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Hour of Power 12.05.2024

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. Thank you so much for being here. The Bible says that when the whole assembly lifted their voices to God in unison and worshipped that the glory of the Lord filled the house of God. It doesn't matter if you think you can sing or not, your voice matters to God and you are loved.

BS: Amen. Let's begin with a prayer this morning. Father, we thank you so much for your Holy Spirit and for your power. We pray in Jesus' name that you would do a good work in this place. Every single person is here because you want them here, and you're going to do something, I believe, special in their life this morning. I pray for everyone under the sound of my voice that they'd receive a touch from you. 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 – Philippians 3,10-14 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Philippians 3:10. I want to know Christ — yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind, forgetting it, and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Amen.

INTERVIEW – Andrew McNair

Andrew McNair is a wealth management specialist, podcast host, and author. He advises families on how to plan their estates and how to leave legacies for generations to come. His new book, *The Giving Crisis: Helping Average Givers Become Everyday Philanthropists*, helps others understanding tithing to the church, and giving in the local community.

BS: Andrew, hi, welcome.

AM: Hey, I'm so glad to be here today.

BS: Well of course every pastor likes your message, right? Telling people to give more to the church, and give more to charity. No, it's really great to have you here. Tell us a little bit about your faith and your journey.

AM: My story is a story sadly of greed. And so, what happened was is I read a really great financial book *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* and it really flipped my world upside down that I could make money while I was sleeping, but sadly this voice started creeping into my life, this dark voice that egged me on to make more, invest more, save more. And one of the best things that ever happened to me is I'd saved up \$62,000 from waiting tables in high school, and then the market dropped – 2008 happened, and I stuck my hard-earned life savings of \$62,000 into the stock market and it turned into a \$147,000. So here I am 18, Bobby, thinking I have the Midas touch, and that voice got louder and louder and said you need to be risk taker; you need to take more risk; you need to make more money. You think a million dollars is enough? You should keep on pushing harder. And luckily, the university of hard knocks called in the tuition payment, and I ended up losing every single penny, and I found myself just screaming into my pillow and punching my mattress because I was bankrupt. I'd connected my net worth with my self-worth and that's how sin is.

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It was there when it was egging me on, but after I was broken, it was the Lord that picked me up and said you don't have to be greedy. You can actually give and give and I'll still provide for you. And that's where my story began with giving.

BS: Now you still believe and teach these principles, right? You show people how to invest, how to save, how to be prudent with their money. But there's something about how sometimes when we're squirreling away like crazy, we just become stingy. Where does that fit in discipleship? Is that still kind of how you teach? Do you still have people do that?

AM: Absolutely. As someone that is not a pastor, someone that's a hedge fund manager, as myself, I'm trying to tell people to save so that they're not a burden for their family and a burden on society. But when it comes to the Lord and His discipleship, we can see so many passages in the New Testament where He says come follow me, and many times that does mean giving up things. And so many times people become Biblical scholars overnight, and they say well He didn't ask everyone to leave everything behind, and I say no, He didn't, but He did ask a lot of them to. And so I think as we grow in faith with Christ and He continues to disciple us, and we're in a body of likeminded believers, we're going to be sacrificial givers.

BS: I love the title of your book *The Giving Crisis*. What is the giving crisis?

AM: This is a crisis. Luckily after I had lost everything, my mother said hey, it would be a really good deed if you could go live with your grandfather. Your grandmother's passed away after 67 years of marriage. He needs some company. And I said, well, I'll do my good deed. And so I show up, the shag carpet, the yellow shower, the yellow toilet, back in time, this time capsule, the house, and I thought I was doing a good deed, but really I needed him more than anything. And he taught me how that in the Great Depression we actually gave more back then when 25% plus in unemployment at 3.3% giving per capita, per person, and that's adjusted for inflation. And today we give less than 2% of our income, and now we have double income households.

