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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 welcome church family. It is such a joy to be with you. The Bible says that in the presence of our enemies, not the absence, that the Lord has placed an abundance of our every need. Wow. You are loved.

BS: Amen. Let's begin with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you so much for your Holy Spirit, and we're asking in Jesus' name you'd help us become all that we can be. Not less, not even a little less, but all that you've made us to be. You can do anything in our lives. You can erase our past, you can redeem our future, you can make us healthy, you can make us whole. We ask for it, Lord, and we ask it in your name, amen.

HS: Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Genesis 32,22-31 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Genesis 32:22.

That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. The man said to him, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.

The word of the Lord.

INTERVIEW – Bobby Schuller (BS) and Jonathan Isaac (CB)

Erin Davis is an author and speaker who has written a number of books and Bible Studies. She also hosts the podcast, The Deep Well with Erin Davis. Her new book, Fasting and Feasting: 40 Devotions to Satisfy the Hungry Heart, explores the relationship between faith and food, while teaching Spiritual principles.

BS: Erin, hi. Welcome.

ED: Good morning. Thanks for having me.

BS: So great to have you, and I love, love this topic. So first before we get into your book about fasting and feasting, tell us a little bit about your faith journey.

ED: Happy too. I think I'm the one leper that returned to say thank you; maybe we all are, but as a teenager, I was a broken-hearted girl from a broken home, and the Lord just invaded my life. I found wholeness in Him, I found healing in Him, and I've had the pleasure and joy of serving Him ever since.

BS: Well we do appreciate your ministry, your podcast. I know a lot of people love it, and people love your writing. And you have a new book out called Fasting and Feasting: Forty devotions to satisfy the hungry heart. So what inspired you to write this book.

ED: Well there's a little verse, actually just a couple words in Mark chapter 9. If you look up this story, the disciples had tried to heal a demon possessed boy. They did everything they knew to do, and it didn't work. And then Jesus came down from the mountain after a transfiguration, and He was able to do it quite easily.

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And afterwards, they said Jesus, what's the deal? We tried; we couldn't drive it out. And He said this kind can only be driven out by prayer and fasting.

ED: Well there's a little verse, actually just a couple words in Mark chapter 9. If you look up this story, the disciples had tried to heal a demon possessed boy. They did everything they knew to do, and it didn't work. And then Jesus came down from the mountain after a transfiguration, and He was able to do it quite easily. And afterwards, they said Jesus, what's the deal? We tried; we couldn't drive it out. And He said this kind can only be driven out by prayer and fasting.

And that thought just grabbed my heart because I have plenty of "this kinds.." things that I would love to see the Lord remove from my life, and I know there are many "this kinds" represented in the body of Christ, and in those who don't know Christ, and this idea that there's some things that can only be changed through prayer and fasting really grabbed ahold of me. I started to study fasting in scripture. I started to practice fasting in my own life, and it turned into fasting and feasting.

BS: So what do you think that is? Why is it that in that context the feasting part of praying had an impact on the demon possessed boy, or whatever.

ED: Well fasting is an act of self-denial. It's an act of emptying ourselves. We all have to eat every day, and I think God did that on purpose because if we pay attention, it's like a little alarm bell going off inside of us, like you need Jesus, you need help, you need something you don't have within yourself. And those disciples had rubbed elbow grease into it, they'd said the right words, but I'm not sure they had emptied themselves and they needed to do that step. They needed to say okay God, I give up myself here. I need you to take the reins. And that's what we do when we fast. We deny ourselves, and we feast on everything God has to give us.

BS: I love the way you describe fasting as feasting. I've heard that before from Bill and from other people, this idea that fasting is eating of the bread of life, drinking from the well of life. I remember an old mentor of mine, Juan Carlos Ortiz used to say that when you fast, it's not a hunger strike. You're not saying to God I'm not going to eat until I get my way, but rather I experience it as sort of gently lifting the veil between the natural and the spiritual where you begin to participate in the kingdom of God in a more real way, and I think a lot of our fears are based on not having enough, right? Where's my next meal going to come from, how am I going to pay my bills, and by sort of giving that up, you realize that. There's something weird about how it does change, especially during that time, it makes your perception of God somehow richer, deeper. Isn't that what you experience?

