. If you have kids that are special in your life, get this book for them; I know it'll mean a lot to them. Tim Tebow, thank you so much for joining us today! What a powerful message you have.

TT: Are you kidding me, thank you. Thank you so much for having me. I appreciate it so much. Thank you for what you and your church are doing and we're grateful for you guys, and God bless you all.

BS: Thank you sir, God bless.

TT: Thank you guys.

Get Your Hopes Up

BOBBY SCHULLER THANK YOU TO HAVEN SCHULLER

Sheer, raw talent and skills. Very good. Thank you, Haven. Thanks for blessing us this morning, and thank you to all the musicians who.. the men's ensemble was unbelievable, too, and orchestra, thank you very much. What a great morning.

WELCOME/COME VISIT – Bobby Schuller

Welcome, we're glad you're joining us. Believe God has something good in store for you this week. I just know that everything God is doing in your life is for your benefit. The enemy wants to hurt you, he wants to deceive you, he wants to harm you, but when we run to the Lord, only good things will come. Yes, there will be hardship and setbacks, but in the end, I should say, God will bring us where we need to get, and so I just want to encourage you. I just believe that this week is going to be better because you started your week in this way.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Whoever you are, would you stand with us? We're going to say this creed together. Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord, let's 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. Its 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 – Bayless Conley "Get Your Hopes Up"

Today's sermon is called Get Your Hopes Up! And that is the right thing to do: to be a hopeful, positive, big vision kind of person. When you serve a big God, He draws you into a bigger reality, and my hope is that this morning as big as you are, your thinking, your heart will get bigger than it was even a moment ago, not because of me, but because of what the Holy Spirit is confirming through His word in your life. We interviewed a wonderful gentleman, a good friend of mine, Earl Larmar who was the chairman of the board for Hour of Power in Australia. Just a man who seems to be very joyful, he's very successful in business and in life, has a big heart for God. He started out as actually I believe a worship leader at a Baptist church. Played organ, I think, did some things with the choir. But was also an accountant, and in life did well in real estate and other ways, has been able to be generous to foundations and ministries like ours. And I really enjoy talking to people like Earl – risk takers and big thinkers. He was someone, and is someone who was very influenced by Norman Vincent Peale, as my grandfather was, the founder of this church. And I asked him, what was the biggest thing that Norman Vincent Peale, you've listened to all of his messages and followed him around, what was like the biggest take away you could get from him that you think impacted your life. And he said, and he said it in an interview also on Hour of Power a few years ago, he said well he talked really often about two things that I think make a big difference. The first is what he called outgoingness. The willingness to shake hands and smile and meet new people and ask questions and get to know others. And he said this is really important to succeed in life, even though we don't always feel outgoing, the importance of intentionally being outgoing, and noticing others, and reaching out to others. And he said the second thing, which is even more important, is a sense of enthusiasm. Now imagine this, an accountant saying that the two greatest things in life to succeed is enthusiasm and outgoingness. So he said enthusiasm, which he was right, means God within. En-theos. Theos. God is inside of me. If God is within me, then it ought to show! Right? It ought to show in the way I act. In the way I feel. In the way I think. In the way I treat others. And so he said that in life, this enthusiasm for life, and this outgoingness is a key factor in being happy and successful. And ever since I heard that, on occasion I try to pay attention to when I'm not feeling outgoing, or when I'm not feeling enthusiastic. And my guess is that during COVID, people are not feeling this way. Well how can you be outgoing if you can't even talk to people and can't shake a hand. Hopefully things will change, but as sort of the snow is thawing on the COVID world, it's important to remember that in life, we ought to be these things – outgoing and enthusiastic and many other things. And I know what you're thinking, for those of you who don't feel that way: Bobby, I can't just will myself into this. And I think sometimes that's true, sometimes it isn't. But I think at the heart of being this kind of a person, and this is what today's sermon will be, is actually not choosing as much to be those things first as much to be thankful for life. Thankful for your past. Thankful for your journey, for your family, or your friends, or your church, or whatever it is you have.

