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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 visitors, welcome church family. We are so happy that you're here with us. I have to remind you that God is not far off. He is here with us, church, right now in this building. He's here. He's here and He loves you.

BS: Lord, we thank you so much for your Holy Spirit and for your power. We love, God that you've gathered us together, and we pray today that we would leave here different than when we came. We love you, and it's in Jesus' 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 – Genesis 45,4-8, 50,18-21 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Genesis 45 and 50.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt."

His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said. But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, do not be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

The word of the Lord.

INTERVIEW – Bobby Schuller (BS) and Alli Worthington (AW)

Alli Worthington is an author, speaker, business coach, and podcast host whose mission is to help women not only build and achieve their dreams, but grow their faith in the process. Her new book, *Remaining You While Raising Them: The Secret Art of Confident Motherhood*, looks at how to help moms care for themselves in all aspects of life in order to not only be a healthy mom for their kids, but for themselves.

BS: Alli, hi! Thank you for joining us today.

AW: Hi, it's great to be here. Thank you.

BS: I love your message. I think it's going to help a lot of people, especially mothers who are facing a lot of challenges and yet have a dream in their heart. But before we get there, tell us a little bit about your mission to inspire mothers, and for people who aren't familiar with you, tell us a little bit about your faith journey.

AW: Yes, absolutely. I did not grow up in the faith. I feel really lucky that my husband and I, we have five boys that we are able to raise our kids in the faith. I did not have that privilege growing up, but my mom did send me to a Christian school in high school, and that is when I came to know Jesus and we've been on an adventure together ever since.

BS: Wow, five boys. That is the definition of a boy mom. Wow. That's a lot. One of the things I really love about your message is you're really big on helping people pursue their dreams according to their faith. I mean I believe that's a big part of our walk with God. My grandpa used to say famously if you build your dream, your dream will build you.

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But there's a lot of parents today, mothers in particular who have a dream aside from being a mother, which is also an important dream for many people and they have all of these things that they're weighing. Let's talk about that. What are mom's facing today?

AW: Well I think that God puts dreams in our hearts. He will give us a nudge and this idea that we have in our heart will keep bubbling up and we keep pushing it down and wondering is it me or is it God. And God keeps bringing this idea up, this dream for something to pursue in the future. But mom's, by default, tend to have a lot of mom guilt, we tend to be way too hard on ourselves. So sometimes there's a real pull between should we follow this calling that God has for us, whether it's to write a book or start a business or start a Bible study, and we kind of listen to culture's messages that we can't do those things. But God's always nudging us and always inviting us to a fresh tomorrow with new things to pursue.

BS: Mom's really do beat themselves up a lot. I've noticed that. There was a church that did a video of what do you think of yourself as a mom, and most of the moms were saying things like I'm not patient enough, I need to improve in this way, I'm not helping us. Then they interviewed the kids, the teens or little kids, and they're like my mom's the best. She hugs me, she kisses me, she takes care of me, she's the best. And they showed these videos to the mom's and you can see that there's this.. they don't feel that way a lot of the time. I like the expression mom guilt. Tell me a little bit about what is mom guilt?

AW: So mom guilt is just feeling bad that we can't make life perfect for our kids, even though if we made life perfect for our kids, sending them out in the world would be a disaster because they would have no way of dealing with imperfect people out in the world. But I sent a survey out to my audience and had over a thousand women answer questions on mom guilt, and just what it was like to be a mother right now. And the single biggest factor causing mom guilt for women, it wasn't ourselves, it wasn't our family, it wasn't our friends, it was literally social media. So you have a woman who is opening up her phone and she sees pictures of family's that are all dressed perfectly and professional photography, and the dog is smiling. And meanwhile, her two-year-old or her twelve year old's having a tantrum and the dog has eaten a sock and is throwing up on the carpet. Because we, by nature, compare our real life to all the highlights that people post on social media, but for mom's it can make us feel like we're doing a bad job.