ED: Yes, absolutely. I love that thought, that it's not a hunger strike. I would say it's not twisting God's arm. He doesn't owe you something because you decided to skip your breakfast or skip however long you decided to fast. It's really a gift. In the Old Testament, there are times when God mandated fasting for His people. A lot of times that was collective. The nation of Israel needed to fast and pray, usually in response to their sin. In the New Testament, of course, we still need to come to God and repent for our sin, but fasting is not mandated for us. That means it's a gift. It's a delight, not a duty, and I think a lot of us, God's given us the gift of fasting, like so many other spiritual disciplines: sabbath rest comes to mind, or prayer, or corporate worship. And we just leave that gift wrapped up and on the shelf. And really, it has been my experience.. fasting is now just an essential part of my walk with the Lord. I wouldn't want to do it without it. And it's just such a tremendous gift. There's some clarity that comes with it, some peace, and I feel like as we turn down the volume on our physical hunger, the voice of the Lord, the volume of His voice just gets turned up.

BS: Erin Davis, what would you say to someone who is listening to you right now, and they think I want to try that. I want to try fasting, but I don't even know like how to start, how long do I go, do I just drink only water, do I drink juice, like what do I do?

ED: Yes, I think there are a lot of practical implications for fasting. And that's by design. It's a very practical need we all have to eat and drink. And one thing I would say to that person who's never fasted before, or maybe they tried it, it didn't go well, or they quit partway in, or whatever happened, is that it's not formulaic. If you were to look at scripture for the topic of fasting, what you're going to find is there's different lengths of fast, there's different kinds of fasts, that's not by accident. That's because it takes walking in step with the spirit. It takes that abiding that Jesus called us to in John 15. So your first step is your first step for everything, which is just to ask the Lord, okay Lord, I'm interested. I see this fasting thing. Jesus fasted, that's a good enough reason for me. I see that you did it, Jesus. I want to model that in my life. What do I do? And it's been my experience that by the power of His Holy Spirit through His word and His church, He's going to make it really clear. It's not going to be confusing.

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BS: I think fasting has also become, even in the secular world, fashionable because it's so good for you.

There was a doctor who won the Nobel prize in I think 2016 because he came up with this description called autophagy where your body eats the bad cells to keep glucose going to your brain, or something like that. That's definitely wrong, but it's like it eats the bad cells, something like that.

ED: Yes, I like it.

BS: And I tried it one time, I did a water only fast for five days, not for spiritual reasons, but for health reasons, and also I tried to incorporate some spiritual, but at the end of that, I just felt euphoric for like two weeks. I felt like ten years younger, and you can see why it helps a lot of people. It's a really an awesome benefit for people.

ED: I always think that's funny when the world says we discovered this thing that's good for you! And scripture's been saying it for thousands of years. I'm like of course. God knows what's best.

BS: I know. Of course, that's right. Well if you're interested in learning more about fasting, especially to draw closer from the Lord. Maybe you're at a critical time in your life, you really need the Lord, it might be that what you really need is less of something, and I want to encourage you to read Fasting and Feasting by Erin Davis. Erin, thank you so much for joining us. We appreciate it.

ED: Oh, thank you for having me.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

BS: All right, no matter who you are, would you stand with us? Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord. Let's say this together: I'm not what I do. I'm not what I have. I'm not what people say about me. I am the beloved of God. 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 have a seat.

MESSAGE / PRAYER – Bobby Schuller – “Sometimes, It Doesn't Happen to You. It Happens for You.”

