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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 first timers and church family. We are always so honored to have you with us. You know, today take sides with God and believe that all your needs for mind, body and soul are already yours. You are so loved.

BS: Thank you for joining us. We want you to know that wherever you are, even if we haven't met you, we're like thinking about you and praying for you, and believe that you're watching because God has a word, a message, a song that's just for you in this time, so I want to encourage you that as you watch, also listen and pay attention to what the Holy Spirit might do in your life during this worship service. Father, we come to you in the very strong name of Jesus and we ask in that name that you would break chains, that you'd bring freedom, sight to the blind, that you'd bring food for the hungry, that you'd bring water for the thirsty, that you would nourish us spiritually, physically and in our soul during this time. Lord, we love you, we thank you so much that you're already here, that you're already doing a good work, that we can trust you with all our hearts and it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

HS: Amen.

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

INTERVIEW – Justin McRoberts (JM) and Bobby Schuller (BS)

VOICE OVER: Justin McRoberts is an author, speaker, singer-songwriter, and host of the podcast @ Sea with Justin McRoberts. His ministry work spans over two decades, and in addition to co-founding Shelter-Vineyard Church in Concord, California, he's become a trainer and mentor to pastors and artists. His new book, It is What You Make of It: Creating Something Great From What You've Been Given, looks at how we can eliminate "It is what it is" thinking from our lives and embrace our challenges to turn them into gifts. Please welcome, Justin McRoberts!

BS: Justin, hi! Thank you for joining us.

JM: Happy to be here.

BS: For those who don't know you or who haven't heard of you, tell us about your story.

JM: I'm five six and I'm Scotch-Irish. That's probably the most important part of the thing. I live in Martinez, California, born in Oakland, and for the last 25 years my role and responsibility has been to create language for the process of life in faith, so folks can get a handle on what's going on in their own environment in the divine context.

BS: That's awesome, by the way. There's a statement.. so when I was reading this, that people say "it is what it is." And your book title is It is What you Make of It. This reminds me a lot of something my grandpa used to say to us when we would leave his house or something: 'have a good day.' And he would so 'no! Make it a great day!' And that kind of reminds me of that. Tell me a little bit about how that phrase kind of inspired the book, right?

JM: Yes, I mean the idea being like a lot of us end up missing out on the things that are right in front of us because we don't grab ahold of.. like we're trained to wait. And not that waiting's a bad thing, but at some point the waiting brings about a certain kind of fruit that we get to be responsible for. So the things that happen in my life, whether it's the gifts and the talents that I'm offered, or the circumstances I end up in, nothing is what it is. It always ends up. The question on the other side of my gifts and my talents and my strengths or my circumstances, my failures and my impoverishments is what do I do with what I have on hand right now. That's what it looks like for me to live and look like God as I do.

In the Fullness of Time

BS: That's a little abstract. Explain that to me. Are you talking about tragedy, are you talking about victory, are you talking about your own personal struggles? It is what it is.

JM: Yes. I'll give you two quick stories. The one is.. and the book starts out this way, is I was cracking jokes in my freshmen year speech class, and my speech teacher pulled me up in front of the room and said 'you like to make people laugh, so here you go. Make people laugh.' And I froze cause now it's like 'I'm not stealing someone else' moment, I've got to make one of my own. I think grabs this inflated cactus and he sets it down next to me, and he says 'you've got five minutes.' And like I'm frozen. The kid next to him says, because he sits down in my seat, the kid next to him says 'just pretend like you're in the desert; it's just a cactus.' And Mr. Roth, the teacher who I was in trouble with, said 'no its not. Its whatever you make of it.' What he was doing for me in that moment is like you have a gift, you like making people laugh, you like talking, what are you actually going to do with that? That's about seeing my gift as not just a thing that I have, but like the question what am I going to do with it? And then a number of years ago, and I share this with a lot of folks who are part of your congregation, like I lost my father to depression, to suicide, to overwork, to a false narrative about who he's supposed to be, and it's awful to lose somebody to suicide. And after the grieving process and after being overwhelmed by that loss, the question then became what do I do now with this moment, with this story that I have in my life? And part of what I did was I got to go speak to folks who live like my dad, who believed that they are only.. they are their money, that they are their successes, and I get to say no, you're a beloved child of the living God. Let's help you re-orient who you are. I get to use that, as well. Tragedy, victory, strength, failure. All.