BS: My guess is this also exacerbates then when a mom has a dream that's more than just taking care of the kids. You started an online business, right? And that type of thing is hard for a lot of moms to do. Tell us about that business and tell us about what it's like for mom's who have guilt and then they also have like this other dream that they want to do.

AW: Yes, for me, I was a stay home mom and in 2008 my husband lost his job and the housing market crashed. We lost our home. We lost just about everything we owned except what fit into two little storage units. And we spent a summer living with my relatives where my husband would apply for more jobs and I would google "how do you start a company" on the internet? Because I knew that God was moving me into a season where not only was my husband needed to provide, I was needed to provide, too. So did I have guilt in those years building my first company? Yes, because normally I was on a computer in the middle of my living room with the boys all around when they were awake. But I didn't have the financial privilege not to build. And I look back on that and I just can't help but wonder did God make sure that I was in just enough financial pressure to keep me going so mom guilt wouldn't make me stop? And I'm thankful for that pressure now because now I built a company where I get to coach women and help them build their companies, as well. But I'll tell you, I don't think I would have had I not needed to.

BS: What advice do you give to mom's who want to do something but they're not forced to. They still sort of have a choice. What would you say to them?

AW: I would say listen to that feeling, that nudge that keeps coming up, that idea that like the beach ball under the water, you push it down and it keeps popping back up. Things like that pop back up for a reason. That is normally God nudging us. And we tend to overthink it. We go well is it me, or is it God. But if it's to do something that will benefit other people, it's normally God. If we have an idea that is going to hurt people, it's probably not God. It comes down to being that simple, right? If we want to take little steps and pray into it and go Lord, if this is what you have for me, I'm just going to take a little step in faith today and a little step in faith tomorrow and God will open doors and put resources in your path.

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BS: I love it. It's great. The book is called Remaining You While Raising Them by Alli Worthington. Alli, thank you so much. What a great work and I want to encourage people to get a copy of your book. It's terrific.

AW: Thank you. Thanks for having me.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Well we're glad you're here. Welcome everybody. Would you stand with us? We're going to say this creed together as we do every week. 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. Thank, you can be seated.

MESSAGE / PRAYER – Bobby Schuller – "Fire Thrives on Obstacles "

I want to encourage you to make a decision today to follow Jesus. When you turn over your life to Jesus Christ, He puts something inside of you that makes you incredibly resilient and strong. Paul says that when you get this thing inside of you, the life of Christ, you might be pressed, but you won't be crushed. You might be persecuted, but you won't be abandoned. You might be cast down, but you won't be destroyed. And this is the amazing thing about the power of the gospel that no matter how bad things get in life, God can make it better. That He can do something on the inside of us that transforms us forever, even