BS: I know we were always, my wife and I, were always raised on tithing, that like if you didn't give 10% you were robbing God. This is what we were taught. That's what the scripture says. And I remember when we were eating Ramen and had nothing we still just found a way to give 10%. And I remember we had friends that would say oh we'll give 5% because we can't afford it. We'll give 2% - that's good enough. And we're like no, you're robbing God. We just give 10%. I've always believed that you don't have to give it to a church organization. You can give it to the poor, you can give it to someone in need, but it needs to be a stretch; it needs to be given away from you. Is that how you teach? What do you think is the biggest misconception Christians have about giving?

AM: I think that they think it's a ritual, they think its optional and again, many times people say well Jesus never talked about tithing. And that's just incorrect. Most people, if they spent time in their word, they would see that Jesus affirmed tithing multiple different times when He said give to God what is God's, and give to Caesar what is Caesar's. And He looked at the Pharisees and said you've neglected justice and mercy, but He said continue tithing. And it's really silent of the widow's mite. He didn't chase after the widow and say hey, here's your money back. We don't need the money; the temple and the church doesn't need your money. No, He actually let the widow give her last two mites away.

And so I think the Bible's not silent on money, and I think really tithing is the floor, not the ceiling, and just like the Sermon on the Mount, it raised the bar on the Ten Commandments. It raised the bar on the commands of the Old Testament. So if anything, we should be giving way more than 10%.

BS: It's interesting, I never thought about the widow's mite. He doesn't pull the mites out and run after her and try and give it back to her because He knows that God's going to do something better for her. That's awesome. Well thank you so much. I'm so grateful for this book, *The Giving Crisis*, and I think people really do.. their lives do get better, in general, when they become more generous people. And not just with their money, right? With their time, with their spirit, with their love, with their ears, finding ways to continually be giving, but of course Jesus told us where your money is, that's where your heart will be also. The book is called *The Giving Crisis* by Andrew McNair. Get a copy today. Andrew, thank you so much!

AM: Thank you for having me on.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Well, would you stand with us? We're going to say this creed together as we do every week. Hold your hands 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

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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 / PRAYER – Bobby Schuller – "Many Start, Few Finish"

Now it is important in life that you make a decision about many things, but the most important decision you'll make is whether or not you choose to follow God; whether or not you choose to live at peace with God and boy, do I care about this issue a lot. I really want you today to make a decision to follow Christ; to know that Jesus Christ laid His life down on the cross for you so you could be at peace with God. He was raised from the dead so that we could go to heaven when we die. If you invite Him into your heart, you don't have to worry about what happens when you die. Make that decision today, and if you do, will you text me the word HOPE to the number on the screen? We want to send you some materials to help you in your walk with God. Well, let's jump right into the passage. The passage today is from Philippians chapter 3. Paul is writing this from prison. And it goes like this – "I want to know Christ." Anyone want to know Christ today? He said "I want to know Christ. Yes, to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so somehow attaining the resurrection from the dead. Not that I've already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it, but one thing I do forgetting what is behind" (that's hard to do, isn't it) "and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Paul's an interesting guy. Writes much of the New Testament that we read and study in all of our churches today. Paul was a driven guy, and this is something that's interesting about this man who was a Pharisee, who was turned around, who had his heart completely transformed. This guy who had the law tattooed on his heart, followed every single rule, and found that that law killed, that it didn't bring him life, that the only thing that brought him life was the power of the Holy Spirit and the cross. And was just driven, driven. Paul was such a tough guy. He was like the ever enduring honey badger. I mean there's just nothing that you could do to this guy to keep him down. He'd get beat up and he'd get right back up. He'd get in a boat accident, and shipwrecked, and he'd be dragged into prison, he'd be stuck there. He'd go through all of these things and still get up and continue to be excited about life and excited about something. He states very clearly in this passage that he has basically this goal that is always laid before him. And the first thing he says that his goal is, and this is a strange answer, his goal is suffering. Well that sounds kind of weird, doesn't it? It doesn't sound very modern. His goal is suffering? Why suffering? Well it's not suffering for nothing, it's suffering so that he can become like Christ. He wants to suffer because he believes if he suffers, he can become like Jesus. So here's the first thing we learn from this passage – if you want to become like something, if you want to become like someone, there's a sort of a suffering price that has to be paid. This is one of the first hard realities about life in general is that transformation is not painless. There's a cost to your body, to your soul, to your mind. So he says I want to suffer so that I can be transformed to be like Christ. And then there's this other goal he mentions, but he doesn't say what it is. It's this illusive something else. And the natural question is well what is this something else that he wants? And if you read Paul, the feeling is the something else is to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. So yes, he cares about his people, the Jews, but he wants to bring it to the Gentiles. And so Paul is this person that wakes up every single day with excitement and power because he knows where he wants to go, and he says that just plainly. He says I am just forgetting what is behind me, like easier said than done, right? I just forget what is behind me. Well how do you do that? Because he presses on to the future. So often we want to forget the past, but you can't just forget the past by saying I choose to forget about it. You have to have something before you that's more exciting than the past is scary. And so that's what I want to begin with today. I want to talk about the importance of being drawn by the future. I want to talk about the importance of being pulled by the future. That the future that lies before you, the calling of the Lord in your life is pulling you through difficult things. If you have a vision for your life and who you want to become when you get into tough things in your life, you'll find that even though it's hard, even though you suffer, there is this bigger thing that pulls you through the difficulties. There are three types of people in the world. The first person is something who's always dragged by the past. Maybe you've done that. You feel weighed down by the past. Maybe there's something that your parents said to you or did to you that still plagues you to this day. Maybe it was a betrayal from a friend or a business partner, a spouse or boyfriend/girlfriend.