BS: I appreciate that because I think we are living in a time where they're multiple reasons why people feel like a pressure to just be or do what kind of like everybody around them is saying they should be or do. That can happen in lots of ways, like it can happen through religion, obviously, it can happen through.. there's a lot of educated people who are saying oh you're this way because of this or that. There's a lot of religious people who are saying all this or that. Very often I think as people we don't even know what we want in life. We don't know what we're supposed to do. Like I think it causes our brains to be almost a little scrambled and confused. When someone says something like 'it is what you make of it,' I think a lot of times we're like well what should I make of it? That's maybe a big question people have.

JM: Yes. It is, and the first step in that is figuring out what it is you actually do have on hand. In other words, we get caught up in solutions, we get caught up in programs, and we don't pay as much attention to the actual gift God is trying to give the world which is you. So when the disciples looked at the crowd of thousands and they say they're hungry, this is a problem, Jesus says why don't you feed them? They want to send them away, like they're like no, we don't want to deal with this problem because we don't have enough. And what Jesus says is then go why don't you feed them, and then eventually they get around to the question, like what is it that you do have on hand. Before they can get to the question of like what they're going to do, they actually had to evaluate what it is they actually had on hand. And they had just a little bit of bread, and just a little bit of fish. They had to come to that point. And you're a hundred percent right. I think we get caught up on the solutions and the mechanisms, we get caught up on the what ifs. And we don't spend enough time actually paying attention to like what do I actually have in me? What's that desire in me, what's the dream I have in me that I actually want to build on and make something out of it.

BS: One of the things you just said that got me is it almost sounds like you're saying everyone is a gift. It's like everyone is a gift to someone else in some way, and a part of sorting out what to do with what I've got in my life is figuring out how I can be a gift to my neighbor or something like that.

JM: Yes, a hundred percent. And it's not a thing I believe and then act on. It's a thing I have to do and then see. Like I have to be placed in those places in which I don't feel like I have enough, I don't feel like I am enough, and then be received differently than I understand myself. So when I am the person in my neighborhood, who like last summer, my neighbor falls down on the end of her driveway and turns out she's got brain cancer and she doesn't know what's going on. And like I'm the person in the neighborhood. I don't feel sufficient for that moment. I don't know what I'm doing, but I'm the person that is placed there. And over the course of the next several months, like the relationship that my family develops with her and her family, we didn't know what kind of gift we were going to be to her and her situation until I was in that situation and had to ask that question – what do I have on hand, what can I bring to the table, and then watch magic and miracle happen on the other side of that choice.

In the Fullness of Time

BS: That's awesome. The book is called It is What You Make of It: Creating something great from what you've been given by Justin McRoberts. I want to encourage you, especially if you know someone or you're someone who's going through a big transition in life and you're just trying to sort out what to do next and what do I do with this mess, or what do I do, this is the book for you. Justin, thank you for joining us. We appreciate it and thank you for this encouragement!

JM: You got it.

BS: God bless you.

SCRIPTURE – Acts 2:17-21 - Hannah

In preparation for the message, Acts 2:17:

In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Hallelujah. Amen.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord, we're going to remind ourselves what the scriptures say about us. 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 – Bobby Schuller "In the Fullness of Time"

The sermon today is called "In the Fullness of Time," but if I were to rename it, I would call this sermon "Do Stuff." The only reason I don't call it that is because for some reason looking at someone and saying "do stuff" feels kind of condescending. But it's a reminder, sometimes, that most of the sermons that I'm preaching, and I think this is true of a lot of preachers, you're really preaching often to a mirror. You're, in a way, inviting your congregation to see what you say to yourself when you're facing your own trials, when you're facing your own difficulties, and you recognize one of the fun things about being a pastor is you're invited into the particulars of so many people's lives. And what you start to see is how much people in general go through, and how often the same thing I'm saying to myself in a mirror is the thing that I would need to hear if I were you. I'm saying it as like a friend, you know? I've always been interested in science, and I've never been a good scientist; I've never been truly a scientist but one thing that's weird to me is hibernation. How a giant animal like a bear will disappear into a cave for months – five, six, seven months – and not drink any water and not eat any food, and then come out of hibernation and instantly has to eat and drink and has only a very short period of time to eat or drink before it dies. And as we come out of this type of hibernation, it's almost like we have to get used to being alive again! Today, I want to encourage you to keep pressing into the idea that God still has so much in store for your life. Your life is not only gifted, your life is a gift! Don't withhold your gift to a world that needs someone just like you. We live in a world that needs to rev up again, and we need people like you to lead the way; to say a kind word, to do stuff, to get out there and do stuff. Have you all heard of Chuck Berry? You haven't heard of the Chuck Berry I'm going to talk about. See there's two famous Chuck Berry's. There's the Johnny Be Good Chuck Berry, and then there's the extreme sports Chuck Berry. This guy from New Zealand has done some of the most amazing stuff. He's sort of a Evel Knievel-type character. He does these jump suits and he does these various things. Well one stunt he did was using a contraption called a Swift. I'd never heard of this until I read the story. It's not a glider and it's not a hang glider, it's like if a hang glider and a glider plane had a baby, this weird thing would come out. So you kind of like.. what you do is you hold on and you run like Fred Flintstone towards a ledge and jump. And so his plan, he jumped off a six-thousand-foot cliff in one of these Swifts, and his goal was to plummet as quickly as he could towards the ground, gaining momentum, and then use the Swift to sort of do a James Bond-type swoop as close as he could to the bottom.

