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Hour of Power - 21.11.2021

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: Welcome church family and friends. Thank you for worshipping with us. You know, God is the only one who can see the big picture of your life. The only persons exist. You can trust Him even during the coronavirus because He is on your side and you are so loved by Him.

BS: We're so, so excited to have Pastor Bayless Conley as our guest speaker today and he'll be preaching for us later. Well let's begin this service with a word of prayer.

Father, we thank you so much for everything you've given us, everything you're doing for us. We thank you, Lord, that when we're suffering, when we're going through hard times, when we're facing challenges, we're not alone. Lord, just because we can't hear you doesn't mean you're not speaking. We pray, Father, that you give us ears to hear, give us eyes to see. Help us, Lord, to listen to your Holy Spirit, to be full of the spirit, and Lord to be more like Jesus in everything we do. It's in His name we pray, amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – John 4,10-14 – Chad Blake

In preparation of Pastor Bayless' message, hear these words found in John chapter 4: Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." "But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?" Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life." This is the word of our Lord.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Wherever you are, would you please 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 always do. Say it with me: 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!

INTRO TO BAYLESS CONLEY – Bobby Schuller

I'm so excited to have back in the house today Pastor Bayless Conley. If you've watched Hour of Power at all, you have seen him. He's already preached for us twice this year, and we're just so grateful for all he's done for us and all the ways he continues to bless us and so many other churches. If you don't know Pastor Bayless, he's the founder and senior pastor at Cottonwood Church here in Orange County. He also hosts the television program Answers with Bayless Conley. Would you please welcome my dear friend, Pastor Bayless Conley.

MESSAGE – BAYLESS CONLEY "The Joy Bucket"

Hello everyone and it is such a delight to be back here again and welcome to all of those joining us online. We trust that the Holy Spirit will touch you right where you are there, and I just have to say I've been blessed being here, worshipping with you and I loved those beautiful songs. It was just fabulous. I have a few thoughts to share with you. That passage that was read a little earlier from John chapter 4 about the Samaritan woman at the well of Sy'char.

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When Jesus said “if you knew who’s talking to you, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water. The one that drinks this water,” no doubt he was motioning to the well, said they’ll get thirsty again, but “the one that drinks the water that I give, they’ll never be thirsty, but it will be in them a spring bubbling up and giving them eternal life.” That word for life there, it’s very interesting because there’s a lot of different words, Greek words, translated life in the New Testament. Some just mean biological life, some of them refer to just physical life or manner of life, behavior, but there’s one word that sort of sits at the top of the heap, and it’s the word that Jesus uses here. It’s the Greek word zoe. And its translated eternal life. It means the life of God. It’s what a person receives when they accept Christ. They are born again. The life of God literally invades them. The nature of God comes to dwell within them and they become what the New Testament calls a new creature or new creation in Christ Jesus. When you accepted Christ, literally zoe, the life of God, eternal life was imparted to you. It’s the life that God the Father enjoys. It’s the life that Jesus enjoys. In John 5:26, Jesus said “for as the Father has life in himself, so he’s granted the Son to have life in himself.” Zoe. The Father has this zoe. This eternal self-perpetuating life. The Son has it, and He’s given it to us. John 6:47 he said, “Most assuredly I say to you, he who believes in me has everlasting life.” Not they’re hoping to get it someday, or once they die and pass into the next world. No, the one that believes has. Has a present tense possession, this zoe, this eternal life. It’s the word Jesus used in John 10:10 when he said “the thief only comes to steal, to kill and destroy, but I have come that you might have life” zoe, the life of God “and that you might have it more abundantly.” So, when I receive Christ, when you receive Christ, that life of God came to dwell in us as a living spring that bubbles up. Some translations say a well of water springing up and it should bubble out into every area of our lives. And here’s just a few different ways that this zoe, this life of God should affect us. Number one, it recreates the human spirit and destroys sin in my heart. I enjoy life as God has it in my spirit. But you know when God does heal, physically, it’s always through an impartation of life. In Revelation when the two witnesses died and they left their bodies in the streets for three and a half days, it says then the breath of zoe, the breath of life came into them and resurrected their bodies. Now if the life of God can resurrect a dead body, it can certainly heal a sick one. When we receive our new eternal bodies, the resurrected bodies like Christ had after He was raised from the dead and the scripture says one has been laid to our account, what a day that will be. But this is the way the scripture captures that. It says “that day when this mortal body will receive immortality,” it says that death will be swallowed up by zoe. By the life of God. This life of God can also affect our minds and bring us peace and tranquility. Acts 3:15, Jesus is called the Prince of Life, the prince of zoe. Isaiah 9:6 He’s called the Prince of Peace. Romans 8:6 says to be spiritually minded is life – zoe – in peace. Its life as God has it. Its abundance and fullness touching all areas of our existence, in fact we’re told in the book of Romans that we should walk in this newness of life, in this newness of zoe. So that life can and should change things for the better for us as Christ’ followers, spirit, soul and body. And that life, it is in every single believer. It is a well or a spring that bubbles up within the heart of every single believer, which brings us to a question: if there is a spring or a well of life within the heart of every believer, why then are so many Christians defeated and discouraged? Why isn’t it spilling over into our families and affecting our loved ones? Why isn’t it rising up and dominating when temptation rears its ugly head? Why doesn’t it push out sickness and despair? Why aren’t we experiencing the impact and the benefit that this zoe life brings? Well just because like when the natural well or a natural spring, the water must be drawn out. The living water that resides in our spirit can potentially meet any human need, but it needs to be drawn out. It needs to be released. And I just want to talk to you for a few moments about one way. It’s not the only way, but it’s one of the main ways that that life of God can be drawn out. I’d like to read you a couple of scriptures from Isaiah chapter 12. They are verses that prophetically look forward in the era we’re living in. They talk about salvation, the salvation that Christ would bring. Listen to these. It’s Isaiah 12, verses 2 and 3. It says “behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid for Yah, the Lord is my strength and song. He also has become my salvation. Therefore, with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.” With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. Many people have no life because they have no joy. It’s a well or a spring that’s bubbling and gushing up with the very life of God in them, but that life has never reached their mind or their body or their marriage. It’s never spilled over into their family because they don’t rejoice. Joy is the bucket that draws the water out of the well. The title of my message is The Joy Bucket. There’s a verse in Isaiah 64 and 5, and Isaiah is talking to the Lord and he says you meet the one who rejoices. You meet him who rejoices. There was an old English preacher that used to come speak for us many times.