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Maybe you carry this kind of guilt, this thing you said or did and you can't take it back, and you feel it pulling you constantly. Maybe it's a sense that you gave something everything you had and all that you had; you gave it a hundred percent and you still failed. Maybe there's something in your past that just plagues you to this day, and you just every day live with fear. You try to run the race but it feels like there's a ball and chain holding you back. Yes, you can move forward, but it's ever so slowly and painful. And I want to encourage you today to no longer be dragged by the past. How do you do that? You get pulled by the future. So many of you are dragged by the past. How do you do that? You look to the cross and know that it's all forgiven. How do you do that? You believe in a God who believes in you; that says anything is possible for you. You know what's possible for you? It is possible. You're alive for a reason. The second type of person is somebody who's.. maybe they're not dragged by the past, but they're very distracted by the present. Many people who are totally consumed by the present day, the present moment, it's not all bad, but if that's your whole life, you tend to catastrophize things or trivialize things. Catastrophizing means you say this job is the only thing in the world that matters! What am I going to do if I lose this job? Catastrophizing looks like this boyfriend, this girlfriend, it's the only thing that matters! What if lose them? I'll never get married. Catastrophizing looks like this bill is so big, I'll never be able to pay it. All is done for. Or, there's the opposite – trivializing, where you actually trivialize the future. You major in the minors. There is this amazing opportunity before you, but you say well I got to fix the fence. Or you say something like well I just got to watch the last episode of Mandalorian. That's a good show. So this is what happens when we're totally consumed by the present. Here's what's better. Here's what God wants from you, I think, is to be pulled by the future. Be pulled by the future. Be pulled by God's calling for you. Be pulled by the person you can become. Be pulled by where you can go. Be pulled by all the lives a person like you can touch and touch deeply and in a powerful way. Know where your life is going and be committed to that and waking up in the morning will get easier and easier. It'll actually get exciting if you know where your life is going. Know where your life is going. If I sat you down today and I said do you know where your life is going? Some of you might say, can I tell you pastor Bobby, my life is going nowhere. Well congratulations! At least you know! At least you know. If you know your life is going nowhere, you can make a change of course today and go somewhere, and that somewhere can be greater than your imagination. All things are possible for you, the Lord said. So if you know your life is going and you don't like where it's going, guess what? You can become a new kind of person that goes a new kind of direction. Know where your life is going. If you go to Long Beach and you go to the harbor, and you ask any captain of any ship, anytime, where is your port of call? Where are you going? Without skipping a beat, without thinking, without looking at some manual, they can tell you Panama City. They can tell you Miami. They can tell you Hong Kong. They know where their ship is going. Can you? Can we? It is so important that as the captain of the ship of your life, you know your port of call. You know where it is that you're going to go, that you want to go. If you take one ship in Long Beach and it's destined for Panama City, but you launch it out of the water with no captain but you go full boar on the gas, what are the odds that you think it'll safely arrive to Panama City? Anyone? What if you took a hundred million ships and you launched them all in random directions at full boar, what are the chances that one of those ships would make it to Panama City? Maybe one, maybe two. And so often in life we hear these exotic, amazing stories of that one or two ship who captainlessly made its way into Panama City and we say ah ha! There's the way. No, my friend, look to the true captains. Look to the ones who designed their lives. Look to the wisdom of those who are able to go according to God's word, and according to wisdom itself where the right kind of ship goes. Look to them. And the important thing is that when you start out in the course of wherever it is you're supposed to go, make sure you finish well. Finish well. Finish well. Arrive well to the port of call. Arrive well to Panama City. You've been trusted with a precious cargo. God has given it to you, whatever it is, and show Him that you can care for the little. If you care for the little, and you arrive well, and finish well, He will give you and entrust you with more. Know where it is you're going and what it is you're supposed to do. I've received this meme probably like five or six times. It's always from other pastors and it's a meme about sermon prep. This is exactly how it can feel for some people. You begin on Monday, it's gorgeous, its looking good. Tuesday, it's not so good. Wednesday, okay. And then you get to this at the end. Now what is going on here? Why is this so funny to so many pastors? Because it's the truth? Why? I'll tell you why. It's because a great sermon takes 15 to 20 hours of writing to finish. Takes 15 to 20 hours to make a great sermon, or maybe more, if you're not experienced. And if you're super experienced, it's 15 to 20.