Get Your Hopes Up

The more thankful we become, the more energy we have, and the easier it is to have these attributes that make us successful in life. It's going to be hard as the world opens up and you have to work from your office again, for example, or you get to do these other things in life that maybe have gone away for a while, remember that in life, life is a lot like fishing. You'll never catch anything if you don't put your line in the water. And as a kid, being forced to fish all the time, I can tell you there were many times you would sit for hours and hours and hours with that line in the water, and you'd swear there's not a fish left in the sea. But the key is to keep fishing and to keep putting the line in the water, and you never know one of these days you might just catch something really big, and the older you get, the bigger that fish will become. That's a joke. That's an old fishing joke. The older I get, the bigger the fish was. Many of us are dealing with the law of inertia. If you took a science or physics course in high school, you probably learned Newton's first law, the law of inertia. I always learned it like this. The correct version is behind me, but I always heard it like an object at rest stays at rest unless acted on by an outside force. An object in motion stays in motion unless acted on by an outside force. This is true whether its apples falling from a tree, or comets in space. And this also has to do with Bobby Schuller, and Hannah and Haven Schuller and every other person, whether they be a Schuller or not. That many of us, when we are at rest, we tend to stay at rest, and we're at motion, we tend to stay at motion. Many of us after COVID have found ourselves a bit like this guy, just kind of a couch potato. Kind of hard to get up out of the couch and really do anything because an object at rest tends to stay at rest unless acted on by an outside force. This is why as a leader I have learned to employ the old axiom – if you want something done, give it to a busy person. Man that is true. I can't tell you how many times I've been frustrated or I give a task to someone that has almost nothing to do and a week later, they still haven't gotten it done. And then you give a task to someone that seems like they are drowning in things to do, and you give it to them and hours later it's not only done, it's done well. This is true, I think of most people. How many times have you thought, the whole house is completely destroyed, and you think well I'm just going to clean up my office and next thing you know you've cleaned your office, and you cleaned your bookshelf and you vacuum your room and then you move to the next room, and hours later you've actually cleaned the whole house because an object in motion stays in motion. So my goal today, in a way, is to get you moving again! Get you off the couch and get you doing something in motion. My hope is to be the outside force that moves the object at rest. And I want to get into your mind this morning, because I can't physically come into your living room, pull you off the couch and get you outside to work, I want to encourage you that at the heart for believers, at the heart of having a positive, outgoing, enthusiastic will and mind is an even deeper attitude of thankfulness. I missed the opportunity to run with attitude with the word gratitude, which we've all used before, so I guess it's a cliché. An attitude of gratitude, this spirit of being thankful all the time. That's a perspective, a way of seeing your past. It's interesting how many of us can have the same experience, and some look at life in a thankful way, and some of us look at life in a begrudging way, in a complaining way. And most of us have things to complain about, most of us have been cheated, or lied to, or taken advantage of, or harmed, some of us even violated, and many of us have every right to feel unthankful and to feel frustrated. And you shouldn't necessarily get rid of those emotions, either. But the default emotion, the thing that you go to all the time is sort of an attitude of just being thankful, not for what you've lost, but for what you have left. Today we're going to talk about this power of thankfulness and how it affects everything we do in life. The scripture that was read today and read beautifully by my wife Hannah, we're a family ministry here at Hour of Power, was Luke 17:11-19. It's one of my favorite stories. It's preached on a lot, but I feel like the most important bits are often missed so I'll do my best to preach it Bobby style. First the story begins with Jesus, the great rabbi, prophet, healer is traveling from Galilee in the north to Jerusalem in the south. Now if you know anything about first century Biblical geography, Israel was a Samaritan sandwich. You had Galilee in the north which is part of Israel, Judea in the south which is part of Israel, but then this bubble in the middle, Samaria, where the Samaritans lived, who were half-brothers but enemies of the Jews. And so to go from the north to the south or vice versa, you had to either go through or around Samaria. And this is what Jesus is doing. He's traveling along this boundary between Galilee and Samaria on His way to Jerusalem. And as He's doing so, He sees a gang of ten lepers in a leper colony who probably 50 or so feet away, that might have been the common law back then, cry out to the prophet: Jesus! Have mercy on us! Have mercy on us! Of course they're asking for Him to heal them. It's interesting to think of the plight of a leper. Leprosy today is curable. The actual term for leprosy is, I think it's called hansen's disease. And today its treatable with an antibiotic or antimicrobial.