All right. Before I begin this morning, I want to talk about the most important thing, and that is to live at peace with God. It's interesting; Billy Graham said it this way – you can't change your past. You can't delete the tapes. You can't blot out the negative words that were said. You can't remove the negative things you did, but God can. God can do all those things. He can throw away the tapes. He can blot out the words. He can remove all of those things from your life. He can, and He will if you trust in Him. It's a miracle. It's an amazing thing that Christ accomplished on the cross for you and for me, but we have to receive that gift. We have to cry out to God for that. We have to ask Him for it. I want to encourage you today, Lord, would you do that for me. If you believe in Jesus crucified for you and raised from the dead for you, you'll be saved. And I want to encourage you today to make a decision. So often we have fond thoughts of Christianity, but we don't really make a choice. Make a choice today and if you make that decision to follow Christ, your life will never be the same. If you make that decision, will you text me the word HOPE to the number on the screen. We want to reach out to you and pray for you. I want to give you a gift today. It's something that has helped me so much in my life. I didn't come up with this line. I heard it somewhere when I was in.. I don't know where it was or when it was or who it was, but this idea, it's been such a gift to me. It's a great way to frame your life, frame a setback, to believe in difficult times, to stay dry when it's raining outside. It is a posture of absolute trust, and here is the idea. When there's a setback. When something goes wrong in your life. When things are not the way you feel like they should be. Maybe it's a breakup, maybe it's a divorce, maybe you lost your job, maybe some financial tragedy. You just don't know how to get through whatever it is you're going through. Sometimes it didn't happen to you, it happened for you. Sometimes it didn't happen to me, it happened for me. It's not always true. We're going to talk about that in a bit, but here's one of the first keys to employing this principle into your life in a powerful way. You know I'm a reformed Christian, so we have a lot of emphasis on God's providence and power and might. God is good and only good and always good all the time. It doesn't matter what tradition, you can attest to that, that God's will is always a good thing, that God loves us even when we're messed up or sinners, that everything God is doing for us, even if He disciplines us, it's for us and it's for our benefit, and it blesses us. And this idea will get you through some of the toughest trials in life. That it didn't happen to me, it happened for me. And just like dancing or singing, just like kissing or laughing, don't overthink it. Many of you already are.