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So it's not that pastors don't do the work on their sermons, it's that pastors get distracted by all the other things. They don't remember their port of call. They don't remember until they've run out of time that there is a demand to preach the word of God to people who need to hear it, and to do it with excellence. And so what happens is because they forget the port of call, very often they get distracted. And mostly, the biggest mistake pastors make is they don't recruit enough. They forget that in an organization, there's not very many "what" problems, it's almost always "who" problems. Instead of recruiting deacons and elders to visit people in the hospital, they did all the hospital visits themselves. Instead of recruiting a CPA in the congregation to do the bookwork and bookkeeping, they did all the bookkeeping and depositing themselves. Instead of getting some kid to design the website, they design the website themselves. And in fact they do all the weddings and all the funerals so that they get to the end of trying to draw that sermon and all they got is this little stick figure, that's what happens when you forget the port of call. You know how I know this? You know how I know this? You know how I know this? Because I've done it. And I know that it's not just churches and it's not just pastors, it's all of us. That we're easily distracted from what our main goal, our main purpose and our main calling is, very often, because we feel guilty or we want to please people. Let's just say this aloud right now – people pleasing is not godliness. Yes! Thank you! People please.. I'm glad.. so glad some of you said it out loud. One more time. (AUDIENCE – people pleasing is not godliness). You have a calling, you need to finish it. You have many callings, in fact, in your life, and some of the callings that you have oftentimes don't feel very important when you're in the middle of them. But little do you know that God is watching how you treat the little things – that's what the Bible tells us – so He knows He can entrust you with the big things. You got to finish the little things, very often, before you move on to the big things. You don't have to be there forever. You don't have to do the thing forever, but you should round it out. You should finish it in order that you can prove, not only to God, but to yourself that you have what it takes. Your brain loves to finish things, anyway. Your mind loves to round things out. You ever had an earworm before, like a song that's stuck in your head? Anyone? No? (BOBBY SINGS – they can feel it over. They can feel it all over people.) Okay. In about three hours, you'll be driving home and out of nowhere you're going to be like where did this come from? You're going to feel the sensation and be like (HUMMING). Okay, that's an earworm. And if you've ever wondered how is it that a song gets stuck in my head and I can't get rid of it, and it's very often a song you don't like. Now I love that song, its Stevie Wonder. That's good. But maybe it's a song you don't like, it's because if you hear part of a song and you know it, but you haven't heard it finished, your brain keeps playing it over and over in your head. It wants you to finish hearing the song. Isn't that interesting? And that's why, very often, when you hear a song on the radio and you're like I hate this song, and you change the channel, ironically it's the one that gets stuck in your head. You want to get rid of it? Go back and listen to the whole song. I'm sorry. You got to hear the whole thing. Later you can tell someone my pastor was telling me to listen to Stevie Wonder and that's why. This is a part of a bigger principle in life, though, and that principle is that it is good for us to finish. Our brain, our mind wants us to finish the things we start. We all know that in life there are two types of rest. There is the rest you have before a task that you do as sort of to avoid the task, and there's the rest you have after the task to celebrate and re-charge. Who all knows that the rest you have after is the real kind. That's the good kind. That's the kind that we want. Here's the bad kind of rest: I don't really want to do it so I'm going to watch TV. Here's a bad kind of rest: I don't really want to answer the emails. I don't really want to apply myself to the canvas. I don't really want to make a sales call, so I'm just going to go on Instagram or TikTok. Here's what it looks like: I don't really want to start the next chapter of my novel, or write that song that I feel is pressing on my heart. I'm going to just take an encouragement nap. But that encouragement nap is a discouragement nap. You wake up and you think I'll just do it tomorrow. See that's not real rest, that's avoidance, that's resistance, that's giving in to everything that wants to keep you from becoming all you've been called to become. Here's what good rest looks like. Good rest looks like pouring it on every time you can. Here's what good rest looks like: giving it all and then resting. Here's what good rest looks like: finishing the task that you wanted to finish and then relaxing afterward. Good rest always comes after good work. Delay the gratification and life will go better for you. Just make it a rule for your life that you're going to finish first and finish well. Finish first, finish well. Make it a habit that you just finish first, finish well, and then rest, then get the gratification. Finish the day and come home proud knowing that you're the kind of person who does it well. Finish the week, finish the year, finish the task, finish the call that God has you in, and watch how your life slowly but surely transforms. Why don't we finish in life? Well I think it's obvious, isn't it? Here's why: it's the dread of work.