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And in his account, when he took off, something happened, and the wings began to what's called flutter, and that something can happen on occasion, it's very dangerous where the wings start to go into a pattern like this, and they go faster and faster and faster until they snap off. And so when this happened, he was going down, his wings fluttered, and both were sheared right off, and so he was basically in a plastic bubble with no wings. And he said that all of these thoughts went through his head, because he was a professional, as he's falling at a hundred and fifty miles an hour, he says okay, I looked at the horizon, I looked at my meter, he had already fallen sort of out of the cockpit but he was lassoed in, and he began to do calculations about how to survive the fall. He looked around for trees, still falling, still falling. He looked at his meter and he began to plan different things and he said I have to go to the emergency shoot, so he pulled himself back into the cockpit, looked at the dials, found the emergency shoot, and pulled it, was launched from the thing, looked up and was scared because he realized that the parachute – he described it as the types of parachutes that were in World War II on D-Day, they're very small, and he said it was even smaller than that, and I was going towards the ground and so I began to adjust, and he landed and he survived. Now in his account, when he was asked how long do you think it was that you went from the cliff to the ground, he said something like 'it felt like an eternity,' something like several minutes, maybe something like that. And the actual time from the point he went from, because we have the record on the GPS, from the cliff to the ground was ten seconds. I first heard this story in a wonderful book by a BBC journalist named Claudia Hammond, and it was her opening story talking about how time, how its experienced is very relative, not just in the Einstein way, but in the way that, for him as he's plummeting down, it felt like an eternity. Something happened in his brain and in his body that's maybe a part of a survival mechanism where he was able to think rapidly and do all of these things, and yet it was just a few seconds. Conversely, when he was lying on the ground waiting for the helicopters to come, it took 45 minutes for the paramedics to make their way to him, but he said he thought it was maybe five or ten minutes, because he was so overjoyed that he was alive! Isn't it amazing how when we experience time, an hour, a minute, that these experiences, even though objectively they're that measurement of time, when we look back on them or when we're in them, our ability to sort out how much time has gone by changes. So for example, if you find this sermon very boring, it's felt like forever has gone by. But if it's interesting to you, it maybe it's felt like, well I don't know, five minutes. The answer is so far, it's been 12 minutes and twenty seconds. I know because I use a timer in the back. What we realize too is that in life as we get older, now I'm not going to ask who thinks of themselves as older. My daughter Haven, who's 11 thinks of herself as older, and I can understand why. She has six-year-old cousins. For those of us who think of ourselves as older, as we get older, does it feel like time slows down or like time speeds up? (CONGREGATION MEMBER RESPONDS) Slows down, okay. Yes right. Time speeds up, right? Like when you think about life, it feels like when you're 12, a year feels like a long time. When you're 75, a year feels like next week! That's no big deal. And many people have asked the question why is it that as we get older in life, the weeks and the years seem to go by faster. An old theory is this: many people used to think well when you're 70, one year of your life is one seventieth of your life, but when you're five, one year is twenty percent of your life, or one fifth if we're sticking with fractions, Haven. That actually has been proved to be a false idea. That's not at all why life speeds up. It turns out that there are actually two experiences of time. There is the current experience of time where we're all experiencing right now, and then there's your memory of how you experienced that time. For example, if you're in a car and you're bored out of your mind, and you have a long road trip, and you're driving by yourself, and the radio's not working, and your battery on your phone ran out, you have nothing to do, sometimes that drive can feel like it went forever. But when you get there, and you look back at the car drive, you think well that didn't feel so bad. Or the inverse. Maybe you had a great car drive with a best friend and you listened to great music, and you had a great time, and it was so much fun, and as you're experiencing it, the ride goes by very quickly. But then after you get there, you look back and you think well that was kind of a long trip we took. See how your present experience of time and your memory of that experience can be very different. The most obvious would be work. If you're at a job you hate, nine to five or whatever, and you just, it's like 3:30, you really want to go home and the clock is just taking forever, and then you look back at your week of work that was completely boring, and it feels like I was just at work - five days already went by? But then you go on a five-day vacation to Hawaii and the five days blasts by like so fast, but then when you get home, you look back and you go like wow, I was only gone five days?

