

Hour of Power Deutschland
Steinerne Furt 78
86167 Augsburg

Telefon: 08 21 / 420 96 96
Telefax: 08 21 / 420 96 97

E-Mail: info@hourofpower.de
www.hourofpower.de

Baden-Württembergische Bank
BLZ: 600 501 01
Konto: 28 94 829

IBAN:
DE43600501010002894829

BIC:
SOLADEST600

Büro Schweiz:

Hour of Power Schweiz
Seestr. 8
8594 Güttingen
Tel.: 071 690 07 81
info@hourofpower-schweiz.ch
www.hourofpower-schweiz.ch

Spendenkonto:

PostFinance AG, 3030 Bern
Konto: 61-18359-6
IBAN:
CH1609000000610183596

Hour of Power - 18.12.2022

GOOD MORNING – Bobby & Hannah

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

HS: Happy Christmas week, visitors and church family. We love being with you. On the night that Jesus was born, a multitude of angels pronounced peace on earth and goodwill toward mankind. Goodwill means kindness, generosity, friendliness! God is not mad at you. God wills good for you. You are loved.

BS: Christmas is such a great opportunity to reconnect with people that maybe have gone by the wayside or people that you've fallen apart from. We're going to just pray that this is a great time to mend some old wounds and build some old bridges, and believe that you'll be closer to your family and friends than you've ever been this year, especially closer to God. We pray for that, Lord, in Jesus' name, we just pray for an outpouring of your peace and mercy, kindness and forgiveness to be in the heart of every Christian this morning, and every person under the sound of my voice, we just thank you God that you've paved a way for us to draw closer to your light and love, and we ask it all in Jesus' name, amen.

HS: Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Luke 2:8-20 - Hannah

In preparation for the message, Luke 2:8:

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all that they had heard wondering those things which were told to them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. Amen.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING (JOY) – Davey & Shawna Martinez

DAVEY: Good morning, everyone. During the first weeks of Advent season, we lit the candles of hope, peace and joy. Today we light the candle of love. Jesus has shown us God's perfect love in human form. The Bible teaches us, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life in heaven." Advent is a time of preparation, a time to think of others and for sharing life with all of God's children. It is a time to love others as God loved us and to give the world His most precious gift – God's good news, His Son Jesus Christ. Let us pray these words together as a congregation: God of hope, Prince of peace, Provider of joy and Lord of love, your goodness is beyond our comprehension. In the union of flesh and spirit, teach us to love this world and all people as you have loved us in Jesus Christ. Come into our darkness and reign. Open our hearts that we all might receive your transforming love. Amen.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

We're so glad you're here, and I want to encourage you to bring your friends. We begin our service by saying this creed every single week. Would you join us by standing together with me? Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord. We're going to 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 "Venite Adoremus"