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It's the dread of failure. It's the dread of oh, I got to do that again. And yet the irony about that is very often when you start the essay, you start the novel, you start the work, you start the process, sometimes you get into the zone, and then what happens? You find yourself enjoying it. Someone comes and knocks on the door, and you say get out of here! I'm working! Somebody says let's go watch some TV. You're like no! I'm in the zone! So isn't it strange that it's not really the work that is the suffering, that more often, here's the irony, it's the dread or the fear of the work, or the dread or the fear of the suffering, and that gets me to another principle – the dread or fear of suffering is worse than suffering. That's worse. You fear the dentist, you fear the surgery, you fear the confrontation, you fear the work, can I just tell you, the fear is far worse than the thing itself, except for a root canal. The root canal is the only exception. I promise you the root canal will be worse. So this is what Paul says. Paul says I join in the suffering so that I.. he says I want to suffer with Christ. Why? So I can become like Christ. He knows the only way to become like Christ is to suffer like Christ. And can we just say that's true about everything? The only way to become an artist, a real artist is to suffer like an artist. The only way to become a preacher is to suffer like a preacher. You got to put the books away and you got to get in front of people, and you got to start speaking, and that's hard. The only way to get a good relationship and to find the person you want to marry and find the person you want to be with is to go through a lot of bad dates, and a lot of bad people. It's just part of how it is. Last service, Dakota, my executive assistant was like (SNAPS) amen because she just got engaged. She went through a lot of bad guys until she found the right guy. And this is the process of life. This is the process. Can we just say it like this? It is important that we understand that we just got to get through the suffering. We have to pay the price. Suffering is the price of the reward. Suffering is the price of the reward. And by the way, the suffering, except for a root canal, won't be as bad as you think it will be. Christ suffered, right, on the cross. And He didn't just do it for kicks, He didn't do it to prove something, obviously. Christ did it because He loves you. Because He'd give anything for you to be at peace with Him, to go to heaven, to know the Lord. He laid His life down for you. He could see when He was on the cross what the suffering was going to bring, and the suffering was going to bring a salvation of the whole world. Amen? So He could see. He was drawn. He was pulled by the future. A mother suffers when she's pregnant. She suffers for nine months. It gets harder and harder. She has to go to the bathroom every 30-minutes. And then finally at the end of nine months, she has the big finish where the real suffering, the delivery. And you think how does a woman go through that and go through it again when has a second child. And the answer is – she can see. She knows the suffering is worth the price. She sees a baby at the end of the finishing line. A medical student, he goes through the hell of medical school, or so I've heard, I'm looking at you, David Cheng. That you got to go through all of these difficult things, memorize things, processes, memorize all this stuff. Why does the medical student do it? Why does he or she do it? They do it because they see the vision of being able to treat or to help people. Maybe some of them they do it for a Ferrari, but still, they have it. They have an idea. They have a reason. They have a "why" that's drawing them. So what do they all have in common, whether its Christ or the medical student or the pregnant woman, they are all pulled by the future. They're all willing to pay the price. And you can pay the price and find out what reward lies at the end. They all know the point of it all. They all know the point of the difficulty. So be led by a vision. Be led by a good "why." You want a good why in your life. This is probably one of the most important questions you can answer. Answer it today. Why. Where am I going and why am I going there? Here's a bad why when it comes to your calling: I'm doing this because my parents want me to do it. Now if you're under 25 or so, listen to your parents. Do what your parents want you to do. But once you're over 22, 23, 24, its time to hear from God directly. Here's a bad why when it comes to your calling: I'm doing it because I just don't want to disappoint people. Here's a bad why: well, I feel kind of guilty so I guess I should drop everything and do what they want me to do. Here's a bad why: I just want some peace. I just want things to be safe. Now these are not things that wake you up in the morning and get you excited about life. Here's a good why: I have this amazing vision for a - fill in the blank. Here's a good why: I want to see what I'm made of, what Christ can do inside of me. Here's a good why: I see an amazing opportunity. What, is everybody else blind? I need to go for this. Here's a great why: God has called me. See, when God calls you, very often He's going to call you to do some things, try some things, read some things, take some classes that may not make sense to everybody else, but that's okay. Trust the process and trust the Lord. My wife's father, Dr. Presley, who we've gotten very close over the years, has a funny story. He had six kids and was mowing lawns. His aunt and uncle, who worked at this bank, got him this prestigious high paying position at the bank that had a lot of upward side to it.