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Don't overthink it. But work it into your life as a discipline that when you have a setback or something frustrating or something's not going your way, believe in your heart it's happening for you, not to you. And that brings us to the story of Jacob. In the Bible, in Genesis, I believe chapter 35, we see the story of Jacob returning home as an old man. When Jacob's a young man, he's born as a twin. We talked about it a couple weeks ago. He and his brother are very different. His brother's this sort of jock hunter type. A little bit of a lug. A meathead. Maybe not super smart. He's sort of the gamer nerd, the bookworm. He likes to stay indoors, likes to read and think a lot, probably a chess player. Hello. And he tricks his brother and later he tricks his dad into getting the birthright, and it still counts! And so because of this, his brother, the lug is out to murder him, and he flees and he goes to a distant land, land of a relative named Laban. Gets married – twice, and back then you could get married twice without getting divorced, and that's saying something. You know that joke didn't fly in the first service, either. I don't know why I tried it a second time. But anyway, he got married twice and had 12 children and becomes independently wealthy. This is the important part of the story. Not because of his dad. He didn't inherit any of it. He earned every calf, every goat, every cow. Had an entourage of servants and maybe some hired hands and help, children. And now God tells him it's time to come home. He sends a message back home that he's coming home and the messenger comes back and says your brother Esau welcomes you, but immediately set out in this direction with 400 armed men. In those days, and today, that's not good. That's not good. Jacob is worried, obviously. Prays; not sure what to do. He believed God called him to go home, but now it seems like disaster is before him. So he comes up, the trickster, he comes up with this idea – how can I work this out somehow. And he starts to send off little groups of gifts. I can't recall what they all are, but it's all sorts of strange things – camels and goats and sheep's and all sorts of things. And he'll send some servants with some gifts so that they arrive every couple of hours, this group of gifts. So his brother Esau gets these gifts, and the messenger says this is from your beloved brother Jacob who says this is for you. He loves you and he can't wait to see you. And this happens hour after hour after hour. Esau begins to be encumbered by all of these animals that he has to care for, and now he's got those servants working for him and helping him care for these animals. And these would have been hundreds maybe thousands of animals. It's hard to picture this; how wealthy Jacob had become. Most people say that the ransom or just the gifts that he was sending to his brother were larger than most tributes would be given by a village to a king to ransom it. Oh, that's a lot. So today in terms it'd be multi, multi-millionaire. And it's his way of saying I'm not going to take your stuff, I've got plenty. And so he just continues to do this until finally they're getting closer and closer. Jacob comes to the Jordan River, the Jabbok which is like a tributary to the Jordan, and he's about to cross, he sends his two wives, his children, everyone across, they're the last ones to go, and he's about to cross and finally he's standing there, everybody gets across, and then he's all alone. And it's now night and he sees a shadowy figure, and the shadowy figure will not let him pass. And then the Bible says they begin to wrestle or struggle with one another. And I imagine he's getting frustrated. This thing is holding him back. He needs to get over, he needs to save his family, he needs to talk to his brother, this is the time to strike, the iron's hot. Let me go! And the spirit won't let him go. It won't let him pass. And it says that they continue to wrestle. You may not know this, how old do you think Jacob was when he's crossing the Jordan River? That's really important, by the way. Crossing a Jordan, that's a symbolic thing. How old do you think he was? The answer – 97. You didn't know that, did you. Because of all those Italian artists from the 17th century painting these pictures of these buff, jacked, young men as Jacob fighting an angel. No, it was a 97-year-old man. Here's something we can assume from the story is that it wasn't a physical wrestling. I think that's true. Now it doesn't say that, but I think that's true. I don't think a 97-year-old man.. sorry to put you on the spot. Grandpa, you're 96, right? I think you'd put up a good fight, don't get me wrong. But it wasn't. And so here this 97-year-old man is wrestling with God or with an angel or something like that, we can assume that it was a spiritual battle and for example, my grandfather, he may not be able to wrestle with a young Olympian, but when it comes to praying, when it comes to fighting spiritually, more than likely the older ones in the house are going to do a better job of that kind of fight. The older of us are going to do better in a spiritual battle. We've been through more, we've seen more. Notice I'm saying "we've." I just turned 42. Getting old.. some of you, that's old. Some of you that's young. We think it's a spiritual battle because we know when this spirit or angel or God touched Jacob's hip, it wretched. And then finally this angel or if its God Himself, we don't know, says the sun's coming up, let me go. And then the tables turn. Somehow Jacob is holding onto this guy and won't let him go and he says I won't let you go until you.. anybody know? Bless me. He says what's your name?