in our death, that our death becomes new life for us. I want to encourage you to receive this gift. So many people have nice thoughts about God or church or Jesus, but they never make a decision. You have to make a decision. You have to choose. You have to choose good over evil, you have to choose life over death, you have to choose Christ over the world, and I want to encourage you to make that decision. The Lord Jesus was crushed for our sins and our iniquities that we could have eternal life. Receive Him today. Make a decision. And if you make that decision today, will you text me the word HOPE to the number on the screen? We just want to pray for you. And I like to keep track, too. I'm a numbers guy and I like to know how many people got saved. I know that's weird, but I like it. Well on that note, some of you are pressed right now, but guess what: you're not crushed. You're persecuted but you're not abandoned. You're struck down, but you're not destroyed. I want to begin with maybe my favorite quote from the stoic philosopher and emperor, Marcus Aurelius, who said this very simple but obvious thing that drives me in my life, "fire thrives on obstacles." Fire thrives on obstacles. One of the best ways to get rid of a fire is to get rid of what? Obstacles. Trees and brush and all of these things. These are the things that cause a fire to grow to get out of control to keep going. There is a fire inside of you. It was placed there in your birth, it was placed there double time in your rebirth. When you received the Holy Spirit you did receive this thing. And that is the weird thing about Christians is in a weird way, we need to be pressed a little bit. We need to be persecuted a little bit. We need to be struck down a little bit. It's a very strange thing that the worst thing to do to the church is keep it comfortable, keep it well fed, keep it in bed, keep it safe, keep it secure. One of the best things to do is to put it in the fight. One of the best things to do is to set it off in the race. One of the best things to do is release it. Release the fire, release the power, release the life within. And this is my encouragement to you today – get into the fight. You know life is a fight, right? It's a fight. It is a constant fight. A fight for what matters. You have to fight for your values, you have to fight for your life, you have to fight for your family. We have to get into the fight. I want to encourage you: fight for your family. I want to encourage you to fight for your dream. Fight for your future. Fight for your health. Fight for your finances. Someone who's pious listening to this sermon says well that doesn't sound very spiritual. Well let me tell you, my friend, it's all spiritual. Everything that we do in life is spiritual. You are a spirit. Everything that you're doing is spiritual. And guess what – God cares about those little things. He doesn't want you to say my finances don't matter, my health doesn't matter, my dream doesn't matter, my future doesn't matter. He doesn't want you to say those things because He cares about those things. I don't want my kids to say that. You think our Father wants us to say that to ourselves? Absolutely not. It's all spiritual. You don't think it matters to God? You don't think it's spiritual? Well why did Jesus heal so many people if our health doesn't matter to God? Why did He just go around and heal, not a few people, but who? Them all. He healed them all. If money doesn't matter to God, then why did God enrich Solomon when he got wisdom? And why did He take the money away from Solomon when he bowed down to other idols?