Today is adoration Sunday. So in these old traditions, we line each Sunday with a particular word, and that kind of helps preachers like me kind of think about what to talk about. But adoration is an interesting one. It's not a word you hear a lot in church, but it's one that I think so aligns well with the final Sunday of advent. Let me just begin by asking you this question: what is something that you really adore? Like you adore this thing or person. I can tell you something Cohen, my son adores, he adores Disneyland. I took him yesterday. We have annual passes to Disneyland that were given to us by friends of ours, and it is amazing that for years I have taken this kid to Disneyland almost every Saturday forever. And every single time he acts like it's the very first time. When I tell him we're going to go, I always put a Dutch orange jersey on him so.. like sometimes we're in the bathroom and we're both going and he goes a little quicker than I do, so he'll run out of there thinking I'm still going, and that's probably more than you wanted to know, but then I'll run out and like look for him! I'm like where'd he go? But it's always an adventure. Every time before we go, if I tell him, he'll just get so excited and he starts dancing and he gets all thrilled and he starts telling everybody he's going to go to Disneyland. And even when we leave, a lot of kids are crabby and they're upset, he just goes thank you, daddy. Thank you so much, daddy. And then like when we get home, he'll say I want to tell mommy I went to Disneyland. I want to tell mommy. So I'm like okay, go tell her. So he'll run into the house, and go 'mommy I went to Disneyland! Daddy took me to Disneyland!' And it's like this every Sunday. Now that's why people are like how do you go every Sunday? Don't you get sick of it? And the answer is yes, I get sick of it. But I never get sick of THAT. I never get sick of that. There's something about being a parent, if you have kids or a grandparent, that's how God sees you. It's important. We're going to talk about that a little bit this morning. But what do you adore? So Cohen adores Disneyland. Maybe you adore fashion and you love clothes and design and you love special fabrics and colors, and you love how there's always new techniques, or events or ways in which dresses or suits or whatever it is, you just enjoy it and you adore it. Maybe you like architecture. My grandpa Schuller adored architecture. He built.. you know, there's nowhere in the world you can find more than one gold medal architect, except at the Crystal Cathedral campus where you can find three! In fact, I believe he's the only person in the architectural hall of fame that's not an architect. Isn't that amazing? But he could sit for hours and talk about all these things, and I didn't understand it all, but I did love it and enjoy it. Or maybe you adore something even better. Maybe you adore your kids, or maybe your grandkids. I know a lot of us don't have kids, but for those that do, someone told me once that grandkids is your reward for having kids. I don't get that because I don't have teenagers, but apparently having teenagers is really a hard thing to do. I have a 12-year-old, she's getting there. She's nudging close. She calls herself a tweenager. So we'll see, we'll see. But for now, I still really enjoy my daughter, but who knows, maybe you adore your grandkids. I hear that a lot from men, actually, which is a surprise, about how much grandpas love their kids. Or maybe it's some other relationship. Maybe you just got a new girlfriend or new boyfriend, or something. You just adore, you think about this person all the time. And isn't it interesting when we have things in our lives and we adore them and we think about them a lot, how it can affect the way we talk? Can affect the way we look. If I told you picture someone in like all black leather that rides Harley Davidson's, you would say that person is a biker, right? You just picture that. Or like if I said picture a teenage girl with pom poms that likes to dance a lot, you would say well it's a cheerleader, right? So it's weird how when we adore things or become part of these groups we even change the way physically we look and we even talk differently. Isn't that interesting? All this to say that I think there's something so human about adoration; about having something that you adore. It brings you to life! It makes you feel alive! It makes you feel alive. I think of adoration as an unhurried deep appreciation for something where you give worth to the thing and value the thing. And in most cases, if its true adoration, its usually worth what you're giving in the attention that you're giving to it, and it makes you feel alive.

