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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. Good morning.

HS: And hello visitors and hello church family. It is a joy to be with you today. You know however good you think God is, He is far more good than that. God is overflowing all the time with goodness toward you. You are loved.

BS: Amen. Let's begin with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you so much for your goodness to us, and we pray today that we would receive all the good that you have for us. We thank you, God that you have not withheld your love towards us, that even now you care deeply about the things we care about. And we pray, God that we could come boldly before you, with fresh vision, new life. Thank you for your Son Jesus, and it's in His name we pray, all God's people said, amen.

HS: Amen.

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

## SCRIPTURE – Hebräer 12,1-3 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Hebrews 12:1-3. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, and did you know you are part of that joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Amen.

## INTERVIEW – Gary Moon (SC) mit Bobby Schuller (BS)

Gary Moon is the founding Executive Director of the Martin Institute for Christianity and Culture, as well as the Dallas Willard Center for Christian Spiritual Formation at Westmont College. Also an author, he has written a number of books and has had his works published in a number of professional and popular publications. In addition, he's a columnist for the magazine, Christian Counseling Today.

BS: Gary hi, welcome. Thank you so much for being with us today. Tell us a little bit about your background and sort of how you got involved with Dallas Willard.

GM: Oh sure it's just one of the great gifts in my life. Long story short, I'd finished a six-year program at Fuller and studied clinical psychologist, and a few years after graduating, someone gave me a copy of the book *The Spirit of the Disciplines*. And I read about two chapters of it and I thought this is remarkable, it was dense, I didn't get it all. I put it away for a while because I was afraid I wouldn't have any original ideas if I kept reading, and then I decided original ideas are overrated. And I read in that book, it was so many of the things that I was hoping to get as far as how to work with people. The integration of psychology and theology was so beautifully told there, and so I just started reading and finding excuses to be in the same room with Dallas.

BS: It's an interesting thing to think; I'm interested in looking at the room. How many people have heard the name Dallas Willard? Can you raise your.. okay so most of the people in this church, maybe because I preach on him so much. I wonder for a lot of people at home, who haven't heard of him and somebody says 'who is Dallas Willard,' what would you say?

GM: Oh, well one of my favorite things to say is that he's America's answer to C.S. Lewis, and by that I mean he's a respected academic, taught at USC in the philosophy department 46 years, chair of the department, who became better known for his Christian writing like Lewis. I sometimes say that he sort of an accidental reformer of evangelicalism to the vibrancy of the early church. I probably would start there

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BS: Yes, I experienced him as a pastor to pastors. You forget..

GM: Yes, yes, pastors.

BS: ..that pastors are Christians, too. There's so many pastors that I've known over the years who are either mentored or had some kind of ongoing written relationship with him, letters or emails, or just became his friends and were mentored by him. I also have noticed that a lot of people from the world of clinical therapy and psychology have also been drawn to him. Your background is in psychology, as well, isn't it? What is it about psychology.. because he's not a psychologist, he's a philosopher. Why does it blend so well?

GM: Yes, I hope this communicates, Bobby. I probably would start with, you know, the word salvation from the Greek "sozo." "Sozo" means, among other things, healing. And just like the early church, I think Dallas, while not taking anything away from the courtroom aspects of salvation, added hospital aspects. That if we were meant to live in union with God and living in union with God is the most healing thing you can do for all the aspects of who we are, our thinking and our feeling and our relationships and our choosing and so forth, it's a natural psychological word.

BS: Yes.

GM: And then his book Renovation of the Heart, which is sort of his psychology text, if you will, he reminds modern psychology, while respecting it greatly, that you've left out some of the most important parts the person: the parts you can't see or measure.

BS: Its interesting when you think about the word "psychology" I used to always think it meant the study of the mind, but it actually means the study of the soul, right?

GM: Yes, yes. Sukay-ology or soul-ology, that's right.

BS: It's a little..

GM: The entire person.