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If your family doesn't matter, why did God create a family, the family of Abraham to save the world? And why did He save that family? If your dream doesn't matter, why did He give a dream to Joseph? Of course we know these things matter to Him, but it's up to us to fight for it. It's up to us to fight for it. Here's the problem with when you have a dream, when you have a goal, when you have something that God's called you to do. Here's the challenge is that there will always be an obstacle. It always seems like the obstacle is in the way. It always seems like there's an obstacle on the road. It always seems like some great thing has blocked the freeway of your life. It always seems like there's an obstacle. And we say God, the obstacle is in the way. But what does God say to us? No, the obstacle IS the way. And that's what I want to get across to you today. That is my sermon title today. Fire thrives on obstacles. If you are fire, you need an obstacle. If you are fire, you need a challenge. If you're a fire, you need a fight, and this is what we were called to do. And these obstacles create us, they make us, they recreate us, they build us, and we need them. And the older we get, the more we need them so that we don't fall into the ruts of life that so easily entangle us. Can I get an amen? From all eight of us? We got this, guys, we got this. Amen! We need it. Some of our obstacles are obvious. Some of you are facing a legal battle. Some of you have friendly fire. Some of you have health or financial challenges. Those are obvious obstacles, and we actually need those to build us, believe it or not. But there's other obstacles that are not so obvious, like this thing some people call resistance. It's this inner thing, like TV. That's an obstacle. I'll do it tomorrow. That's an obstacle. See, there's the obstacle, the other obstacle, and the obstacle we need to break through it. We don't like stress, do we? The world teaches us more and more, you hear it from pop psychology that stress is bad for you, but real psychology, the real medical science of psychology actually shows us that stress is good for you. Not all stress, but most stress you face in life is actually good for you. It's good for you psycho-dynamically, it's good for your soul, it's good for your family. In fact, therapist' draw two different types of stress. The first is distress, which is the bad kind that you experience when you go through say a health crisis or the loss of a loved one. But there are some things called eu-stress that actually cause us to grow, and it's a surprise how often that can happen. We know about post-traumatic stress, but do you know about post-traumatic growth? Did you know post-traumatic growth is a more common result from trauma than post-traumatic stress? God can use whatever it is you're going through. God can use whatever tragedy you've faced. God can use whatever is stressing you out to make you bigger. So here's what we ask is we learn from Seneca and others. We don't ask God to make it easier, we ask Him to make us stronger. Don't ask the Lord to make it easier, ask Him to make you stronger. Don't ask the Lord to prepare the road for you, ask Him to prepare you for the road. This is what we ask of the Lord. Lord, make us stronger, make us bigger, make us worthy of the fight, make us worthy of the journey, make us worthy of our calling, and help us get there and help us grow, and He will. Here's a great question – if you wanted to design a perfect person. If you wanted to design a person that was strong. If you wanted to design a person that was resourceful or patient or full of faith, what would you put that person through? That's a good question, isn't it? If you wanted to design an amazing person, what would you put them through to create the characteristics you would want? Would you make it easy on them? Would you give them lots of money? Here's the thing. We all need a little bit of obstacle for that fire to stay alive. We all need a little something to get in the way for that fire to burn bright. And that brings us to the star of the sermon today, Hannah read earlier, the story of Joseph. Anybody seen Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat? You know that's a great thing when you preach on this sermon is that musical is pretty accurate, actually. It's pretty spot on to the story. Any dream will do, right? The story of Joseph is probably my favorite story in the Bible, my favorite character other than Christ, and this was because Joseph's story is so similar to what many of us face when a dream is put in our hearts. Joseph is an interesting guy. He's one of the youngest in his family. Got eleven brothers, big family. And he seems to be a bit naïve and a little annoying to his siblings. He's the dad's favorite. And he gets this dream in his heart from the Lord and he shares this dream with his brothers, and what do they say? Let's kill him. And so they're about to kill him and then they realize hold on a second, instead of killing him, why don't we make a little money. That's not a bad idea. I think it was Ruben's idea. So they throw him in a pit and they sell him as a slave and he disappears. And you see this really tough journey for this young Joseph, this teenager. The first bit, he goes and he works for this great man named Potiphar. And Potiphar has this gorgeous wife. And Potiphar leaves one day, and this gorgeous wife is all alone, and she gets a nice look at Joseph, who probably has a six pack. I've read it in the Hebrew, it kind of looks that way. And decides she wants to be with Joseph, right?