Get Your Hopes Up

I can't remember, but it's basically curable, although many parts of the world, parts of India for example still suffer from the disease because they don't have access to the medicine. But in those days and through much of history, lepers are not only suffering but they look like they're suffering all the time. So on top of this, in Judaism and in the ancient world in general, there was a rule that if you had leprosy, you couldn't be with everybody else because it's a contagious disease. In those days, following the law of Moses, in fact, the Jews had to go a step further in their suffering. God had instructed in Levitical law and Leviticus chapter 13 and 14, a method for how to keep the tribe safe from leprosy. And what would happen is if a Jew noticed some kind of a thing on their skin or rash or something like that, they would go before the priest and the priest would examine them, and then the priest would say to them okay, you definitely have something. You need to wait seven days outside of the tent and then I'll look at you again. And if after seven days it went away, or if there's certain markings or things, the priest would say oh, it's just a rash, you can come back in. You're fine. Cool it with whatever, whatever caused your rash – strawberries. No more. I don't think there were strawberries in the desert back then. Hannah doesn't know, I don't know. Anybody know? Okay, all right, that's enough of that. But if after seven days it didn't go away, and the priest realized this is leprosy, the person then had to have unkempt hair, they had to change from normal clothes into unkempt clothes, and what does this sound like? They had to wear a face mask. How many of you feel like lepers today? And had to leave the camp and could not be with anybody but other lepers. And there they had to live out their days unless a miracle or something happened, and the rash went away. Now think about this for a minute. Not only are you suffering from the illness, but if you're a married man or woman, you have to leave your children, you have to leave your job and your family. You're an outsider. If you're single, you're never going to meet somebody. You have to say goodbye to your family. You've basically died. Unless some amazing thing happens, your new life is to live in an outside colony with very few amenities, very, very small DVD collection, and no friends or family except for those that live there. And everybody's feeling grumpy, aren't they? I mean if you've got leprosy and you lost your family, you're just not in the mood to play Monopoly. So this is not a good environment. In all seriousness, it would have felt like basically you might as well die. Here are these ten men. The great healer is walking along, and they cry out Jesus! Have mercy on us! He stops and sees them on the road, and this time, now there's another story where Jesus actually holds the Samaritan. Keep in mind, everywhere they go, they have to yell "unclean! Unclean!" if they go anywhere. And in another story, Jesus touches the man and holds the man, and then He heals him. In this story, it's almost the exact opposite. From a distance, Jesus gives them a word. He gives them the word of God, a commandment, and He tells them 'go show yourself to the priest.' That's all He says. What does this mean? Well, in Judaism, if you are healed, you then, after you believe there's nothing on your body anywhere, you can go show yourself to the priest and he can deem you clean, and you can come home. But they are still in tattered clothes, they are still missing limbs, they still have patches all over their skin, they have all sorts of gross things. But He says even though in the natural they're still sick, in the spiritual, He's promised them, in a Jewish sort of way, that if they take the step of faith to believe Him first by going to Jerusalem, then they'll be healed. And guess what they did? They began the long journey; a four day walk to Jerusalem. They began. And that'd be embarrassing, wouldn't it to show up to Jerusalem still a leper? And obviously a priest isn't going to do any.. but they decide okay we're going to show ourselves to the priest. This is an important thing to learn about faith, by the way. That so much of living a miraculous life for God is trusting the word of God sometimes over what seems to be true in the natural. To trust that what God says will become true in the natural, even though I don't see it now, and to take a step according to that in the name of Jesus. To just trust, to just say to myself either the word of God is true or its not! And it is. The scripture says that they began the long, lonely, difficult walk to Jerusalem, and they began it in the natural as suffering lepers, but in the spiritual, they claimed a promise and it would be true. Now here's the best part of the story, actually, that many people miss. Not all ten of them were Jews. If you like to read the Bible, you might remember that one of them was a – anybody? A Samaritan. Now Samaritans were the enemies of the Jews. They were not the same religion, they had a Samaritan Torah, they had a Samaritan temple or at least they used to that had been destroyed by the Jews, and these were like half-brothers that hated each other. They looked very similar, so ethnically they would have seemed identical, but outwardly as a faith, they hated each other. And so if you were a Jew and you went to Samaria, there's a very good chance you'd be killed, or vice versa. If you were a Samaritan and went to Israel, there's a very good chance you're going to die. This Samaritan was bundled up with these other nine, and when Jesus said to all of them.