BS: That's a difference, isn't it, I mean because the.. now we're getting.. it's like we're..

GM: Just very briefly again, there's a difference between psychology of the last 2,000 years. I mean Jesus was a remarkable psychologist. With modern psychology, you start losing the focus on the invisible parts of the person, and Dallas didn't let that be lost.

BS: One of the things I loved about Dallas is he really invited people into the daily walk with the Lord. His gentle criticism, I would call it, of the modern church was that it's all about the afterlife, sort of. And of course obviously that is probably the most important part, right? What a great thing that on Easter we remember that Christ saved us and that we attained eternal life.

But today I'm talking about this phrase he liked to use – eternal living. That the early church referred to our faith as the way. It's a daily way of living life that gives you life today. And I think that's what he noticed that there was a sort of inner emptiness from a lot of Christians because the gospel had been relegated to a moment of decision or prayer, rather than a daily walk of the life of a disciple. Do you think that's right?

GM: I think that's exactly right, and if you think about what some of the physicists tell us, that the universe made just in 12 dimensions or more. I know that sounds a little bit strange, but where I'm going with that has to do with your scripture lesson today and the cloud of witnesses.

For Dallas, the trinity, the kingdom, the cloud of witnesses are here, and part of our reality, even though we can't see them, but we can interact and hear in our hearts.

BS: And that goes along with the right understanding of heaven as not just where I go where I die, but anywhere God's will is being done, so that's all around us, right? So if we're in a place where God's will is being done, we're in heaven right now, also, right?

GM: Exactly. Dallas would say if you want to go to heaven, why wait. Go now. And what he meant is the kingdom, the heavens are here. Live eternally here and now.

BS: So if you were to give.. I hate to narrow something down to like a tip, but if you were talking to someone, you said probably the number one practical thing I've learned from these studies that would probably help the everyday Christian, if somebody did this today, their life would change. What would be something you would pick? Or is that a bad question?

GM: No, it's a great question. I would say that, and I hope this communicates.. if you want to grow apples and you're a peach tree, you can't, by a determination, grow apples. You have to become a peach tree. And spiritual formation is the process of becoming a different type of human, a different type of tree, so that the fruit of the spirit naturally flow out of you and not through white knuckle determination.

BS: And then the natural question then is how do I become a peach tree.

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GM: And that is what I've heard some of your sermons. I think you're telling people that. By entering into the process of life with God here and now, the then model, do I have the right vision, intention and means for growing peaches.

BS: That's great.

GM: And sorry about the fruit references, but you are catching me in Georgia.

BS: Well no, that's great. Georgia's a great place. Well Gary Moon, thank you so much for your encouragement to us, and thanks for carrying on a lot of, not only your own message, but carrying on the message of Dallas to so many people who need to hear it today. Tell us your website again, if we can check you out.

GM: Oh yes, so many of Dallas' resources. Conversatio – no "n" at the end of conversation. Conversatio.org. That's the Martin Institute website.

BS: Super. Thank you so much, Gary Moon. We appreciate you. God loves you and so do we.

GM: You, too. Thank you so much.

### DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

All right, whoever you are, would you stand with us? Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Holy Spirit. 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. 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 my neighbor. Thanks, you can be seated.