Venite Adoremus

Today, and I talk about this word a lot, today we live in a world, though, that the passion for things seems to be going down for good things. Passion for bad things is going up, but good things goes down. And in fact, there's a chronic problem that I can't speak to this authoritatively, but in the clinical world, there's this word "anhedonia" that's being used a lot, that used to be almost nonexistent, and the word anhedonia is not depressed, but it's the inability to experience pleasure. It's happening in particular with a lot of younger people, that what happens when you look at a lot of bright lights and loud sounds and these types of things, it begins to almost kind of fry your brain a little bit where it makes it very hard to enjoy the simple pleasures of life, like fishing or going for a walk, or having a meaningful conversation with a friend. It's a clinical word that means you just can't experience pleasure. Maybe you're here today and you kind of feel that way sometimes. You feel a little bit numb. And I just want to say that I think adoration for almost anything is almost the cure for this. That instead of we've gone from adoration to stimulation. And I wonder what do you adore? What do you really adore? Or the problem is with all these things that we adore, whether they're sports heroes or groups that we're a part of, or people, all things fade away. Don't they? All things rust and rot. Are pecked away by birds and bugs. All things wither and wrinkle. All things turn grey. Everything burns. It's a positive church. Except one thing! Except one thing. The kingdom of God which is in this building, swirling all around us, and inside of you right now. And there's only one person who will never fade – the Lord Almighty! And can I tell you when we fix our adoration on these other things, but don't have it fixed on the tree of life, on the thing that will never fade, on the thing that will never rot, if we have it on other things and not this thing, our life, especially as we get older, becomes this taxing journey of perpetual loss. No wonder we've become anhedonic in a godless world. Everything fades. Everything rots. Everything withers. But when we cling to the strong arms of God, when we adore Him, it allows us to let go of the other good things we adore, even though we're brokenhearted, it allows us to endure with joy. So let's adore the Lord, and most of all, just take a moment, close your eyes, and just say in your own heart, Lord, I adore you. I love you. I love your kingdom. Thank you for Christ and the cross and the resurrection. Thank you for your spirit. Thank you for life. Thank you for air in these lungs. Thank you for blood in these bones. Thank you for my friends and my family. Thank you. Thank God for God! Thank God for God! Thank you, Lord, thank you. We adore you. We worship you. Just take a deep breath and let your shoulders drop and let your tongue fall from the roof of your mouth, and let your face relax and just say God, I trust you. I adore you. I love you. You're a healing God, you're a saving God, you're a merciful God, you're a friendly God, you're a joyful God. We thank you and we love you. Do you even experience it there? In Jesus' name, amen. We have to say amen in Presbyterian church, or people keep their eyes closed. You feel it, don't you. Just in that moment, there's just the joy of adoring the Lord and just enjoying His presence. It allows you, in a weird way, to enjoy other things better. I don't know if that's.. I don't speak English good. I'm not a PhD like Dr. Messoloras over there. I just have a masters. You can call me master Bobby. That's what I got growing up. You know it's a funny thing. My friends used to tease me because.. that is.. that's a stupid.. never mind. We go down a rabbit hole. Now I've got 17 minutes to get you out of here. Where was I? Oh yes, worship. So worship, so worship becomes this great thing, and I think so often we forget that God wants your worship. He wants your company. The scripture that Hannah read from Luke today, it was Luke chapter 2, probably the most famous Christian verse, Luke chapter 2, verse 8, it says, "then there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks" in the morning? At night, right? Everybody say overtime. (AUDIENCE RESPONDS – overtime) You know what's interesting about this passage? When most of us picture these shepherds, we're picturing middle to older age men in robes with white beards and canes. That's usually the picture that you see. You know what a first century Bible reader would have pictured? He would have pictured someone like this. Shepherds were almost always teenage girls. Ask Bible scholars, they will tell you, that a shepherd was mostly like 90% done by teenage girls between say 15 to 17, or very young boys but not kid/kid, like 10, 11, 12-year-old boys. When those boys went through puberty, they usually didn't do shepherding work anymore, they did stuff that required more heavy lifting, etc. This is an actual shepherd; I think from Afghanistan. They wouldn't have worn these very nice clothes that she's wearing. She's probably at the market or something, a special occasion. But anyway, that's what they would have pictured. Mostly kids, like teenagers. It probably would have been like four or five girls that are about 16 and like two boys that were like 11 or 10. Isn't that interesting? Not these old beardy guys out there. Somebody asked me in the back, I think it was Diane, I was like where did we get that image from? And I said I think we got it from England.