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He says my name is Jacob. Right? The trickster or the one who pulls the heel. He says you're not Jacob anymore, you're Yisrael. So he goes from holding onto the heel to wrestling. You see it's like an evolution of the name, like Abram to Abraham; great father to father of many nations. And he says because you have wrestled with God and man and triumphed. That's interesting. And then he says tell me your name. And then very Jewish answer – why do you want to know my name? And then (POOF) is gone. Jacob calls the place Peniel, which means the face of God, because he said I saw the face of God and I lived. Well I think that when Jacob is wrestling with the Lord, he's feeling frustrated, he's feeling angry and he's feeling scared and he wants more than anything to get past. But what I think was actually happening, it doesn't say this in the Bible again, but this is just me filling in the blanks – my own thoughts – I think Esau needed time. He needed time to be with his new sisters in law and his new nephews and nieces. He needed time to appraise the stuff that he got. He needed time to cool down. He was an angry guy, remember. He was hot tempered. He needed time to chill, to relax. And it was only when Esau had finally come to a place of peace that God let Jacob pass. Jacob always wants to make things happen right away, but God wants to hold him back until the job is done. We can say it this way: that it didn't happen to Jacob, it happened for Jacob! For his benefit, and it's happening for your benefit. It didn't happen to you, it happened for you. When Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden, it didn't happen to them, it happened for them. Old tradition says there were two trees in the garden. One was a knowledge of good and evil, the other was the tree of life. And tradition says that if they'd eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and then eaten of the tree of life after, they would have lived forever in death; lived forever in sin and never been saved. The only way to be saved was to actually perish and be raised from the dead. If that's true, then the removal of them from the tree of life didn't happen to them, it happened for them that they could be saved. That we could be saved. Joseph's story, he's falsely imprisoned, he's accused of this horrible thing – rape, even though he did the exact opposite, he's forgotten in prison. He's abandoned by the people he serves. He's maligned, he's sold by his brothers. No doubt along that journey Joseph's asking the question – why is this happening to me? We might say, if we could call back then or write him a letter, we might say my friend Joseph, it's not happening to you, it's happening for you. And not just for you, but the saving of many nations, and many people. Of course, he becomes the great man and the great country to save all those lives. Saul is knocked off of his horse on the road to Damascus and knocked blind. He thinks he's doing something great for God. Boy is he wrong. He thinks that persecuting the Christians is exactly what God wants him to do. Boy is he wrong. He's knocked off his horse and made blind, and he never knows if he's going to see again. And of course he does, but we might have told him at the time, my friend Saul, it didn't happen to you, it happened for you. And how many stories do we have of this. A woman is arrested because of her addiction to drugs, and she sobers up in prison and finds the Lord. When she's arrested she thinks why is this happening to me? My friend, it's happening for you. A man is fired from a job he's not really stoked about, but he needs the security. Maybe it didn't happen to him, it happened for him. Maybe you went to see your personal trainer this last week and he made you do another pushup or another step or another lap. You think why does he hate me! Your personal trainer doesn't hate you. He's doing it for you, because he loves you. Not too long ago, we were flying home with our family from Orlando, and we got there right on time, we're ready to go, and a thunderstorm strikes, plane is delayed. And at first we start to wallow in our misery as more and more people pile up. Orlando's a very humid place, and even when the air conditioning's on, it feels hot somehow. And for a second there wasn't feeling good. And then we saw this place called Bahama Breeze and the four of us we went to Bahama Breeze and we hung out and we had these big fruity drinks and coconut shrimp, and it was great. And we talked and had a great moment together, and then we got to meet another couple that we had met at this event, and got to talk with them and get to know them better. And I'm kind of glad that the airline didn't take off into a lightning storm. I don't think the pilot had anything against us. I don't think the airline was run poorly. What I think happened was they were trying to keep us safe. You might even say it didn't happen to us, it happened for us. Here's some things that happen when things are happening to you. Sometimes God is opening a door for you. Can we just believe that? Sometimes God is opening a door for you. Even feels like a door is closing. Sometimes God is forcing you to choose. That happens. And if you choose the wrong way, He might give you a chance to choose the right way again later. Some of you made a choice this morning to follow Jesus. I hope you do that. Peter was given a choice when Jesus was arrested. Aren't you one of His followers? No, he says. Denies Christ three times. His soul is tarnished. His personhood is sort of lost. His dignity abandoned. Christ is killed.