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So you picture this young man, maybe say 17 or so, and a beautiful woman, and she wants to be with him. She wants to lay with him. But he's committed to God, he's committed to his faith, and the story goes that as she's trying to seduce him, you almost feel like he wants to do it, but he refuses and so just very smart, he decides I'm just going to run. I'm just going to run away. As he's running away, she grabs his robe, it comes off, and you get this picture of Joseph running away stark naked. She's, of course, offended, and so when Potiphar comes back, she lies and says Joseph tried to violate me. Here's the proof. Now think about how horrible that is. You did the right thing, no good deed goes unpunished. This man who's trying to honor, he's doing a great job, he's got a great attitude, he's been really fair to him, he feels like he's.. Joseph feels like he's just being mistreated. He's thrown into prison. There's this whole thing where he's talking to these guys, and they work for Pharaoh and they forget about him. Anyway, the long and short of it is eventually through all of these things that Joseph goes through, he's made the second most powerful man in all of Egypt. And this amazing thing comes where finally he meets his brothers and they don't know who he is, and they think he's just this powerful governor. And then when they find out who he is, they grieve, they tear their clothes, they think they're all dead men, and what does Joseph say? What you intended for evil, God intended for good for the saving of many lives. And famously he reunites with his brothers. Okay, so there's some amazing things that we learn about this famous story for Joseph. Here's the first thing that I pick when I learn about Joseph's story. There's a long road for him. The number one thing I learn first is God does not like to show us the price of our dream. God will not show you the price. He'll show you the dream, but not the price. You say that's not fair. Well I didn't make the rules. These are the rules. When you get your own planet, you can make your own rules, but these are the rules. God does not show us the price because the price would terrify us. And I think that's something we miss. It would be like showing a first grader that in the very end of the journey, they're going to have to do a doctoral thesis. The first grader would feel overwhelmed. But as in life, you go from first grade to second, second grade to third, and on and on it goes. Here's where the problem gets is when we get to third grade or fourth grade and we check out. We get to third grade or fourth grade and we say well what if someday I have to do a doctoral thesis, and we check out. So very often the price, the cost, it terrifies us. Here's the clear thing that we can see. There is no way Joseph would have become a ruler if he wasn't first a slave. This is the stark reality of the story of Joseph. The road to victory is through a road of pain. The road to victory, it comes with a price. It comes with struggle. It comes with setbacks. It comes with lost loved ones. It comes with betrayal. It comes with law suits. It comes with all sorts of things that are said about you. If you're making a difference, people are going to make an enemy out of you. You might say that for Joseph, the fire inside of him had to grow, and that's exactly true. Jesus tells us, unless the seed falls to the ground, it is buried, it remains only a seed. But if it falls to the ground and is buried, it becomes many seeds. You ever notice how often in this story Joseph is literally underground? First he's thrown into a pit, then he's thrown into prison, then he's thrown into another pit. It's on and on. He spends so much of his life underground, forgotten, suffering, tortured, only to become the second most powerful man in the world. See this is what the pit does to us. If we endure the pit with the Lord, because He never abandons us, if we endure the pit with God, with His word in our heart, He will turn that thing into a great victory. Now Joseph didn't choose the misery of his life. Joseph actually really doesn't choose to pay that price, but sometimes we have to do that. That's the setback for many of us. That's the setback for many of us. We have to make a choice. We have to choose to read the books. We have to choose to apologize. We have to choose to start typing the novel or the essay. We have to choose to stare at a blank canvas and start painting. We have to choose to take the walk. We have to choose to search for opportunity. We have to choose to pray! You have to choose, and you have to choose to not do it tomorrow, but to do it today. To get in the fight today. To take action today. Amazing how often people think they don't have a choice. The worst people in our society are the ones who believe they don't have a choice. Notice how the perpetrator always blames the victim, almost always. 'He shouldn't have left his wallet out. He was begging someone to steal it.' 'She shouldn't have dressed so scantily. Of course someone would take advantage of her.' 'The banks shouldn't steal from people. That's why I steal from the banks. It's only right.' 'She shouldn't have made me so mad. That's why I got violent. I had no choice.' Of course, we know that's hogwash, right? We call that hogwash in church. We call it something else when we're not in church. Its hogwash. They act as if they have no choice. Now here's what we do. We do the same thing – I had no choice. I had no choice. I was too busy. I got too much going on. I'm working on too much. I have no choice. We call that hogwash. Say the church one. You always have a choice. You always have a choice.