Many Start, Few Finish

And they said we got you this job. And he said I can't do it. Why? Because he felt that God was calling him to make his house like an open house for.. he was a hippy back in those days. Any hippy, former hippies in the house today? Yes, he was a hippy. And so he just opened up his house because he wanted everybody to know the Lord, He wanted everybody to have a square meal, and so they just had this, whether for good or bad, this is what he felt called to do. And he knew if he worked at a bank, he couldn't do that anymore. And so he kept mowing lawns. And when push came to shove, he ended up becoming an optometrist because he felt like as a doctor he could still create his own schedule, and then he ended up creating a retail chain of eye glass stores across America, and now he's very successful financially, but if you met him, you wouldn't know it, because he uses the money still to this day to reach young people, to reach teenagers. He does missionary trips. Now see if he had taken that lucrative bank job, none of that stuff would have been possible. But when he was turning down that bank job, he didn't have a vision for optometry or eye glasses. He had a vision for lost people, and a vision to stake out his own future. Here's another way of seeing it – probably the position at the bank was a calling for someone else, and if he had chickened out and taken that position, he also might have taken someone else' calling, maybe. Who knows? Okay. So it's a great example that we need to be drawn, and we need to have a vision, we need to have a good "why." Are you in a culture that doesn't allow second chances? Maybe you have a family culture that will not let you off the hook for anything. Maybe you're in a country or ethnic culture that does not allow you to fail even once. I have a friend who says in our country, if you fail in your business, that's it, it's over for you. You're done. I said is it really done? Well people will kind of feel like it's done. But it's really not! Maybe you're in a corporate culture that doesn't allow for second chances. Don't be defined by any of those hogwash cultural ideas. Even though you love your family and you love your country and you love your company, we serve a God of second chances. Here's a good culture you can follow – Christian culture. Christian culture, which says this – you always have a second chance. You always have a second chance. Don't be defined by those. Look to the God of second chances. How many second chances will God give us? How many? He gives us a number – seventy times seven. Now before you pull out your phone and multiply seventy times seven, some of you just did it in your head, it's a way of saying as many as you need. God will give you as many as you need. Because He doesn't want you to be right because of some guilt thing, He wants you to be right because it's the best you there can be. It's the best life you can have. You're going to be so fulfilled. Look, can we just say it this way – if you want to succeed faster, you got to fail faster. There are always going to be a number of failures that come before the success. There's always going to be a lot of no's before you get to the first yes. So just get all the no's out of the way. Get all the failures out of the way. Get it done quickly and you'll succeed quickly. Maybe you say well Bobby I understand all that, I understand suffering for a business, or suffering for a medical degree, or suffering for a ministry, but I feel like I'm suffering for no reason. There's no reason for my suffering. It doesn't make any sense. Can I just say in God's kingdom, you never suffer without a reason. It may not be clear to you, but someday you will know. Here's something I do know for sure and I know this because of what the Bible says – God has something bigger for you than whatever it is you're going through. Don't let it go. Not too long ago, I was sick for three days, and it was bad. I had this horrible fever. My whole body ached. I couldn't sleep at