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He's given that choice again later in life, after he sees Jesus raised from the dead. And they say look, all you have to do, Peter, is deny Christ, but if you don't deny Christ, we'll kill you. He says just kill me. He says just kill me. I made that choice the wrong way once, I'm never going to do it again. Just kill me. And he says only one request I have – hang me upside down because I don't want to die the same way of Jesus. I don't deserve to die that way. Isn't that cool? That's a good way to go – choosing the right way. Sometimes God is showing you where you need to go and where you need to grow. You remember, you have to grow somewhere before you go somewhere. Growth is much more important than go-eth. Growing is more important than going. But we are going to go, you got to grow first. Or sometimes God is, and this is true for a lot of you, those who have ears to hear, sometimes God's preparing you for leadership. If you want to be a leader, you got to endure stress, you have to endure disappointment, you have to endure letdowns. You have to endure disagreements and arguments and all sorts of challenges. Leading is stressful. Leading is painful. Sam Chand says that your ability to lead is equal to your ability to endure pain over a long period of time. It's true. You learn to endure pain; you can learn to lead. And can we just say it, sometimes Satan actually wins a battle. If you lost a loved one, you lost a child, you had some kind of sickness or something, some horrible thing in that way happened to you, sometimes we just got to be honest and say Satan won a battle there. God doesn't kill children. But can we just say this as well. If you lost a loved one and they died and you miss them, they're alive. They're still alive. They might even be watching you, and they might even be praying for you. Here's something else we can assume – they want something for you. What do you think they want for you? What do you think the great cloud of witnesses who watches us lead this life wants for us? Shall we wallow forever? Shall we mourn till we see them? Shall we sit in bed and draw the curtains and cry all day? Surely not. They would want for us to be happy, to be full of power, to see what they see, to do what they couldn't, to accomplish all we've been called to be, to become all we've been called to be, to grow. That's what they want, right? We would know. Ask yourself that question – what shall I do and what would they want for me. And if you ask yourself that question, here's something I can promise you that even though sometimes Satan wins a battle, God will win the war. God will win the war in your life. Sometimes Satan wins a battle but God will win the war. So we endure. When Satan wins a battle it creates chaos. But ironically, very often, the chaos that the enemy or evil people or things that people do, those chaotic moments can actually be turned around by God for your benefit. Sometimes it doesn't happen to you, it happens for you. So be ready. Chaos creates fear, for sure, but it also creates opportunity. Nobody likes it when things change in a dramatic or chaotic way, but when they do, it creates weirdly a lot of new opportunities and things for your life. So be ready! Just assume that there's a storm coming, because there always is. It's hard to remember than when we live in California. I used to live in Oklahoma, and we just assumed there's always a storm coming. Don't leave things outside, make sure your roof is in good shape, right? A storm is always coming. Storm is coming in your life. It's okay. You'll be fine IF you build your house. Build your house. Be ready for a storm. Be ready for moments when you feel tired. Be ready for moments when you feel weary, you don't feel like going anymore. Be ready for times when you'll stand alone, you surely will sometimes. But we never stand alone when we do life with the Lord. Be ready for enemies when they come your way. You have an enemy. You have lots of enemies. And the more that you accomplish, the bigger and scarier your enemies will get. Someone here says I don't have any enemies. I don't have a single enemy. Can I say something to you? Get some. You say I don't have any enemies. I say to you go get some enemies. Get an enemy. Don't be rude. Don't be mean. Don't set out to create a fight or a war or an argument. But here's how you create an enemy as a Christian – you stand up for something. If you stand up for something, somebody won't like that. You want to get an enemy, declare something. You need a good enemy to challenge you, to show you what you're made of, believe something. Defend someone. Don't be rude, but don't be a pushover. Don't be a wallflower and don't be a couch potato. It's your life. It's your responsibility. And every day and every year you live is a moment and opportunity to make an impact for the better. If you make an impact, you'll make an enemy. If you make a difference, you'll make an enemy. If you have a vision, a place you want to go, a big dream, somebody will want to keep you from getting there. That is a Bobby Schuller guarantee. I guarantee it. The bigger your life gets, the bigger you become a target and that's just how it is. It's sad, doesn't feel right, you want to get along with everybody. I understand that. We want to live in Christian love and harmony, and we do, but sometimes you'll have an enemy. Some countries – Australia, Japan, I believe, has an expression. Many countries have this expression of the tall poppy syndrome. And very often their cultures like to chop down anyone who gets ahead.