Venite Adoremus

The medieval age, it was old beardy guys that were shepherds, but not in the middle east, and not even today. If you go anywhere in the middle east, it's always still going to be teenage girls, and it's been that way for thousands of years. When you think of a shepherd, think not the elite of society, which would have been the elderly. The elderly were the elite. They were going to be the most powerful, the wealthiest. Think of someone like a fry cook at McDonald's. Or a janitor. Or an expeditor. Do you know what an expeditor was? That was my first job at El Pueblo Viejo, which if you speak Spanish is bad in Spanish. Right? Isn't it La Pueblo Viejo? I'm looking at my grandpa. And at the restaurant, there were all these levels, right? You had like the GM and the owner, and then you had the bartenders, who were like way at the top. I don't know why.. I think at every restaurant, the bartenders are the coolest. You got the servers and then the host and hostesses, and then you get the busboys, and then way down below the busboys, down with the rats and the mice, was my role, the expeditor. And my job, I was the only one. Later we got another one, but was to basically bring food out. But it really meant that if you had a job you didn't feel like doing, you'd give it to Bobby. In this world, you think about all the amazing men and women of God who were available to reveal this to. The great rabbis and sages who wrote the Talmud, and Hillel was alive at this time, and there were many priests, and the high priests of the temple, the zealots who were ready to lay down their lives for Israel, and the Essenes who were like these monks who were constantly in prayer and seeking after God, and it didn't happen to any of them. It happened to a bunch of kids out in the field just taking care of the sheep, the shepherds. Can I just say in a Sunday of adoration, this is the only thing I really want to get across from you from this passage today is just that God, and it's just this praise from the angels, that that God wants your worship; that when you pray to God.. your prayers are just as powerful as my prayers or anybody else' prayers. God loves your praise just as much as He does anybody else' praise. Did you know that at least theologically, and I believe practically, you have more favor and power in you than the Old Testament prophets did. They were under the blood of goats and sheep and birds. You are under the blood of the living God, who lay down His life so that you could be with the Lord and in His kingdom. Isn't that powerful that that's the blood, and that's the authority under which we do what we do. God is not upset at you, God is not waiting for you to get your moral report card from like a C-minus up to like a B, and many of us feel that way. When I get up to like a B, B-minus, then I know He's hearing my prayers. Jesus shows us what God is like. If you're a Christian, you believe that Jesus is God. You want to know what God's like? Look at Jesus. He'll just show you. Jesus never makes a single person sick to punish them. Not once. Jesus invites the sinner who.. a lot of these are really bad people, invites them to the table to eat with Him. In fact, and Jesus does get upset, but the ones that He gets upset at are not the people you'd think. The people He gets upset at are people like Bobby Schuller! The ones who are telling you how to live and preaching at you. The religious leaders were the ones He gets upset at. It almost makes me wonder if I need some prayer, if I need to go out there and find somebody who's a gambling addict or something. Pray for me, brother. So I just want to say that God wants your adoration. And that so many of the pagan gods of old; there's this old novel called American Gods by Guy Game and I think his name is pronounced.. I think he's.. a fantasy novel, and in his imaginary world, this idea is that there's old gods and new gods, and like the new pagan gods are like the god of the internet, the god of the cell phone, and then there's these old gods like Oden and Raw and these others. And they're like fading and withering because the gods draw their power from however many people worship them. But they all sort of share this.. and I like this message, they all sort of share this common theme that they consume their worshippers, and their worshippers like being consumed by them. If there's ever a rated R book, by the way, this is it. So it's not for kids. But very dark book of the gods consuming the life of their worshippers. And that's really how old school pagan people viewed their gods. But our God is the exact inverse of that. He doesn't consume us, we consume Him! Quite literally! We eat of the bread of life, and we drink of the living water. That He is our nourishment and our soul, and everything we need to live and feel joy and feel life. All the other gods were the gods of give, give, give, He's the sort of pay it forward God. You're still giving, but you give a way, you give a way from yourself, in a way, that your life is a belief and a trust that I'm in God's loving care, and so therefore I'm going to pay forward my life to others. All right, we get it, right? Like we get it, you've gone twenty minutes telling us that we need to worship more. Okay, you get it. There are a million ways from Sunday to worship God, and it would probably be fun if this were a seminary class to ask you what are ways in which you worship God. But I want you to consider three ways and the last time I only got to one, so we'll see if I do it again.

