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GOOD MORNING – Bobby Schuller (BS) and Hannah Schuller (HS)

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

HS: And hello visitors and church family. It is such a joy to be with you. Did you know that you are God's dream? He dreamed you up and the Bible says that God has loved you with an everlasting love. And we love you, too. Thank you for being here.

BS: We really are so glad that you're here, and we believe God has something great in store for you. It's easy to think God doesn't have anything in store for me. He does. He's got something great for you today. So let's begin by receiving that word from the Lord today. Father, we come here to lift up the name of Jesus first to say we worship Him in our lives and we pray, God that you would reveal in us the power, the life and the love that you have for each and every one of us. Help us to leave here encouraged today, renewed, refreshed. Give us fresh vision, we pray, and we pray it in Jesus' name, amen.

HS: Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Luke 14,16-22 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, Luke 14:16. Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.' "The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' "Sir," the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full.'" The word of the Lord.

INTERVIEW – Bill & Kristi Gaultiere

Drs. Bill and Kristi Gaultiere are authors, psychologists, and mentors. They reach thousands through their organization, Soul Shepherding, which helps train people in ministry and provide mentorship to pastors. Their new book, Healthy Feelings, Thriving Faith: Growing Emotionally and Spiritually through the Enneagram, looks at how we can take unhealthy patterns in our lives and transform them into healthy practices, and use them to grow in our faith.

BS: Hey guys, welcome. It's so good to see you.. feels weird to shake your hand. You're like family. For those who don't know, Bill and Kristi have not only been mentors to Hannah and me, but they have a long tradition with this church. Multiple family members. You guys were both involved with.. Bill, you led New Hope, and layers and layers. Tell us a little bit about that before we do the interview; about your experience at Crystal Cathedral and Hour of Power and all of that.

BG: Well we just grew up with the church years ago, so we were blessed to serve together as college pastors. Kristi was actually the college pastor and I assisted her in that. And then from there I was directing the New Hope Counseling Ministry, as you said, and then I became the spiritual formation pastor, so over 20 years, and just loved the Crystal Cathedral and now Shepherd's Grove.

BS: That's great. And Dr. Jim Kok is still here in the back there. Hi Jim, nice to see you. Your old colleague. It's great. So I wanted to talk to you guys about your new book. What an awesome message it is.

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You both are committed Christians, I feel like people ought to know that, you are pastors, really. You both are Reformed and a charismatic background, you are both clinical therapists, so to me you're like the perfect package. I just love what you offer the Christian reader. But one of the things that you talk about that for some Christians kind of weirds them out a little bit is the Enneagram. And I know you have used that in an awesome way. It's helped me a lot, but a lot of Christians are kind of like I don't know, the symbol is kind of weird looking, and the word is kind of weird. Like what is this about? Can we begin there by talking about the Enneagram?

KG: Yes, the symbol is intimidating, but really all the Enneagram is is a nine point diagram, and there are nine different types of personalities all based on our roots and are a way that we're trying to secure our self apart from Christ. So it's a wonderful tool of discipleship because it gives us a vision of how we can grow in Christ' likeness and really not depend upon our own personality.

BS: I remember when I was asking.. Hannah and I used to give each other New Year's resolutions, so I like give her hers and she'd give me mine, and one she gave me was to like serve around the house more, like dishes and trash and stuff, and I was like ouch! I was really hoping it'd be something else. And I realized like as an eight, that's like kind of a hard thing for me. But like if I was two, for example, that's something I might not want to do as much. I might want to do something else. And so really it's kind of a path for discipleship, isn't it. Like how do I grow in Christ? How do I move away from.. like there's something you said how we get trapped in the healthy side of our personality, is what I wrote down there. Talk about that a little bit.

BG: Yes, how we get trapped in the unhealthy side of our personality. It's because each personality has a root dysfunction or sin, but yet when we come to Jesus, and when we become more aware of our personality type, that can be transformed by God's grace. And so that's the really fun part is it's a journey, and as we open up to ourselves and we share with our spouse or a friend or a mentor, we can learn so much about ourselves, and that's what God wants for us. Search me and know me, O God. Test me. Know my heart. See if there's any anxious way in me. Offensive way in me. Lead me in the everlasting. And so self-awareness is just huge for our growth and grace.

BS: What were your guy's personality types and did Enneagram help you first before you sort of brought it to everybody else? How did that work?