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No one will force you to pay the price for your dream. No one will come and wake you up in the morning and tell you to get after it. No one will put handcuffs on you and put you in front of that blank canvas. No one will call an Uber for you and have you drive to the studio. No one will force you to do what you're called to do. You have to make the choice. You have a choice, and that's a good thing. Some people say, and might be saying to me, I didn't choose this! Now certainly Joseph didn't choose to be a slave. Maybe you're going through a tough time. You're going through a health crisis, a financial setback, a betrayal or a lawsuit or something like that. You say I didn't choose this. But you still have a choice. You still have a choice to fight, and you have a choice on how to respond. This is one of the great things we learn from Dr. Frankl. Viktor Frankl, who suffered in the Holocaust said this amazing thing. He said the Nazis could take away everything from me. My food, they could take away my health, they took away my money, they took away my family, they took away my clothes, they even took away my hair. But he said here's the one thing they could never take away from me. They could never take away from me how I choose to respond. Do not forget that the world will throw a lot at you. The stronger you are, the bigger your dreams, the more will be thrown at you. But here is the other thing I believe is God has put something inside of you. God has put something inside of you. A miracle, a power, a life, the spirit to help you overcome and no one can take away from you how you choose to respond. This is the truth. So I mean how did Joseph even do it? One of the coolest things about Joseph is over the twenty or so years of suffering until he went from a slave to a ruler, is just how he never loses his character. And he seems to never lose his spirit. He seems to always do what's right in the eyes of God. He asks, he works, he goes for it, and even still with all the setbacks, he never falls completely spiritually in a pit. Here's what I think: I think that dream that was given to Joseph was the best gift that was ever given to him. I believe that Joseph had faith. That the dream that God gave him was so clear to him, he knew somehow God was going to bring it to pass. That got him through every prison, every setback, every betrayal. In other words, he was pulled by a vision. Joseph was pulled by a dream. He was pulled by the future. Here's something we know about human beings – we need to be pulled by the future. We need to believe that we have a better future than a present. I think any person today that says I have an amazing present but a bad future is not in a good place. But any person that says I have a terrible present but I know I have a great future because of X, Y and Z is in a good place. It's so important that we're drawn and pulled by the future. Too many people are pulled by the past. It's an albatross. It's like trying to run with a parachute like those guys do on the beach. They have all these regrets, all this remorse. They're being pulled constantly by what happened, or what was done to them, or all the unfair things that happened. They're pulled by fear, and they're pulled by regret. Cut that cord. Many people are pulled by the present, all so caught up in what's happening right now, all the chores, all the daily minutia, all the things that people said about me. Well that's not going to get you very far. Here's where you get pulled by – you get pulled by the future. If you're pulled by a dream, if you're pulled by a vision or my grandpa said if you build your dream, a dream will build you. You need a dream, just as Joseph did to get through what you're going through. You need a compelling "why," a good "why" to get up in the morning. A good "why" to put your sneakers on. A good "why" to put on your armor. I have seen some amazing "whys" that have come out of nowhere that have gotten people through the worst times. Sometimes the why is disgust! Anybody here been driven by disgust? David Goggins was three hundred pounds, wanted to be a Navy SEAL, had to lose a hundred pounds in three months, had given up on his dream. One day he was working as a pest control guy, which is a worthy job, a very good job. And one day, the story says that he was looking for the cockroaches, poked a hole in the ceiling and hundreds of cockroaches fell on top of him and filled up his bathroom. And he was brought to the point of wanting to throw up and he went out of this gas station, and he said no more! And that changed his life forever. Some people are driven by justice, as the Count of Monte Cristo was. Some people are driven by the love – I need a better life for my kids, or a better life for my wife, or better life for my parents. Some people are driven by the need to prove something. I got to prove my dad wrong. I heard that one recently. Anybody got to prove your dad or your mom wrong about your dream? So there's a million ways and a million whys that can draw you, but here's the why that will never draw you that so many people use. Here's the why that will never get you to your dream. Here's the why that will never, ever get you there, and the word is vanity. That's the one. The Bible says they who observe lying vanities for sake of their own mercy. You know what that means? If you're doing it all for how people see you, it won't get you anywhere. If you're doing it all for Instagram, it won't get you through prison.