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His name was George Stormont, and he had one of those just amazing voices, this baritone voice that sort of carried an authority within him. He was telling me the story one time how he was in the meeting of an older gentlemen that he knew named Howard Carter. Howard Carter had led the oldest Pentecostal Bible school in England. And he's in this meeting and he said Bayless, Howard Carter and his wife just sort of had a gift for leading people into a fuller measure of what the Holy Spirit had to offer. They had a gift for leading people in what the scriptures refer to as the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He said in that meeting, when it was over, a gentleman came up to the front, I was standing right there, and he came up to brother Carter and he said brother Carter, he said I pastor an Assembly of God church. You know, we're charismatic, we have Pentecostal roots, and he said and I believe in the baptism and the Holy Spirit, and I preach it for 23 years, but I've never received it. I begged God, I pleaded with God for 23 years for this experience and I've never received it. My friend George said, and there was just a bit of whine in his voice, and he was sort of almost crying when he was saying it. He said brother Carter looked at him and says and brother, I want to tell you, you're not going to get it that way, either. And he quoted Isaiah 64:5 to him that the Lord meets the one who rejoices. And George said it was like a light went on in that pastor's mind. You could just see his countenance change. He fell to his knees in the front of the church and he repented for his unbelief, and he lifted his hands and just began to rejoice. George said within five minutes, he'd experienced this mighty baptism in the spirit. Here's what I remember about the story. George looked at me, he says Bayless, more was accomplished in five minutes of rejoicing than in 23 years of begging and crying. I have never, ever forgotten that because God meets us when we rejoice. And I know some are thinking pastor, how can I possibly rejoice with so many hard things going on in my life? Let me share three thoughts with you. Number one, we must realize that joy is not dependent upon circumstances. We can rejoice regardless of what's going on, and I know I realized that sitting here and those that are watching at home, there would be a myriad of challenges. As Nita sang that beautiful song a few moments ago, People, that we go through things, we have hard times. You may be going through a rough patch right now. You know what? God sees you and He cares. And it's important to realize that we can rejoice regardless of circumstances, regardless of what we're going through. In fact, it's just interesting to note as you go through the scriptures, especially in the New Testament, quite often joy is always linked together with affliction and with trouble. 2nd Corinthians 7:4, Paul said I'm exceedingly joyful in all of our tribulation. In 2nd Corinthians 8 it talks about the Macedonians in a great season of financial lack, but it says they had abundant joy. We know James 1 and 2 – count it all joy when you encounter various trials. Jesus said in Luke 6 when men hate you, when they exclude you and cast out your name as evil for the son of man said rejoice in that day and leap for joy. Why be joyful when you're in a trial? Why be joyful when you're surrounded by enemies or facing lack? Well for one thing, you need what joy brings. I need what joy brings. It sends that bucket down into the well and it brings up the life of God and the life of God is what will meet our needs. I heard of a lady one time in church, they were having a prayer meeting. She said I want to put in a prayer request for Sister Agnes. She's going through a great trial right now. And they said well what kind of trial is Sister Agnes going through? And the woman said well I don't rightly know. They said what do you mean you don't rightly know? She says well, Sister Agnes lives in the apartment above me, and I know whenever she goes to tribulating, she starts to shout in praises to God, and last night I could hear her marching back and forth on the ceiling in my apartment, and I could hear her singing to Jesus in worship so I know she has to be going through a great trial. Well, some of us need to learn the secret this Sister Agnes knew. When we're going through a rough patch, I think we should lift our hands and sing to Jesus all the more. Secondly, and this is very important. You need to look for a reason to rejoice in everything. Paul wrote to the Philippians and he said now that I'm in jail, he said some are emboldened to preach even more, and he says, and they preach Christ out of goodwill, out of good motives. He said but there are others. They're just glad that I've been sidelined because now they want to step into the limelight and they're preaching Christ out of wrong motives. Paul said you know what? Whether Christ is being preached from right motives or wrong motives, at least Christ is being preached and in this I will rejoice. The disciples in Acts chapter 5, they were beaten and threatened and told not to speak at all in the name of Jesus. And the Bible says they went their way rejoicing, not because they'd been beaten, not because they'd been threatened but they were rejoicing because they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus because they were identified with Jesus Christ. We can always find something to rejoice about. You know our daughter, she's 33 now. When she was 16, she borrowed her mother's new car, and we got a phone call she'd been in an accident.