BG: Yes, we used it on our own selves, so I'm a type one, which is the reformer that likes to improve things, and likes to be a teacher.

BS: I always thought it was called the perfectionist.

BG: Well I changed the title, Bobby! We wrote the book so we can change the title. I thought that was..

BS: That's good.

BG: ..that was a negative title.

BS: That's good, that's good.

BG: The other eight are positives, so yes..

BS: Yes, yes. That's good.

KG: And I'm Enneagram two, which is the helper, and that has been so important because it helped expose to me my underlying motivations for helping, which weren't good. They were actually in ways of trying to feel wanted and secure. And as it revealed that for me, it helped me to realize no, like, you preach every Sunday, I'm the beloved of God, that's my identity. Not what I get for trying to secure myself and win approval helping others.

BS: I love that you approach this topic pastorally and also through the lens of clinical therapy, as well, because I'm sure you see all sorts of people who have.. like I mean I see this all the time, incredible spiritual giants who also have these mega huge blind spots where they do all these amazing things, but there's this part of their life that everyone else can see that they can't see. That's really what you're doing is kind of helping people discover some of that in a nice way, not a judgmental way.

BG: Yes, we always say the truth is our friend, so learning the truth about ourselves, even if it's something that hurts or something that's broken, is actually good news because we can pray about that, we can bring that to God, and the Lord and His word in the scripture shows us how we can become more like Jesus, more joyful, more fruitful, more effective in all that we do.

BS: That's good. What is your dream for this book? I know when you write a book, it takes forever, and you put so much of your heart into it, its years and years of experience, and you want people to read it. What do you hope is like the big outcome if somebody really reads this book?

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KG: Well my first one would be that they will worship Jesus because as they see Jesus as the perfection of their type, they're just going to be so enthralled with Him and want to worship Him and grow to be like Him. My second is that they'll agree with His grace for them through the empathy that we give for each of the types in the book.

BG: It's such a beautiful thing when we see Jesus in our personality type. So it's like nine different faces of Jesus as He enters into through the incarnation, in the gospels we see He's like every personality type. And so He shows us who we can become!

BS: That's good. Amen. I want to encourage you guys to get a copy of this book from my friends Bill and Kristi Gaultiere. If you like my sermons, you'll like this book, and they will really help you discover so much of those blind spots and really help you heal emotionally. I write about them in my book, *You are Beloved*, about how they helped me. I didn't feel manly to sort of talk about my feelings, and this type of thing. Helped me kind of get through that, and I know it will help you, too, in your walk. The book is called *Healthy Feelings, Thriving Faith* by Bill and Kristi Gaultiere. Thank you guys so much. We love you.

BG: Thank you, Bobby.

BS: God bless you.

KG: Thank you, Bobby. You too.

BS: Thanks guys.

MESSAGE / PRAYER – Bobby Schuller – How to Seize the Golden Opportunity

Right now we're in the Father's world. He made it. God's world is not breaking into an evil place, rather, evil has attempted to break into the Father's place, and we're kicking it out. This is the Father's world. He made it and He loves it. And not everything in it is good because of evil, but in it there is so much that is available to you. And I think too often we miss out on these amazing opportunities. Has there ever been a time in human history that is more amazing than today. I don't know. It's definitely up there. And it is easy in that world to compare yourself to other people who have the things you want and say I'll never be like that, I'll never have that. This world is bent against me or the system is rigged or everything's unfair or once my guy gets in office, then things will get better, or whatever. None of those things are true. Here's what's true for you. The whole world is open to you and all things are possible for you, but something has to change. And the thing that has to change is here and here. When we change, everything changes. My hope for you this morning is that you'll get a vision for your life, that no matter how young you are, or how old you are, or how healthy or unhealthy you are, that if you can simply understand this sermon, you can understand the world, and that in that world, you can transform your life and you can change your future. So I want to invite you today to believe that there's still something great for your life. There's something great for you. There's something available for you today. Yes, you've missed out on some things, and yes, you've taken some things by the horn, but what lies in front of you, what lies before you, and the question is an incredible amount of opportunity, and I'm encouraging you today to get ready. Who's ready today? Get ready. We are in the Father's world, everything is possible in this world. This is a world where the dead can be raised to life, this is a world where anything is possible for you. So much is available. So here's what I want for you today. I want you to change today so that you're ready to seize the golden opportunities of life. If you hear what I say today, your life is going to be amazing. Your life already is amazing, but it's going to be better because you're going to be ready. So there's many ways that we get ready for the opportunities God has for us. Here's the first thing. Before we learn to say yes to the opportunities of life, we have to learn to say no. No doesn't feel like a very Christian word, does it. Doesn't feel like very saintly to say no. But here's what I've learned as a Christian who has had seasons in my life where I'm saying yes to all sorts of things I shouldn't be saying yes to. So if we want to be ready for what the Lord has to do in our life, we have to also be willing to say no to a number of things. We have to say no to unimportant things so we can say yes to important things. I mean that is so simple, isn't it? It's so obvious. If only we did it. You say well how do I know it's important and what's unimportant? I think you know. And if you don't know, ask the Lord. Ask the Lord. Is this thing important to you or is it not? And if you don't hear anything, decide on your own. Here's what I would say. Saying no to things that are not important is not selfish. It's a way of being prepared to say yes to good things. Here are some things I want you to say "no" to in the coming future, okay? Here's some things that might be on the list. You might start saying no to TV. Not right now, if you're watching Hour of Power, of course, but I mean after this. Here's something you might want to say no to: going to your second cousins birthday party.