### MESSAGE – Bobby Schuller – Dig Deep. It's Worth It

Free time is such a precious gift. And there are so many companies and groups of people that want to take your free time. Anybody feel that sometimes? The boss who calls you after work, or on the weekend; maybe it's your kids. Maybe it's a stranger who's maybe talking a little bit too long. There are people who when they start to take away your free time, you start to feel a nagging worry on the inside that this precious thing that you have so little of is being whittled away. And yet, in this modern world, very often when we have a little extra free time, the first thing we do is reach for the phone: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or we reach for the remote control. Let's watch a good show for four hours. Or we click on YouTube, or funny memes. There is nothing wrong with any of that, but a fair warning to everyone when we feel anxious about somebody who takes an extra five minutes of our free time, and then we give three hours to TikTok, something is wrong. Can we say today let us use free time to get the life you want, rather than escape the life you have. I think that time and planting time as you would plant a seed is a wise thing to do, actually. We understand that with money, you take a little bit of your money, not all of it, but a little bit, and you invest it, or you plant it, and He'll get it back with a return. But did you know spiritually when you invest your time in God's kingdom through prayer, through service, through personal development, you're setting up for yourself a harvest that's going to make all the difference in the world. Use your free time to the best that you can to get the life you really want, rather than escape the life you have. Today we had an interview with a guy who did the biography of Dallas Willard, and he reminded us that the way Dallas describes life in God's kingdom is God offers us heaven, but why wait to go there. Now immediately we think, oh that means you want to die, but it doesn't. It means God offers a heaven-like experience to those who are willing to put in the effort; to be a disciple. The word disciple means "trained one." Training is something you do every single day. So maybe this is something you want. Maybe there is a gap between the life you have and the life you want. Maybe your life isn't terrible – you like your life, but when you really think about it, when you're sitting alone staring at a beautiful horizon and thinking about your life all by yourself, maybe there is a different life you wish you had. Maybe there's a different thing that you feel like God called you to. And there is a gap between where you are and where you want to be. The answer to that is your philosophy; to not blame other people, to not blame, whatever, the government, or your spouse, or your friends, or inflation, or China, or whatever it is, but to simply look in the mirror and say if I make small decisions every day, if I take responsibility for my life, God has made available to me eternal living today. You have to choose to use your free time wisely. Eternal living is a lot of things, but there's three things that really stand out to me. Number one – eternal living is a life without lack. This is the life that Jesus describes is made available in the kingdom of God; a life without lack. Immediately many of us think oh that's a Mercedes, that's a big house. Can I tell you there are many people who have means, but have very little meaning.