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The idea is that poppies grow, but if one poppy grows higher than the rest, the mower will come along and chop that poppy down. I have a good word for that and the word is hogwash. That is hogwash. You are not a poppy. You are a child of God. You're full of the Holy Spirit, and you're called to do something. And if you do those things, you will rise above the rest. You will rise above the rest, but you won't be chopped down. Yes, people will try, but it won't work. It won't work. Here's what you do if you're worried about tall poppy syndrome – get around some other tall poppies. Get around people that root for each other to grow. That when you grow, they say way to go. Get around tall poppies that have big dreams, that have big hearts, that are tender hearted, but tough minded. Get around people that are going somewhere. Get around people that are dreaming. Get in a church that's full of possibility and positivity. Get around people that love it when you do well, that rejoice with you when you rejoice. That's a great place to be. And they're everywhere. They're everywhere. You know that there is no real such thing as security in whatever the world offers you today. Many people want job security. I understand that. Many people want financial security. I understand that. People want relational security. I understand that. They're all illusions. There is no job security, there is no financial security, there is no relational security, there is no other kind of security except for this – here is where your security is – it's in the Lord. It's in the Lord! And becoming like Him and having a life full of His spirit, and in most of all, following and trusting His word and doing what He says. Not in a religious way, but in a way that it's like great advice. Great advice. That you follow the amazing advice that God gives us for a full rich and abundant life, a good life. That's what's made available in the Lord. Here's where you find security. Jesus just tells us plainly – you build your house on the rock and not on the sand. Build your house on the rock. Now when I was a kid and I went to Sunday school, I used to think building my house on the rock meant the prayer that I pray when I receive Jesus. That's the beginning, but that's not what Jesus tells us building the house on the rock is. He says this – anyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice. One more time – anyone who hears my teaching, these words of mine, and puts them into practice is like a man who builds his house on the rock. Here's what it means to build your house on the rock. It means to hear the word and to do the word. And it means to practice the word. It's a practitioner of the teaching spirit and life of Jesus. That's what it means to build. Notice how build is not a one-time thing. It's something you're always doing. It's something you're always working on. So build your house. When's the best time to build a house? When the weather's good or the weather's bad? Can I just say it's hard to build a house in the rain. If life's going okay for you right now, that's the time to read the books; that's the time to pray the prayers; that's the time to get the mentors; that's the time to go to church; that's the time to get ready. If things are going okay; you can build a house in the rain, though. You can do that. It's just much harder. And the rain will stop eventually. But if the sun is out, build your house and get ready. The storms a-coming. Here's what the rain does. The rain helps you assess your house. Some of you, when the rain comes, the house is going to fall. Others of you, you're going to be like one of the three little pigs who was in like the brick house with the fireplace and the brick piano. You did the work. Congratulations. Keep working. Keep building. Can we just say this? Don't waste your life. So easy. It's never been easier to waste a life today. In ages past, lives were wasted through violence and sickness. That still happens in some parts of the world, but not here. Here's how people waste their lives today. They waste it on their phones. They waste it on their TV's. People waste their lives away on the things that later you look back and you're like oh, that was a waste. Don't waste your life. You can take a break, do those things. Don't get religious, but don't waste it, either. There's so much opportunity. So much opportunity. I remember back in the day I used to remember hearing about these celebrities and still happens all the time who get these amazing fortunes, and then they die broke. I always thought how does that happen? How do you make a hundred million dollars and die broke? How could you even spend a hundred million dollars? I'm sure lots of us would like to try it. Sounds like a lot of fun. And I thought if they'd just taken one million of that hundred million and put it aside, then when they went broke they could go well, I got my.. live off the interest. Dave Ramsey now has become a financial consultant for a lot of celebrities and sports guys, in particular. He always tells them the same thing. He says NFL. NFL stands for not for long. Not for long. Its going to run out. That money's going to run out. And he helps them plan. There's this guy, I guess, I read a story years ago about a guy.. anytime a major league player signs a multi-million-dollar contract, he helps them go buy five McDonald's and just puts them under a management company so that they'll always have an income from these restaurants. Restaurants. I guess it's a restaurant. I actually like McDonald's. I digress. So it's easy to mock and make fun of these people who have these incredible windfalls, but then I think about my own life.