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Do you know their name? Here's something you might want to say no to: busy work that's not getting your life anywhere. Here's something you might want to say no to: alcohol. Right? Or maybe here's something you might want to say no to: wasting all your free time on your phone. Now a lot of these things that we talk about are not bad things, but we know that they take up bandwidth. They take up that valuable precious thing that all of us have such an utter contempt for, all of us are so afraid of, and it is the big B. The big B. You know what I'm going to say? It is boredom. Boredom is the great incubator of creativity and possibility in your life. It's one of the best places that God will get through to you. Why do you think all your best ideas come when you lay down to go to sleep? Why do you think that's when you start working out and sorting out your life when you lay down to sleep? Don't wait till when you go to sleep for those things to come. Set aside part of your life that you're ready to say yes to the Lord when the invitation arrives. Yes, it's good to say yes to boredom, but we say yes to boredom and no to video games, yes to boredom and no to our cell phone, yes to boredom and no to television, we begin to create a space where the Holy Spirit can do something awesome in our lives where we're ready to say yes to an amazing project, yes to a great idea, yes to a new change in our life, yes to our family, yes to our friends. We get ready to touch more lives and make a bigger difference. So the opportunity is coming, let's get ready, amen? We're going to be ready. Now Jesus tells us a parable, a wonderful parable about a banquet. Wealthy, powerful man put together this amazing banquet. And what it doesn't say in the text but would be assumed by everyone who's hearing this story is he sends out invitations to a bunch of people. The same way you would send out invitations if you're going to have a wedding. Not everyone's invited, only this special group of people are invited. And when they get that invitation, they can mark yes or no. And the people are going to hear about marked, yes. They said yes, I'll be there. When it's ready, come and fetch me. Well now the foods done, the musicians have done their sound check, they're ready, the bread is being served in that basket where it has like the little blanket thing over it, and if you open like the steam comes out. There's Diet Coke's around. My favorite drink. There probably wasn't Diet Coke. And now, the announcements go out – hey, the festival, the food, the thing, it's ready. It's ready. You said you'd come, it's time to come. So they go out and the first guy they meet; now remember, rabbis, in Jesus' day, were funny guys. They like to use imagery, they like to use animals and props; they like to tell great stories. They were great preachers. And so it doesn't sound as funny to us, but in Jesus' day, this would have been hilarious. This would have been like the funniest thing ever. So he says to them, first guy, he says the banquets ready, and he says to them, 'oh, ahh, ahh is that today? I can't make it. I've just bought some land and now I have to go see it.' And at that, everybody would have been (LAUGHING) right? A big hearty laughter. Why? Nobody would ever buy land first, and then go see it. So they laughed – oh, what a ridiculous reason, right? The second person says 'oh, I'm sorry, I can't make it. I just bought five oxen and I have to go and try them.' Everybody again howling – oh, who would do that?! So he's like saying like he just bought five cars and now he has to go test drive them, right? Like who do that? Oh, oh, oh, oh. Third guys say 'I just got married.' And that's the most ridiculous one of all, because a wedding, just like today, is something you plan way in advance. He must have known when he RSVP'd that there would be a conflict. And so the reader, hearing this story, just hears these excuses that are actually offensive to the banquet person. Now think about that. Imagine you're having a wedding or something like that. Weddings today, I read online. Can you believe weddings today, I found out, are \$300 a head. That's how crazy it's getting. That's more than \$30 a toe. That's a lot. That is a lot for a wedding. Now imagine you had this \$300 a head, and you prepay for them for the caterer, and then you see a bunch of spots are missing from friends and family who said they'd be there and they didn't, and the food goes to waste. That's what it's like. That's what it's like for you in God's eyes sometimes is that you RSVP'd for this thing. You said yes that you'd come to this thing. You said yes that you'd be ready. You said yes that when the meal was prepared, that when the cryers came for you, you'd arrive. But so often we get that invitation, and we don't say no, we say, 'you know, I just bought some land and I got to go see it.' That's human nature to sort of, in our heart we've already said no, but then our mind we cook up a reason not to go. But God doesn't see the reason. He sees the heart. Let's change our heart today, and get ready to say yes when the Lord invites us. Here's what I know – I've regretted saying no to the things that the Lord has invited me to. I remember once, when I was walking back from the beach, it was a Monday and I have this weird thing with Monday's that I really want to relax and take it easy. And I walked by a man, a young man, about my age, younger than I am. I'm not young anymore, I can't say that. And he was in a suit, and he was crying. And I was walking by this man, it was just him and me; nobody else was around.