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There are a lot of people in this city, a wealthy city that have all the things that everybody else wants, but they don't have any meaning. They still don't feel fulfilled. There are many people in this city and around the world that have lots of food, but no nourishment. There are a lot of people in the world that have lots to drink, but are still thirsty. There are a lot of people who do a lot of things, but feel like their life isn't going anywhere; that it isn't productive. A life in the kingdom of God is a life without lack. It's a life described in Psalm 23, a life as a sheep on green pasture. You know what that is, right? That's like a teenager who just inherited a pizza parlor. So much you don't know what to do with it, it's a fulfilled life. In Psalm 23, King David says my cup is full to the very top, all the way to the very top and that's it. No? I'm just checking to see if you're listening. NO! He says my cup overflows! God is almost prodigal. That means wasteful in the way He loves to give nourishment to hungry people, water to thirsty people, daily bread to those who are in lack. And God loves to favor people and fill their baskets and open doors and give them victory and opportunity. But those things require responsibility. That is it's my responsibility. That's a new philosophy. And it's looking at my free time and saying this is my chance. This is my chance to either escape my life, or take one or two steps closer in the direction of the life I really want by praying, by learning, by writing down my goals, by surrounding myself with people that have the kind of life that I want, by serving, by spending time listening to messages or studying God's word. You see, those are valuable things that when we use our free time to do those things, we leave not feeling like oh, I just blew four hours and now it's time to go to bed, and I don't want to go to bed because I got to get up early and go to work. You ever feel that way? My friends, there's a much better way to do things. Yes, sometimes you need just a good movie, you need to just cuddle up on the couch with some popcorn and some McConnell's ice cream. Sprinkled cake is the best one. The second thing that eternal living gives you is a life of peace. Peace with God, and peace with your neighbor. So many of the compulsive behaviors we have in life is because we don't have any peace. Yes, we're not at war, we're not fighting with people, but inside there's a lot of turmoil. And that's why we run to drugs or alcohol or that old relationship we shouldn't go to. Or we give up on life; we don't have peace on the inside. How can you have peace in God's world if you're not at peace with God? You have to be at peace with God through Christ crucified, and you have to be at peace with your neighbor by forgiving them. Yes, it's annoying that you have to forgive bad people. There are plenty of people in this world that don't deserve forgiveness, but guess what: it's so much better to just let it go. Give it to the Lord and forgive, and to live life at peace with God, and with your neighbor. That's something you can do in your free time. To pause and think about somebody that's bothered you or hurt you or betrayed you, and if you can't say I forgive them, you can at least say this: Lord, help me forgive that person. Help me, Holy Spirit, to forgive that person because you forgave me, and you'll have more peace in your life, and you'll enjoy your free time more. In the third and final thing eternal living is, is it's forever, it's an eternal life. That's one thing that doesn't require any effort. That's one thing that was given the moment you said yes to Jesus. If you haven't made that decision, today's a great day to become a Christian. Today's a great day to say Lord, I trust you with my life, and know that when this life is over, you'll be there with Him. Today, I want you to see your free time as a precious moment to grow, to be at peace, to be full of the breath of God, the life of God, and to become more and more the person that will attract the things that you want in life. We are running a race. It's more like an ultra-marathon. Have you ever heard of those guys? I have a friend that does ultra-marathons. Sometimes they're hundred miles. And I thought what happens, you run just non-stop for a hundred miles? And no, they take breaks, and they rest, but it's still a race and it's still very difficult, obviously, and it requires training. In Hebrews chapter 12, the author says, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses." Pause there for a moment. Who is the great cloud of witnesses this author is talking about? Well, I used to always think the great cloud of witnesses was like those great medieval paintings, like the big host of heaven, the angels flying around and stuff like that, and it's that in part. But look to your left, and look to your right. You're looking at the great cloud of witnesses. We're here in this room. And guess what: when we pass away, we become even greater witnesses of the kingdom of God. A great friend of mine, Juan Carlos, who passed away last year and was a mentor of mine, he taught me to pray, and I remember once he was thanking me for the choir, which I deserve very little credit for that, because the choir is the one that does all the singing, and the Irene is the one, and Kathy are the ones that do all of the planning, and Marc, anyway. But he said I just love when the choir sings because when they sing, I imagine my son singing with an array of saints and angels the glories of God in the great cloud of witnesses. Now if you don't know Juan Carlos, who was a pastor in this church, he lost his son when his son was 28 years old.