Get Your Hopes Up

Go show yourself to the priest, he took that promise for himself! And it would have been very easy for him as a Samaritan to say, well I'm not a Jew, that's not for me. Even though God said it to him, he had every opportunity in the world to disqualify what God had promised to him. He had every opportunity to say I'm not religious enough, or maybe he was just saying it to the others. Or to say gosh, that would be embarrassing, or to say I'm a leper, I'm not going to go to a Jewish temple and be healed. Maybe I'll be killed. No, he took what Christ said at face value and it was accredited to him, not only as righteousness, but in his healing. Isn't that good news? That whatever God says to the Jew, He says to you. The word of God is true for anyone who would believe it. Do not disqualify a promise of God to you. Don't disqualify it. That's what the enemy wants. As you go, God will make it so. And that was true for the Samaritan. So imagine that. This is the ultimate fake it till you make it story. A Samaritan walking with his nine buddies who I love that they didn't like tell Jesus or anybody else, oh he's a Samaritan. Sorry! No, they were kind of cool with it, they're probably all friends. And imagine that, a four-day walk, maybe three-day walk. They're walking along, and every single day it gets a little bit better. Isn't that great? Every day a patch goes away, every day they feel a little better, every day their energy gets a little bit. And then all of a sudden they arrive to Jerusalem, maybe they're completely better, and just elation that in obeying God over four days, their skin got well and they decided to show themselves to the priest. Now in Jesus' day, if in the weird chance that you were healed of leprosy, perhaps it was just eczema or dandruff or something like that; no Head and Shoulders back then. And you're better, you have to go through a process of being brought back into the community and proclaimed well. So all ten of these guys would have gone through this ritual. The ritual looks like this. It's actually beautiful. You take a live dove, okay? Or some kind of a bird; so this is what happens first. The man who has leprosy and is now healed, comes before the priest and the priest examines him everywhere, and he says you are well. This is what we're going to do. You take a live dove, and you dip the dove in blood and living water, and you take the bird out to an open field and you release it. What is that a symbol of? I mean as Christians, it's hard not to relate this beautiful image of a bird being dipped in blood and living water and being free. It's the symbol of forgiveness and healing. Forgiveness and healing. And the freedom that comes by being given this gift of grace from God. When you see that bird flying in an open field and you're a healed leper, you're supposed to have this image in your head of that is me! I've been healed by God's grace; I've been forgiven by God's grace. I was dead but now I'm alive. I was lost but now I am found. And all ten of these guys would have had this amazing feeling of watching a dove covered in blood and water flying free and they would think man, this is me. And then they go through an eight-day process where they have to sleep outside just to make sure, and then on the eighth day they're examined again, and then they have to shave every hair on their body. That includes back hair, eye brows and everything below the belt, shall we say? Everything has to be shaved. They're examined again, and then there is a ritual where they take a bath and they're given new clothes, and then what happens? They get to go home. After an offering, they get to go see their wife, their kids, their husband, their employer. They get to go back to their favorite coffee shop. Just imagine that, this sense of freedom and joy that you would get from going through this amazing process of receiving a miracle from God through Jesus, and then what happens? We know the end of the story, don't we. There's Jesus, He's still walking along the road, maybe in another town, and out of nowhere comes the Samaritan who's completely shaved, he's got no eyebrows, got no hair on his head, no arm hair, he's running at Jesus in new nice clothes, no longer wearing a mask, no longer hair unkempt. He throws himself at Jesus' feet and he thanks Him for all that He's done and begins to just pour out worship to God because this man who was dead is now alive. Wow. And what's Jesus' response? Where are the others? Where are the other nine? By the way, Jesus knew he was a Samaritan, and He believed that he would receive that gift, but He says where's the other nine? And this is just Bobby, okay, this is just a Bobby commentary 101, this is just me. But you think about it. You've got eight days, a four-day walk down to Jerusalem and then an eight-day ritual, and all this amazing stuff, I think those nine Jewish guys, in their mind, kind of felt like they had this one in the bag. I think that as they were going, it was still great, it was still awesome that they took a step of faith, but I almost feel like the word we might use today, they felt a bit entitled to it. Like they knew it was.. they're like we're Jewish, we're going to our temple, but the Samaritan, he just had his hopes up. He was just kind of like God said it to me and I'm going to trust that it's for me too, and I don't think he had the same assurance, even though he was doing the same action, and so I think when he received the gift, he was grateful in a way that the others weren't. And you know what kills me? This is the part that kills me the most.