all at night. And I remember thinking to myself, I can't remember what it was like being healthy. I even had this strange, when my fever got too high, I was like have I always been sick? I can't even remember. It's a strange feeling, isn't it? But then you get better, and you think wow, I'm glad I got through that. Can I just say even if you've been sick for years, you will be well again. Trust the word of God. You're going to be healed. God's going to do something in your life. Believe it. A man who's going through a low point in his marriage says something like I've always felt this way. I've never loved her, we were never close, she was always mean to me, we never got along. They get through the tough time, they restore their marriage, they're happy again, and he goes that wasn't true. I felt like it was true at the time, but we really did love each other once, and we love each other again. Later, he just admits it. God will carry you through. I had a friend who had broke his back, and he had excruciating pain for four years and was on pain medication. He got this special surgery that released the nerve and all the back pain went away, but for 11 more years, he pretended to be in pain. Why? Because he was addicted to the pills. And he would tell you, in some ways, the pills did more harm or were greater suffering than the back pain. But God set him free, too. Can we just say this? God's going to restore you. God's going to bring you victory. God sees you. God has not abandoned you. God is not punishing you.

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You are not under God's wrath. You are forgiven, you are restored, and God's going to heal you and rescue you. Here's what the Bible says – everyone born of God will overcome the world. Here's what the Bible says – by His stripes, you are healed. If you believe it and you receive it, say amen. God's going to restore you. He's going to bring you victory. Maybe you feel like a seasick captain. You've been at this thing forever. You're out in the water, you know you're supposed to be going to Panama City, but can I tell you as someone who's just lived on the water for much of his life, the water looks the same everywhere. When you can't see land, the ocean looks the same whether you're in the Gulf of Mexico or the Mediterranean, or the Atlantic, or the Pacific. When there's no land, it looks the same everywhere. Some of these boat trips, they take weeks at a time, and you think am I getting anywhere? Am I trapped in some purgatory? Are we making any progress at all? But you know what, even though it looks the same everywhere, it's not the same everywhere. You're making progress. Maybe you feel sick. Maybe the storm is coming. Maybe you feel like everywhere is this turbulent, wide, dark sea. Trust me. You're making progress. Finally, life is not a single player game, my friend. Not for Christians. For us, life is not a single player game. Do not make that mistake of going it alone. Begin every day with the Lord. When you're going through the toughest time, God will carry you through. Start every day with the Lord. The best way you can. Don't go it alone. Start every day and finish every day in victory. Start every day with the Lord and you'll finish in victory. Start every week with the Lord and you'll finish in victory. Start every year with the Lord and you'll finish it with victory because He's a victory maker. He's a chain breaker. He's the one that carries us through. Don't go it alone. Amen? And so Father, we ask for that in Jesus' name. We ask for your power and the Holy Spirit, God, to break every chain, to heal every sickness, to carry us through our dark times. I'm so glad, Lord, that when I was in the darkest times of my life that I didn't give up. I'm so glad that the people I know and love, that you carried them through, too. Thank you, Lord, that you carry us through to victory. I pray, God that you'd give us all the wisdom and all the power we need. 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.