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Robert John passed away. And for those of you who are parents, is there any greater nightmare than losing one of your children? I can't think of anything worse in the world. I can't imagine how I could endure something like that. I can't imagine waking up in the morning and facing that. And his beloved son passed away. But when the choir sang, he pictured in his mind, and rightly so, a whole array of saints and angels among which his son was there, singing the glories of God. And it gave me a fresh perspective of the great cloud of witnesses. Did you know that you have friends and family and loved ones who have passed away that are watching your life, that are cheering you on, that are rooting you on to victory. They're rooting for you, and I am, too. And when you get to that place, you'll be able to give them a big hug and we'll be able to talk about some of the amazing stories and things that God did in your life. It's an interesting thing being a pastor of a church. It's an honor that really that our church has a lot of older folks and experienced folks. I'm always surprised the types of educated and experienced people that will give 30 minutes to listen to a guy like me just talk and even make stupid jokes sometimes. But part of the sad thing about that is I feel like I've learned a lot from my friends, but most of my friends are much older than I am. And so at 41, I'm experiencing what a lot of people experience in retirement, which is the loss of good friends, like the loss of Juan Carlos. You experience a lot of loss, and to be honest, it can be painful at times that some of my best friends are in their 70's and 80's and some of them have passed away, and it's just something I didn't think I would experience. But it's a comfort for all of us to recognize that those friends that prayed for me so often, those friends who poured into me and spent time with me, that although they've passed on, they're rooting for me and they're rooting for us as a church, and they're watching us. They're cheering us on. Isn't that encouraging? And that's why it's in the message of a race. It's like this author is saying you are racing and they're in the crowd now. They were racing, they passed the baton to you, now you're racing and they're on the sidelines, or they're up in the bleachers, and they're painted like they got their selves painted Shepherd's Grove on them, or something, or whatever, and they're going go, go, go! They're rooting for you because they understand the power that a single life can have. The author continues to say, "let us throw off everything that hinders, and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." What a positive view of sin that is. I know that's a strange thing to say. I'm a positive person, but to look and describe sin, not as something you wallow in and all of this, but to see it as something that entangles you. Entangles you. That when your life is full of bitterness towards your neighbor, unforgiveness, gossip, greed and hoarding, avarice, never giving to anyone, never serving, never helping, always angry, never trusting, always fearful. These are things that encumber us from being able to carry on the race that was set before us. When you engage and allow those things in your life, you're like this girl who I just saw at a runway show. This is a new type of fashion called extreme layering. That's what it's called. Supposed to be cool. But this is what the great cloud of witnesses sees. They see you as like wearing high heels and all of these things, and they're not upset at you, they're like take it off! Get rid of all that bitterness, unforgiveness, greed, malice, fear. Let it go and run the race that God has set before you so you can have victory in your life. Don't let it entangle you. "For the joy set before him" this is Jesus "he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners that you will not grow weary and lose heart." Looking to the cross reminds us of the resurrection. In God's kingdom, there is no cross without a resurrection. Jesus, who laid His life down for us, also bore in us first fruits! And it was, worth it. It was totally worth it for Him to lay down His life. We forget.. or first I should say, often we remember how painful the cross was. We think of the physical pain. But too often we forget the shame of the cross. Did you know when people were crucified by Rome, that is men, women and yes, children, when those children, women and men were crucified, they were not up on a high cross like we see in so many movies. The Roman law said they had to be hung on a cross at eye level. So when Jesus was hung on a cross, He wasn't up there, He was face to face with the people that were passing by. And it was usually on a road and they were naked. So you'd have the Son of God, the greatest person who had ever lived, not high and esteemed but face to face. And most of the people just walked by while they watched God being killed by man. The author of Hebrews tells us, but look at the reward of that shame. Right? How many of us are too embarrassed, there's too many things between us and what God has called us to. We're so worried about no. Nobody wants to hear the word "no." I once heard a lady who was talking; it was in the context of sales, but I think it applies really well to the Christian life. She said you should go for no because before every yes, there's a hundred no's.