Get Your Hopes Up

All ten of them, if they were going home, would have been going north. Him to Samaria and them to Galilee. In other words, Jesus coming south and they're going north to go home, they would have like almost passed each other or been very close. And even then, the other nine, because they were so excited to see their spouse, so excited to see their families, so excited to get to that party, that they couldn't just veer off the road a little bit to say thank you. But the Samaritan did. I think that today, I mean I would be tempted in that way, to just be like oh, He'll know I'm thankful. I'll let Him know later. I'll go find Him later, and then you never do. I think there's something about someone who truly experiences God's power in their life as a free gift, not as something that I earned, not as something that I was born with, but as just a huge surprise that was God's word enacted in my life that I just think there's something about that that causes a person to be more grateful. To live life in a sort of open-handed way. I'm not sure if that makes sense to you, but it makes sense to me. That there are some people who want something, expect something and then get that thing, and then there are other people who want something and then hope to get that thing and get it, and the responses between the two are very different. It's the difference between entitlement and thankfulness and it's a big issue today. That so often I think we have so many wonderful things that we have in our life, but we're sort of just used to it. It's sort of like well we had that yesterday and the day before, why wouldn't I have it today? Three square meals and a roof over my head. A family or friends who love me. Being able to walk. These are things that other people don't have. And so it's easy to fall into this rhythm of life where we just forget how lucky we are, or really how blessed we are. And it's easy to focus on what we've lost versus what we have left. I think that in life to live like the Samaritan is to be overjoyed and grateful even for the little things. And I think when we do that, we continue to see God's outpouring of miracles in our life. If you need more miracles in your life, become a more thankful person. Become a person who worships the Lord. Become grateful to the giver and He'll want to give you more. That's true, isn't it? For those of you who like giving gifts, when someone's super stoked about a gift you've given them, don't you want to give them more? And when you give something to your nephew, for example, and he doesn't care, I'm talking to you, Caleb. Just kidding. And they're like ah, thanks. Like that's it? That's the last one. Congratulations. You are cut off. See I want to be over the moon about every breath in my lungs. I want to be over the moon about my wife and my kids. I got to go to Yosemite yesterday. By the way, we were in Yosemite yesterday. We were stuck in traffic on the way home. I had a choice to make: am I going to be grumpy about being stuck in traffic? Or am I going to be grateful that I got to go to Yosemite. And so much of life is like that, isn't it? So I want to encourage you anyone, anyone who has a grateful heart becomes a magnet for miracles. A grateful heart is a magnet for miracles. This is my most ripped off quote, by the way. I wrote this in a book in 2006. I see it all the time now. But it's true. A grateful heart is a magnet for miracles. I think many of us have a type of soul leprosy – the numbness. What happens is when our soul becomes numb, it's easy for the things of life to eat away at us and we look down and we're missing something that we really wish we could get back. The cure to the numbness you're experiencing life is living life with a thankful heart. I want to encourage you to live every single day with what I think of as a slow thankfulness. Almost like you would feel if you were a tourist in a wonderful place you'd always wished you could go. That the thing that everybody who lives there takes for granted every day, you see in a fresh way. And I want to encourage you to see your own life in a fresh way. To experience your life in a way of slow thankfulness. Live every single day with a slow thankfulness and engender in your own life a heart of gratitude and watch how you will become a magnet for miracles. Lord, we love you and we thank you that you love us. We thank you for your word, the word of God is true and doesn't change. Lord, we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

Thank you for taking part in this worship service. We want you to know that we love you so much and we know you're going to have a great week. 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 peace in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, amen.