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And we drove to the scene of the accident, the cars were there, the police were there. Our daughter was okay, but she took one look at me and she burst into tears and she ran and just collapsed on me and was sobbing and if you have a daughter, you get it. Some kids had gone across, they'd gone on a red light in front of traffic on their bicycles, and the car in front of our daughter slammed on the brakes and Rebecca plowed into the back of her car, actually totaled her mother's car. And you know what, wasn't a good situation, but I could rejoice because our daughter wasn't hurt. I could rejoice because no one else in the accident was hurt, not even the kids that were so foolish to cross the road in front of traffic. And I could rejoice we had insurance to take care of things. There's always something we can rejoice about it, and if you find it hard right now to find something in your situation to rejoice about, at least rejoice that your name is written in the Lambs book of Life. Your name's been recorded in heaven and you can rejoice over that every single day. It doesn't matter what you're facing or what you might be going through. Thirdly, determine that you're going to rejoice. I want to read you some verses and I know that you have heard them, but I want you to consider this. These were written about people that were living in an agrarian society. All of their prosperity was measured in their crops, the fruitfulness of their trees and their orchards and their vineyards, and their cattle and their sheep. That their whole life revolved around this, and it says this in Habakkuk chapter 3, verses 17 and 18. "Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food, though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there's no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation." I will, a conscious act of the will. And in this situation, things couldn't have been worse for them. This was catastrophic! It's not just that they don't have flocks or herds or crops that they can sell and make a living from, they have nothing to sustain their physical life. They don't have anything to feed their children. It is absolutely catastrophic. It says yet I will rejoice. You may have unpaid bills right now. You may have wayward children. You may have a lingering illness. We don't rejoice for those things, but we can rejoice in those things. Rejoice because God has an answer. Rejoice because we're not locked in. Rejoice because when we do, the life and presence of God will flow out and come into contact with the need, and the need will give way. The very next verse in Habakkuk here after he said in the middle of this chaos and catastrophe, I will rejoice in the Lord my God. This is the next thing he says. "The Lord God is my strength. He will make my feet like deer's feet. He will make me walk on my high hills." That was the result that came from rejoicing. The Lord God is my strength. It brings God's strength on the scene. The second thing, he said "He'll make my feet like deer's feet." In other words, it will help me navigate difficult terrain. I don't know, have you ever seen a deer in the mountains. It's amazing they can go almost anywhere. They can navigate the most difficult terrain. And God will help us navigate those difficult situations when we rejoice. He will give us wisdom. And it says "He will make me walk on my high hills." He lifts me above the catastrophe. There's actually a little thing added in some Bibles, it's just a notation, it says that this is to the chief musician with stringed instruments. In other words, it was to be put to music for the whole congregation to sing. In other words, this truth is for everybody. It's not just for a few people, it's for every single one of us. There's a story in Genesis 26 where Isaac came to the wells that had been dug by his father's servants, but the Philistines had filled those wells in with earth and debris. And I know because I've been there, some of you listening right now, may be sitting in here right now, you'd say pastor, I believe that that well, it has the life of God and it is in me. I believe it's there because Jesus said it would be. But I feel like the enemy has thrown a bunch of debris in that well. I feel like somehow it's just clogged up. There's something that's stifling it. Well, you know what, Isaac went and he re-dug those wells that Abraham had dug. He dislodged the work of the enemy. And one of the ways that we do that is just by as an act of faith, when we don't feel like it, when everything within us wants to complain instead, as an act of faith, we begin to rejoice. Psalm 118 says, "the voice of rejoicing and salvation is heard in the tents of the righteous." The voice of salvation rejoicing, not the voice of complaining, not the voice of woe, but the voice of rejoicing is heard in the tents of the righteous. I'm a Southern California boy. I was raised in the city. I married a farm girl from central Wisconsin. She came from a town of 600. And I remember the first time I went to meet my wife's parents, we are driving miles and miles out in the country, there was a little one room school house. That was first through sixth grade. It looked like it had landed from Little House on the Prairie. And went to meet her family and they're just beautiful country people. We had squirrel stew for dinner the first night I was there. And you know went out to.. her brothers, they thought it was funny, they had about a half an acre garden out there. Her daddy was a dairy farmer and so we're going to go get some tomatoes out of the garden plot and wash them off and eat these.