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If you're doing it all for the good words that people say about you and all of the flattery, it's not going to get you through the hard times. You will quit early. I realized this early when I was in college, and I had no money. I used to barter all the time for lessons, actually. I loved to trade piano lessons. I would teach piano, if somebody taught me something else. So like one girl, the girl who taught me how to play golf, she taught me golf, I taught her piano. Another guy taught me how to play drums, he taught me drums, I taught him piano, and so on and so forth. Another person, a Spanish tutor, taught me Spanish. Accounting tutor, I taught him piano lessons. And I always loved to ask the question before a piano lesson – why are you doing this? Why are you going to run the scales? Why are you going to go press through all of the difficult pieces? Why are you going to give the hours of time that you could spend relaxing or being with people you enjoy. Why are you going to give it to this? And here's some really good reasons that got people to be really good piano players. One guy wanted to lead worship. He said I want to lead worship. I think piano is the best instrument to do that. He made it. Another gal said I have this song from a movie I love, and it's my dream to be able to play that song on piano. She made it. Another guy said my crush, this girl I've had a crush on for a year loves piano, and I want to play a song for her on piano. Guess what – he made it. Here's who doesn't make it. Why do you want to learn piano? Because I want to be a piano player. That's the reason that never makes it. Why do you want to be a piano player? Because it seems cool. Why do you want to be a piano player? Because I just think.. I could just see myself playing piano. It will not get you through. It will not get you through. That's just how it is. It will not get you through. Vanity will not get you through. It is not a good why. You need to get a good why. You need to get a good why and the Lord can give you that reason. Here's a good why – for others. When it's for others it'll get you through. It'll get you through. All right, my friend, so fire thrives on obstacles. You need obstacles in your life if you want to grow. Don't get angry at the obstacle. Don't get mad at the obstacle. Just see what it is. It's the next thing that you got to get through. It's the next challenge that's going to grow you, and it will move out of the way. If you hit that thing hard enough, you'll get around it, you'll get through it, you'll get over it, but it will help you. You know why? Because once you face that obstacle, I know that's when God shows up. That's when God shows up the most. Get into the fight. Get into the fight now. Get into the fight as soon as possible. Here's why we get into the fight as soon as possible: because delay increases fear and action takes it away. Teenage boys know this because we always have to do scary things all the time. I remember one time, I was with my brother and we were going on this hike. It was a ten mile.. we called it the coastal challenge where you go up the coast, and you either run on the sand but then you get to these peninsulas that are all rock, and so when you get to the rock you either have to climb over the rock or swim around the rock, which is a lot easier, but swimming takes more energy. And so there was this one point in Laguna Beach near where my brother lived, we climbed up this rock, we got to the other side, and there's this huge cliff. We all debate today whether it was 45 or 60 feet high, but it was high. And we get there and he says okay now we jump. There's eight of us and we all look at each other, we're all men in our 20's, all of us think we're brave, and I was like oh, no, no, no. Now can I just say 60 feet when you're on the bottom looking up is a lot smaller than 60 feet when you're at the top looking down. Just to give you some perspective, this roof is 23 feet. So it's probably not 60 feet, just to be honest with you. It's probably 45. But we're standing up there, and we're all arguing. My brother says I've done it before, you just got to go. And he's like you'll be fine. We're like.. and I look at him and I go.. this is the conversation. I go Anthony, if you jump off this cliff, you're going to die. He looks at me and he goes, oh yeah? And he literally jumps off backwards! And immediately we see him, and we hear him go ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh ahhhhhhhhhh ahhhhhhhhhh ahhhhhhh no, splash. We look down, he's like WOOOO! And you know what happened? All of us like lemmings, we all just went goo, goo, goo, goo, goo, goo, goo, because we all know, as boys you do this a lot, you know if you stand on that cliff and you start looking down and you start weighing, you're just not going to do it. The longer you look down that cliff, the percentage chance of you jumping goes down, down, down, down, down. And the last thing you want to be is the coward standing on top of the cliff with all your friends down there waving you on. The longer you wait, even if you jump, you don't get the glory now. That's the point. That's why we got to get into the fight. This is true in all of life. I'll say it again, delay increases fear, action takes it away. And this is true with everything we could experience. When Hannah and I, the first time we experienced Cohen in the hospital, I was spinning my wheels. Now, we do it. I just show up and I just say I'm father. My kids need a father. I'm husband. My kids need a husband. I used to be like I need sympathy, I need some help. And now I just say I don't need sympathy, I need a sandwich. I don't need empathy, I need an empanada.

Fire Thrives on Obstacles

And later you get the empathy and the sympathy later, but there's something about the jumping, the doing that builds something inside of you that the action takes away the fear because you're called to do something. And you just go at it with absolute confidence. Go at it with absolute confidence. Say to yourself if I show up, God will show up. You say God's not there right now. That's because you're not right there. Get in the fight and God will get in the fight with you. Remember, when the Israelites matured, they had to step in the Jordan before it split. It was a rushing river, dangerous. Any naturalist would know this will kill me if I step in this water. So they were called by God, carrying a giant ark of the covenant, weighing probably a thousand pounds, they had to step into the water before it split. You have to get into the fight and God will show up and He'll do a great thing for you. Lord, we ask in Jesus' name that you continue to increase and not decrease the fire that's inside of us. We love you, it's in Jesus' 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.