But the first, and I want to say most important one to me personally, and probably to you, too, is music. Think about how it's hard to see how embedded music is even in the Bible, and what music does for the soul. There's never been a great movement that didn't have its own music. There's never been a successful church that I've seen that didn't have wonderful music. Music is magic. There's something about it that changes our mind and our soul, and it can draw us to great good and great evil. It's interesting, too, because although in this world the technology that we've developed has made it hard for many people to be Christian; they get tempted into many sorts of problems and sins, and evils. There's also this incredible benefit that you can listen to worship music in your car. We have this incredible invention called a speaker that you can put in your ears, or it's in your house, or it's in this building right now that at any time can play some of the most amazing, inspiring music ever. And how is it, too, that I think the human body itself is an instrument, isn't that interesting? I used to do stuff with my hands all the time, tapping services, drive my parents crazy. I used to do this a lot, drive my sister crazy. Stop! Bobby, stop it! So I learned to make music with my hands like.. (BLOWS INTO HIS HANDS). Waa, waa, waa. Maybe you whistle. But of course who can forget singing, right? I mean the power of singing. And I want your participation, okay? We're going to sing together, and we're going to just experience some music, okay? Are you ready? So we're going to break you up into three groups. You're going to stay where you're seated, don't worry. This isn't.. the stupid. I'm not that annoying professor that always does that. Men, you just sing the line I give you. But women, you're either going to be alto or soprano, so if you're higher that's the first part, that's the soprano. If you're a little lower voice, for a girl I mean, that's alto. Okay? So I'm going to sing this first line, and I want you to sing it with me, okay? The first one is the violins. Not violence. Violins, okay? It goes like this: the violins are singing with joyful ringing. Okay? So here we go. Ladies, it's going to go like this: (SINGS – the violins sing, with joyful ring. The violins sing, with joyful ring) that was a little sharp that time, but it wasn't too hard. Okay girls here we go. If you have a higher girls and you're female, let's sing it together. If you see your wife not singing, you can finally get her back. Okay, here we go, ready? Women, here we go: (BOBBY & LADIES – the violins sing, with joyful ring. The violins sing with joyful ring). Nice, that was good. Pretty good. Thank you, choir. We need a little help from the choir, which is not cheating at all. Now if you're a little bit lower voice and you're female, you're going to be clarinet, all right? And it goes (BOBBY SING – the.. the) I can't, it's in that weird zone between falsetto and normal. (BOBBY SINGS – the clarinet, the clarinet, goes doodly, doodly, doodly, doodly debt. The clarinet, the clarinet goes doodly, doodly, doodly, doodly debt.) All right women, here we go again: (BOBBY & ALTOS SING – the clarinet, the clarinet, goes doodly, doodly, doodly, doodly debt. The clarinet, the clarinet goes doodly, doodly, doodly debt.) Okay, okay sopranos, altos together, here we go: (SOPRANOS/ALTOS SINGING) come on louder! (SOPRANOS/ALTOS SINGING) Okay, now I know that 50% of men who come to church are over it when they walk through the door, and this has put some of you over the edge. You are so ready to get out of here. You are not into me, you're not into this. But I want you to just put all that behind you, and be pal, be a sport. I'm looking at you orchestra. There's a lot of guys in the orchestra. Okay, so some of you are tenors, and some of you are baritones. So the tenors or baritones, we're going to sing the same note, just an octave higher or lower. Choose whichever.. choose your level of manliness. The higher it is, the manlier you are. Here we go! I'm going with the higher one, and I'm a tenor. But it goes.. okay. Wait.. what is it? (BOBBY SINGING – the horn, the horn, they sound so forlorn.) Or an octave lower. (MEN STARTING TO SING – the horn) sounds like I'm burping. Patrick Blackwell. (PATRICK – the horn) Okay, all right, all right. All right, you got it? Ready to go guys, here we go. This is so easy. Please don't be too cool for church. You're already in church, just go with it. You ready, here we go: (BOBBY & MEN – the horn, the horn) come on, louder, Viking style (they sound so forlorn. The horn, the horn, they sound so forlorn). Okay now the key to the song, we all start on the same note, just in different octaves. Are you ready? We're going to do it together. (BOBBY & ALL – SINGING) Come on let's do it louder! Louder, church, come on, one more time. (ALL SINGING) Merry Christmas. Give yourselves a hand. Isn't that fun? I want to point out that every culture going back as far as we can see, loves music. Loves singing! And although the styles change, this is something our ancestors have done forever, and it's something that the Lord has always invited in the temple, in the synagogue, in the church, at your home, that there is something about music that softens us, right? It goes straight past the mind into the heart. There's no reasoning around it. It makes us feel what it wants us to feel. There is a power in consuming and utilizing and singing the kind of music that draws you to the Lord.

Venite Adoremus

Well I've run fresh out of time for the other two, but I'll just say them very quickly. The second one I would recommend, these are just Bobby, right? I think that in the modern age, we're dealing with a problem that wasn't specifically addressed in scripture, and that is that we're just, especially if you live in a city crowded by people and technology, I think there's something that happens when you live in a manmade world that it just feels like man made the world. I used to think that the reason so many cities lacked faith or religion or whatever was because they were educated, which sounds like a slam against religion. But it's not that at all. Some of the best most educated people ever have been faith filled people. Rather, I think that if you just live in Yosemite for like a year, you're going to come back a little more religious than you were when you were there. There's something about being outside that practically, I think, gives us sort of God glasses. So I want to encourage you to spend more time outside. And the third, and I don't have time, I'm not even going to mention it. I'm not going to mention it because I'll make it worse. I don't have time to preach it. Think of a third one and tell me on Instagram what your third one is. At the end of the day, find a way to just adore the Lord. Find a way, and don't be blocked.. just find a way to show God that you're into Him and that you love Him, and watch how over time, this will bring the joy that you need to get through a lot of the bad news that we get in life, and a lot of the other things that we adore that disappear from us. It sort of sustains you. It gives you deep roots to get through the storms of life. Father, we thank you and we love you, and we adore you. We worship you, and we're so grateful for all you've given us. I ask in Jesus' name, Lord, that this year as we adore you and value you and worship you, that we would soften our heart towards our neighbor and our enemies and people who offend us, that we could be in a spirit of kindness and brotherly love towards people that we live life with. Father, we thank you so much, and it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

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 His peace in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.