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The reason this happens is, you see all of us typically will experience time.. our present experience of time has nothing to do with how old we are. It has everything to do with how bored we are. But our memory of that time has to do with how many new experiences we're having. So in other words, if you want to slow down your memory of your life, you want to slow down the years and months of your life? It's all about having new experiences. The reason children experience the years in such a slow way is everything is new! Look dad, I've never seen a bird like that! What's that car going by? Who's Forest Gump? You see its these types of things.. my daughter literally said that to me yesterday. Its these types of things that the newness of life, the new experiences that we have, whether they're interesting or not, if its new, your memory registers it and slows it down in your memory. The ideal life that we would have then, if we were just basing it on this, would be something that as we experience it goes super-fast, lots of fun, lots of enjoyability, time with people we love, but lots of new experiences so you look back and you go wow, I did a lot in that week. All of that to simply say that as we get older in life, I think we try and be safer in our need to be more responsible, and sometimes that causes the years and the months to fly by, even though the days seem to go awfully slow. All that to simply say it's time for us to do some stuff. Do stuff! They asked me in the back, they're like is that a slide? Like it is a slide. Especially now, more than ever, after all we've gone through, it is time for us to do some stuff, am I right? Can I get an amen from God's people? I originally wanted to put "do stuff for God" but if I were to totally write out what I think is better than do stuff for God is actually "do stuff in God's kingdom." See the problem with do stuff for God is a lot of the stuff you're supposed to do doesn't always feel like you're doing it for God, unless you somehow, like gardening, learning a language. A lot of times, helping your neighbor is obviously doing something for God, but sometimes God wants us to do things that build us up and train us for the future that's about to come. Someone that was really important in my life when I was a kid was this guy who taught me how to play hockey. Well he had to learn how to play hockey before he could teach a 13-year-old kid how to play hockey and teach him that he's got a bright future. So sometimes God wants you to just play hockey, but do stuff. Get off your phone and turn your TV off AFTER Hour of Power is over. You need to wait. There's still more to come. I think that human nature, the way we view our past causes us to think about how we will define and predict our future. When we're a kid, and we think about our future, our future is full of hope and opportunity. Maybe I think when I'm a kid, as a kid, I think when I grow up I'll be an astronaut or a ballerina or a doctor or a world traveler. And this is a definitive part of being a kid, even though your idea of what you want to be when you get older changes, it just changes to the next coolest thing you can think of. But as we get older, we shift from that somehow and we think what do I look forward to? Well, I hope that in my future, I think next year it's about time for me to get a mattress and boy am I excited about that. I just got a new mattress and I was almost disappointed at how excited I was that I was getting a new mattress. But man does it feel nice. Hannah got a deal, too. Good job, Hannah. All of this reminds me of the famous quote from Yogi Berra "The future ain't what it used to be." Now that is true for so many of us. This sense that as we get older, our future, our own future shifts from I'm going to be an astronaut, to I can't wait to get a new mattress. Unless you're Elon Musk or someone like that. And I think that this is because life is hard! Tragic! Disappointing! So many things that I thought would happen didn't happen and I couldn't muscle my way into it. And so many people that I love have left me or died or betrayed me. What future could someone like me hope for? Our world and our life and our choices are riddled with tragedy and mistakes, so our life becomes ingrown as we think I'm not going to make any more mistakes. I'm not going to suffer any more tragedy. I'm not going to have any more loss. We look back at the times then of all the times we wish we'd taken a risk or wish we'd done something big, or wish we'd made that leap and we didn't, and even more regrets sink in. As we look at our past, a life full of tragedy, regrets and lack of faith, it begins to define our future. God says to you no more. No more! It is time to do something great for God! This chronic withdraw is the result of the crippling despair, sadness and fear we have based on what we've gotten so far. But to quote Yogi Berra again, my friend, it ain't over until it's over. It ain't over till it's over! God is giving you the opportunity to redeem your history, even if it's all your fault. It is never too late to create a new past. Create a new past. Your stories not done. You will not be defined by tragedy, you will not be defined by lack of faith, you will not be defined by your mistakes. You will be defined by the triumph that God had in you because you heeded what I'm saying today – that you're going to do something great for God. I'm so proud of you. You're going to do something good for Him. Redeem your history. Don't just do it for you, do it for like your kids and your friends and the people that you do life with.