## Dig Deep. It's Worth It

I might ask you the question, you hate hearing no, but what if between you and your dream, you needed to get 26 no's. What if I told you that right now I guarantee you, you have 26 no's and then the 27th is going to be a yes. You would hurry to get that no, wouldn't you. You wouldn't think about being embarrassed. You'd be like I got to get my no's out of the way, so I can get my yes. See. And it's so often, we don't attempt things and do things for God or for others because we're worried about some form of no. I don't want to be embarrassed. And of course that's human nature. I don't want to be embarrassed. I don't want to be humiliated. But you have to get a lot of no's before you get a yes. I think often when we talk about running the race, about advice that was given to me by a good friend Earl Larmar, who is such a wonderful man. He's for sure watching this right now. Hi Earl, nice to see you. How's the weather down there in Australia? Its winter now. Earl's the chairman of our board. He's a successful guy, has done very well in business, has been super generous to this ministry and many other ministries, but he was also a worship leader at his Baptist church, an organist, wonderful man. And I asked him.. or I think Hannah asked him once in a meal, what's the best piece of advice you would give to younger people today to do well in life. And the first thing he said was, have enthusiasm and outgoingness. He was quoting Dr. Peale when he said that. He said the second thing is you realize in life that so many of the wins that you have are just won by a nose. In a horse race, he said, you'll see these horses racing, and that one horse will be just one nose ahead of the other horse, but the reward will be sometimes millions of dollars more. And we don't realize in life that to just be a little nose ahead, a little further than you were, a little better than you thought, a little extra doesn't give you just a little more, it gives you a lot more. And see friend, that's where this idea of free time comes in. It's not that we have to use all our free time for this, but a little more is going to go a long way. I have a watch on that was given to me by another friend, a friend of ours Helen, who actually passed away this year, too. Great friend of ours. Wow, my arm hair looks humongous on this screen. Why is that so gross? You can't even see the watch, it's like in a forest. Well, this is the watch I'm wearing now, and Helen gave me this watch. It looks expensive, it's not. It's probably a hundred dollar watch or so. But I love it. I really like this watch because of that horse. It somehow reminds me of Monopoly, but it also reminds me of this line that just give it a little extra consistently over time, and the rewards will be exponential. So change your philosophy today. Your philosophy is perfectly designed to give you the results you're getting. Yes, that sounds harsh. I'm not saying that to judge anyone. I'm saying that to encourage you. Is that we are always tempted when we're not quite where we want to be, to blame others. Change your philosophy today. You have the power in you through Christ Jesus to build any kind of life you want to build. He's laid it before you. It is easy in life to blame. My daughter, I was talking to her on the way to school once, I said Haven, when you hear the word blame, or when you think about blaming, just hear b-lame. Be-lame. Don't hear blame, hear b-lame. It's not that the people you're blaming are not at fault. It's that there's always someone to blame. And when you blame others, you're choosing not to take responsibility. You're choosing not to go around, go over, dig through, or make a new plan. You're giving yourself a license to quit and to be embittered to a world that has much to blame for your setbacks. But its lame. Nobody plays a video game, and when they get to the dragon who's guarding the princess says, that dragon, that is not fair. That dragon put that princess in.. that is not.. no you kill the dragon. You slay the dragon. See this is life. And it's hard to kill dragons, isn't it. It's hard. Dragons are scary and they're big and they're tough, that's scary. So it's much easier to just go that is not fair at all. That stupid dragon, I'm out of here. And then the princess is never safe, and that's life, so often, you see. So the princess is stuck, and the dragon is alive, and so on and so forth. So change your philosophy. You're never too old to change your philosophy, though often you're too young to change a philosophy, I have learned that. And people do not like to change their philosophy. But you want a better marriage. And very often people in a marriage when they think about having a better marriage, they think of a different person. They think, the problem with my marriage is my spouse. If only they would change. See, they're blaming their spouse. But that relationship used to be pretty good, or you wouldn't have gotten married. You certainly wouldn't have gone on a second date, I think. So maybe the person that needs to change is you. Very often, people who are single, they want to meet somebody. And when they think about meeting somebody, they think about the person they want to meet rather than the person who's meetable, that is becoming someone new. Becoming a person who's more attractive to another person in every sense of the word. I don't just mean physically. But someone who is healthy, and someone who is friendly, and someone who likes nice experiences, and likes to have meaningful conversations.