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And being the gentleman that I am, I grabbed the fence to push it down so my wife can step over and I failed to realize it was an electric fence. Her brothers watched me and they thought that was the funniest thing ever. But eventually we went in there and we got these big ripe tomatoes and we took them, they had an old red farm pump and you had to pump it by hand. We washed the tomatoes off and that, but that old farm pump had to be primed before it would give any water. You had to take a bottle of water and pour it down that old pump first, and then it would give you water. I know some people think well I'm not going to lift my hands or sing to the Lord, I'm not going to rejoice if I don't feel like it. That would be hypocritical. It's not hypocritical, you're just priming the pump. That's just your act of faith that you need to do, that when you don't feel like it. I wouldn't say well I'm not going to pour water down that pump, it's supposed to give me water. Now, sometimes all of us, we don't feel like it, everything in the world seems to be going wrong, but we'll lift our hands and we will rejoice in the Lord our God. I will rejoice in the Lord. And again, it's not the only way, but it's one of the main ways that we drop that bucket down into the well and it brings the life of God on the scene. And it will spill over into our families. It will spill over and affect our marriages. It will spill over and affect our minds. You would be surprised at the peace that can be yours, but I think rejoicing is an integral part of that. I'd like to end with this, it all starts with getting that well or that spring inside of you. He that believes on the son of God has eternal life. Now I got saved in a little street mission in a place called Medford Oregon. I never heard the gospel until I was in my 20's. No human being ever told me that Jesus Christ was alive. I had no idea. I had some terrible issues with substance abuse, other things going on in my life, I ended up in a street mission. I ended up there because a 12-year-old boy came up to me in a park one day and he told me about Jesus Christ. I'd never heard the story before. He told me Jesus was alive. It was like I was listening to an alien from another planet when I was talking to that little boy. And because of his influence and the influence of his family, I ended up in that street mission and I gave my heart to Jesus Christ, and that's where it all started for me. I cried like a baby for probably 30 minutes because that burden that I'd carried around in my soul for so long was lifted and I knew He was real. You may come from a background like mine, or you may not be able to relate to that at all, but we all relate to one thing: we're people, as Nita was singing. We all have a need of a Savior. We've all sinned and come short of the glory of God, and Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came for you, He came for me, and no amount of good works or human striving can ever bring us into right relationship with God. It can never do it. Salvation is by grace, through faith, plus zero. It's not of works, lest any man should boast, the scripture says. If you're here today, or listening and you've never embraced Jesus as the Lord and Savior of your life, or you're unsure of where you stand with the Lord right now, He's rich to all those who call upon Him. I want to ask you for just a moment if you would pray with me. Maybe put a hand over your heart. Close your eyes, if that helps you, but you don't have to. I'm going to give you a quick prayer to pray and if you'll tie your words around this prayer and if you'll speak it to God and be sincere, I believe that He will meet you. The Bible says if we believe in our heart, God raised Jesus from the dead and confess Him with our mouth as Lord, we will be saved. We receive eternal life. Why don't you just sincerely speak these words to God, just say oh God, I come to you. Even right there in your home, wherever you are, oh God, I come to you. With all of my heart I believe. I believe that Jesus Christ is your Son. I believe that He died on the cross for me. I believe He paid my debt in full. Jesus, thank you for loving me so much that you would take my place. I believe you have been raised from the dead and I ask you now, come into my life, be my Lord and be my Savior. Amen. Amen. God bless you. It's been a pleasure to be with you.

THANK YOU TO BAYLESS CONLEY – Chad Blake

Amen. Thank you, Pastor Bayless. Do you feel that? Do you feel that joy bubbling up, that bucket of joy that we all have inside us? Now go unleash it on the world, unleash it on your family, on your children, on your neighbors. Be that 12-year-old boy who goes up and changes the world. Think about that 12-year-old had no idea that he was talking to Bayless Conley, who would go on to share with so many other people!

BENEDICTION – Chad Blake

And now for the benediction: may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord cause His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn His countenance upon you and grant you His peace, and may we be a people marked by our joy. Amen. Have a great week, everyone.