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I compare it to these places I've been on missionary trips, and many of us, we just have had so much opportunity and wealth compared to Somalia and North Korea. One of the biggest luxuries we don't realize that it's the first time a people has ever had it in such abundance is free time. So much free time. You say I work eight hours a day. Well if you sleep eight hours a day, and I bet you don't, you got another eight in there, as well, somewhere. What do you do with that time? This is not meant to judge you, it's just meant to say that this is something I struggle with, as well. If I could use one of those eight hours to read a book, to google the thing, to research the thing, to listen to the podcast, to pray for someone, I bet my life would be different. My point is you don't have to do a lot, you just have to do a little over a long period of time and everything will change for you. You don't have to do a lot, just a little bit more. It's like a man who is leaving on vacation, and he turns off his faucet in the tub, and the tubs a little bit clogged, but he doesn't turn it off all the way, and that little drip that's a little string of a stream keeps going, and he leaves. Pretty soon the bathtub fills up and a day later it spills over into the bathroom. And then it goes out into the hall, and then it spills over the balcony onto the first floor. You guys weren't thinking it's a two-story house, were you. You got to dream bigger. You got to dream bigger. Bottom fills with water, right. He comes home and his house is flooded from just a little bit of extra water. That's all it takes. Just a little bit of extra over a long period of time. So just do one more. One more hour or one more mile or one more hug or one more prayer, things will change for you. People today like to complain about the system. People have always liked to complain about the system. Is the system perfect? No. Will it ever be perfect? No. Will it ever give you what you hope it'll give you? No. That's a promise. The system will never be amazing, but you can be. You can be amazing. The system will never be amazing, but you can be amazing person. The system will never be perfect, but you can perfect your craft. The system will never improve your life in the way that you hoped it would, but you can improve your life! It's up to you today. Don't blame the system. I was taking an Uber recently. I get stuck,, actually on hikes every once in a while. I was stuck in a hike and I took an Uber back to my car. And the guy in this car, I felt so bad for him. He's an older gentlemen. He was just talking about how rotten the system is and if you ever want to know something about politics, take an Uber, you'll get an earful. How rotten the system is, and something about billionaires and corporations and oil companies and all this stuff, and all of these things created some network that had ruined this man's life. He couldn't say specifically how, but he knew it was unfair and he knew they were to blame. And I just looked at this guy, as a pastor, first I prayed for him and I listened to him, and I tried to help him, but in my heart I thought this is the problem. It's what's in here. This is the problem. It's in his heart. You can't have a bitter heart and have a better life. You hear me? You cannot have a bitter heart and have a better life. And I kid you not, a few weeks later I took another Uber to the airport. A lady from Venezuela, I was talking to her in Spanish. Heard her whole story, and boy, what a different story that was. She's coming from Venezuela. She said this country is amazing! I could just buy a car, drive people around and make hundreds of dollars a day! It's incredible! You can do anything you want in this country! She's like I'm working on a business and my brother did this and I did that. Same job, roughly the same age, she was maybe 65, I think, 67. Totally different life. Same system. Here's where the system needs to change. Here's where the system needs to change. It changes in you. Finally, you say to me my dreams are too risky. My vision is too risky. This thing God wants me to do, it's too risky. I know. It's risky, but we need a dream to pull us. We need a dream to pull us through. We need a goal to pull us through. If you don't have a goal, then your past will pull you back. If you don't have a goal, then the distractions of life will pull you side to side. You need a dream or a goal to pull you forward through whatever it is you're going through. If you build that dream, that dream will build you. Build the dream and the dream will build you. I think it was Jim Roan that said this idea that cost of the failure of a risk is too much. That bill is too expensive. Wait until they send you the bill. Wait until they send you the bill for not pursuing your dream. Wait till they send you that bill. Wait till they send you the bill for not growing. Wait till they send you the bill for not being healthy. Wait till they send you the bill for not spending time with your kids. Wait till they send you the bill for not investing. Wait till they send the bill for not having goals. The bill is coming either way. As my grandpa says, better to attempt to do something great and fail, than attempt to do nothing and succeed. You're not too old. You're not too young, you're not too old, you're not too anything. You can accomplish any dream in five years. I'm convinced of it. You can accomplish almost any dream in five years. Do you think you'll be alive five more years? I think you will. And you've never known more, you never had more, you never achieved more than you have today. You can do it; I believe in you. So work on you. Build the house.

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Man spends four hours googling politics and he's got one vote but won't spend one minute googling how do I become a better husband. Won't spend a single minute saying how do I become a better father, better grandparent. Won't spend a single minute studying the things that make him become all he wants to be. You can do it, my friend. Your life lays before you, claim it. Claim your life. Claim it. Lord, we thank you for the power of God in us. We can't do it on our own, we need you Lord, and we need your word. And we need you to send the kind of people in our life to show us the way. Lord, we ask in Jesus' name that you would do it. We love you, it's in Christ name we pray, all God's people said, 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.