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Yes, everybody wants those from somebody else, but nobody looks in the mirror and says I want to become that kind of person. Well that's a new philosophy, and that will change your life. You want new friends, you want to be surrounded by healthy friends, get healthier. If you're a healthier person, if you're a more positive person, you're going to attract those kinds of people in your life. In other words, stop blaming other people and begin to take responsibility by applying in your free time the little changes that make the big difference. Even now, so many of you are thinking about someone else who needs to hear this sermon. You're thinking wow, John needs to hear this! I need to send this to my sister. Oh, if only my mother would hear this sermon. She blames everyone. She's the worst. You see? So even then, it's a temptation. It's always somebody else' fault. See that philosophy will never lead you to any kind of victory. It will never help you overcome. Change your philosophy. Use your free time to become the kind of person you want to be. Use your free time to get the life you want rather than escape the life you have. You're planting seeds in your free time, you know. Every minute of your free time is planting a seed for your future. There it is, you just put it in the ground, and the more of that thing you do, the more it grows, whether it's bad or good, you're planting seeds in your free time. I used to complain about my financial life, for example. Its politicians fault. Once I get my president, then my financial situation will get better. And you know what, I got that president, and my financial situation did not get worse, and so you know what I did? I didn't look in the mirror and say add more value to the marketplace, I looked in the mirror and I said we need to get the party out of congress, that's the problem. They're stopping the president, right? Can I just guarantee you that no politician is going to save you. No government is going to save you. I used to look at prices.. and we did this today, here a lot of us in the church now with inflation, prices are too high. Well guess what, I used to complain about prices being too high, and I thought if prices came down, my life would get better. And guess what, in 2008 all the prices came down. Did my life get better? It got worse! It got harder! Oh interesting. If prices come down, that means people don't want to pay me as much, either. My price has to come down. I didn't think of that. But of course in the kingdom of God, it's not about money, it's just that so often we think I have too many burdens, too many responsibilities in my life. The truth is I can't say that when I watch so much baseball. I remember there was a time in my life when the Angels signed Albert Pujols, who was considered at the time probably the greatest baseball player in the league, and they signed a guy named Josh Hamilton, who had a lot of promise, and there was this new player, Mike Trout who was like really impressive. And this was the line-up. First of all, how many of you know how many baseball games there in a professional baseball season? Hundred and sixty-two, Greg, that's right. Guess how many games I watched that season when I was complaining about the government, and prices, and I had too much responsibility, and things were not fair, and oh yes, my neighbor Joe, and when I was saying all that, guess how many games I watched that season? A hundred and sixty-two. And they didn't even make it to the World Series. And I started calling the Angels the cash for clunkers program. A few of you got that, that's a good joke. The more we blame, the more entrenched we get in the life we have. The more we take responsibility and use our free time to become the person we want, the better our life gets. Not always, it gets harder. Sometimes its training. But training, that tough thing you do today, training, Craig Groeschel says, is doing what I can today to enable me to do even more tomorrow. If you want more free time, use your free time now to become the kind of person who has victory in the things God has set before you. There's so many opportunities, but instead of next time when you have a little free time, reaching for your phone, quiet your heart and pray the Lord's Prayer. Next time you have a little moment alone, instead of reaching for the remote control, grab that book you've been meaning to read, non-fiction, please, if you can. When you go to bed at night, take just a couple minutes and think about your day, and the encounters you had with people, and pray, and ask the Holy Spirit to forgive you of your sins, and to help you see where you were not the kind of person you wanted to be in that day, and to do better tomorrow. Oh, will that make a difference in your life. Oh, it will. Read more books. Spend more time asking questions rather than telling everybody.. yes, and I recognize the irony of a preacher saying that, right, I'm telling everybody to do. But it should always come from a place of inquiry, curiosity, asking people how they got where they are. Surrounding yourself with people that have the kind of life that you want to have. And if you do these things, if you apply your free time to the Lord and to the life you want, everything will change. Use your free time to get the life you want rather than escape the life you have. If you do that long enough, things will change in your life, and eventually people will look to you and say my goodness, she is lucky. But guess what – they'll say you were lucky, but the truth is, you were responsible. We thank you, Father, for free will. The ability to choose.

## Dig Deep. It's Worth It

Thank you, God that we can train ourselves into the person you've called us to be, and we ask for your help. Thank you for your mercy and kindness and friendship towards us. And Lord, we just pray not any guilt or shame or anything like that, thank you for things like TV and ice cream. But we pray, Lord, that you would help us use some of that free time to build ourselves up into the kind of people you've called us to be. We love you, it's in the strong name of Jesus we pray, all God's people said, amen.

### BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

Well way to go. I'm so glad that you gathered with us today. You're starting your week off right and you showing God that He is first in your life by gathering with Him and His people on this holy day, so we're glad that you're here. I want to encourage you to go outside and say hi to Nita. She has a book out there. If you're interested in a good read, I would encourage you to pick it up and just thank her for being here with us. She's such a gift to us. And thank YOU for being here. 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.