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The more stories we see of people who have gotten this far but have been beaten and broken but turned it around, the more people we know like that, the more hope we get that God can go something like that in our lives. Your test will become your testimony, as they say. You'll become a living example of what God can do when someone just simply gives their life to Him.

Pentecost is known as the birth of the church when the Holy Spirit came upon everyday people and did miracles and wonders and changed the world forever. But this hope of Pentecost that we see in Acts chapter 2 when thousands of people came to faith, and people were healed and there's just this outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it happened through the people that nobody thought it would happen through. In the Bible, in the New Testament, there are three religious.. well in the New Testament days, there are three religious groups that are super popular, but only two are mentioned. If you read the Bible at all, you've heard of the Pharisees, the first group, the Sadducees, the second group, they're arch nemesis, so they hate each other. But then there's this third group that whenever I study and read the Bible, I'm astounded that it's just never mentioned. They're everywhere. They're walking through Jerusalem, they have an area of Jerusalem, actually, that's reserved for them. They have multiple settlements throughout the desert. It's a group called the Essenes. They're the guys who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls. You might remember them. And it's astonishing that they're not mentioned. This place behind me that you see is their most famous settlement called Qumran. A number of buildings and baptismal pools. The Essenes had the hope that God would come. See when Jesus came, it's weird, all of Israel you read in the original documents outside of the Bible, was just pregnant with expectation and hope for the Messiah. It's like God was telling multiple people, like, He's coming, He's coming, He's coming, He's coming. And so because of this, everybody was looking and hoping and expecting. There was all this increase of people returning from Babylon into Galilee. Actually in Jesus' day, did you know there were more Jews still in Babylon than there were in Israel, and they were still returning. And they were speaking Greek and they had all these hopes and expectations for Israel. One of the groups is these Essenes, they believed that they were going to usher in the Messiah. Essene means "the pious ones." The pious ones. They believed that the temple was corrupt. They believed that all of Jerusalem was full of sinners, and they wanted to just have order and be perfect, the best they could, so they were going to spend all their time out in the desert baptizing themselves every single day, living perfect lives, lives of order and scribing and writing things down. They were celibate. They were going to do everything they could to make sure they never made a single mistake. They were effectively prototypes of monks. They prayed all the time, they were naval gazing, they were thinking, they were talking. But here's the big question: other than the Dead Sea Scrolls, why have most of us never heard of the Essenes? Because for all of that piety and all that holiness and all that perfect living, and the fact that they never made a single mistake and never did anything wrong, they never did anything worth anything! They never fished! They never built a house! They never fed the poor! They never did anything! Their goal was to be perfect because that's what God wants. And so here are these men who in their own eyes believe themselves to be utterly righteous, but the pages of history has all but forgotten them. When Pentecost happens, who does it happen to? A bunch of like what we would think of as high school/college students that are fishermen, tax collectors, men and women, children. They're up in a room or they're in the temple, probably. We always think of them in a room – it says the whole house is full of the spirit, but we forget that in Judaism, the house means the temple, so many scholars believe Acts chapter 2 actually happened in the temple. That they were there praying, the Holy Spirit was poured out on them, and they read this passage: "I will pour out my spirit on all the people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, and blood and fire and billows of smoke, and the sun will be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood. Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. For on Mt. Zion and in Jerusalem, there will be deliverance as the Lord has said. Even among the survivors whom the Lord calls." This was the passage that Peter, an everyday fisherman who became the leader of the gang through Jesus, this is what he says when six thousand people come before the Lord in holy repentance and full of the spirit. Somebody who was doing something. And when I think about that, I think about how different those lives were than these Essene-ian monks. Peter's sin didn't keep him from giving this sermon. Peter turned his back on God, betrayed Jesus, denied Him three times. That didn't keep Pentecost from happening for him. Even in their times, in their lack of faith and all their mistakes.

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Thomas' claim that unless I can actually see Him and put my fingers in His hands and His side, that didn't keep Thomas from experiencing an outpouring of the spirit. Tragedy. All of them experienced tragedy, but they had just experienced was the death of the greatest holiest best person who had ever lived, murdered and marred before their eyes, their mentor, their friend, their father really, to see Him die in the way that He did, naked, completely naked on the cross, that's a tragedy. Raised from the dead. Well God confirmed in their lives in that moment everything that He's always said in the word that there is no tragedy God can't turn around. I'll finish with this idea. The command to sabbath, the Ten Commandments, one of them is to honor the sabbath and keep it holy. We all know that the sabbath is a command to rest. But did you also know that the sabbath is a command to work? We forget that part. Traditionally, the sabbath is understand as a dual command. Its two things you do. You work six days and you rest on the seventh. Let's read it together. Not together, I'll just read it out loud because that'll get weird: "Remember the sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it, you shall not do anything." Yes, I think that we are for sure in a time.. I'm going to wait for that car to go by because it's going to annoy me when I watch this later. We are for sure in a time where we think of sabbath as like the minimum, and we think of non-work as the ideal life. Like what if I could make enough money in my life where I just wouldn't have to work anymore. But my guess is if you know a good person who tried that, you'll find that very quickly they found some work to do. See it's not that non work is the ideal, it's that good work is the ideal. And friend, let me tell you, there is a big difference between non work and work you love doing. Perhaps that's the thing most of all if you're approaching retirement age that you can look forward to is maybe you can quit the work you hate doing, and start the work that you love doing because now you have the means to do it. I hope that for you, honestly. But in general, I believe that if we want to be a part of the great things God is about to do in this world, we must be willing to do stuff. I'm already out of time, but I just want to tell this one last story. Did you know I tried to start a monastery? Does anybody know that? Only Russ and Hannah know that. I literally tried to start a monastery. I raised money, not a lot of it but I raised enough.. I hired attorneys, I was working with brokers, and my plan, this was about 12 years ago when I was finishing seminary, my plan was to take Fuller Seminary Irvine and I was working with Fuller on doing this, in starting a monastery for seminary students at Rancho Capistrano, my dad's old church grounds, which I go to on retreat often, and I was going to make this amazing monastery where the seminary students were going to learn, and then also spend the rest of the day like praying and meditating and having these worship services. And you want to know something? Nobody seemed to be into that idea. I could not get people into this idea that I thought was amazing. I was working like crazy and so I loved to go to Prince of Peace Abbey and pray with the monks down there. But the longer I went down there, the more I realized that most of these monks were nuts. I remember one of the last trips we ever did, Russ Jacobson was there, Russ is ethnically Jewish even though he's a Christian pastor, and this monk who was the head of the whole thing, made like multiple anti-Semitic jokes in front of Russ. And we're like what are you doing? And then I heard Dallas Willard who was my hero say that he believed monasteries were elaborate retirement programs for priests who didn't want to work anymore. And then I realized seminary is already a monastery. When I was going to seminary, I noticed that there were two types of students and their paths completely diverged. There were students that all they did was go to school the full time, and they lived on campus, and they threw frisbees, and they naval gazed all day, and they debated whether or not the Holy Spirit preceded from the Father or preceded from the Father and the Son, and then you had other students like me who were dads and had jobs, or had ministry positions, and they were not worried about the dumb stuff that the naval gazing students were. They seemed happier, they seemed to ask practical theological questions like why do bad things happen to good people. And they had to think about how do I meet the needs of parishioners in my church. And it was around that time I realized what am I doing? I'd already decided that I was going to encourage every seminary student.. a seminary is a wonderful thing, I think that people should go to seminary, but man, if I was a president of a seminary, I would demand that every student have a part time ministry job somewhere. That they're doing something, they're working at a homeless shelter, or they're preaching, or they're doing youth ministry, just part time something while they go through school, otherwise you just get withdrawn. You become like these Essenes and you think that because I'm in my ivory tower, I've got my books and I've got all this, that the Spirit's going to do something, I was like hogwash. Do stuff! Do stuff! Do stuff with your faith, amen? And watch as God. Don't forget, we do rest, but the rest is only rewarding when it's a break from work you love doing.

In the Fullness of Time

My encouragement to you is that you have some amazing work ahead of you that's not going to be exhausting, it's going to be life giving. It's going to be with people you love, and its going to make a big difference in the world. We love you and we're rooting for you and we're praying for you. Father, we love you so much. We ask in Jesus' name that your Holy Spirit would be poured out in our lives. We ask, Father, that you'd train us and teach us what it means to do work that we love for your kingdom. To do things and grow personally in our lives so that we can be even more effective in reaching people who are hurting and need encouragement. Lord, we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

BS: 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.