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I felt the Holy Spirit say to me stop and pray with that man. But you know what I did? I just kept walking. I thought well, that's awkward, he's crying, I'll just give him that. I just felt so impressed by the Spirit to pray with him. I walked about a block and I said nope, I'm going to go pray with him. I ran back, and guess what – he was gone. That's the end of the story. And I still think about it today. Maybe you have something like that in your life – a missed opportunity. You just weren't ready. You weren't ready in your heart or here. It was like I'm taking a day off from God because it's Monday. I'm taking a day off from helping people, it's my day off. Maybe there are things. I had a friend back in the day, broke up with a wonderful girlfriend. Just broken up a day or two, realized he made a huge mistake. Went back to her and said I'm so stupid, I make a mistake. Let's get back together. And what does she say? No sir. No sir. He tried and tried and tried, no sir. And he was in the pits for a couple years, even suicidal for a season, and especially she married another terrific guy, great guy. Took him awhile to get over that. So we know these events that happen in our lives. These things we're not ready for. These mistakes or these parties we miss out on. We RSVP. We sign up for something, and then when the moment comes, we don't do it. And that's the assumption of this story, because here's what Jesus says. He says all right, you're going to pass, go out on the highways and the byways and just invite everybody to come. Just invite everyone to come. I remember Reinhard Boenke told a story, this amazing.. passed away, this amazing missionary who brought millions of people to faith all around Africa, one day he was praying, he said Lord, thank you for putting this anointing on me. Thank you for choosing me to do this. And the Lord spoke to his heart and said I didn't choose you to do this, I chose four other people and they said no. Now is that really the Lord? I don't know, but that feels like a believable story to me. Now that's the case. Now what if you're one of those poor people and the invitation comes to you? You say me? You invite me? Think about how joyfully those people sing and dance and enter into God's kingdom. Let's enter into God's kingdom with joy in that way, amen? So here's the message today – don't miss out on the life you RSVP'd for. Don't miss out on the life you RSVP'd for. You don't have the life you want, change something now. It's your life! No one is going to captain the ship for you. If you signed up for a life that you wanted, do it! Go for it! You RSVP'd for a life in God's kingdom to be a disciple of Jesus, go for it with all that you've got. Give it all to the Lord. Watch what He'll do with your life and with your body and with your mind. You say well I did that, and I messed up. Have you not read the gospel? How gracious the Lord is to all of us, including me, who have messed up many, many times. The gospel is not about being perfect, it's about clinging to the cross when we make a mistake. You do your best, and forget the rest. Maybe you RSVP'd to have kids. You said I just want to have kids. I can't wait to have kids and then now you had kids and you're kind of busy for them. No! I've heard kids grow up quickly. Is that true? Parents? I've heard that's true. My daughter's 14. That is crazy. Not yet, she'll be 14 next month. I still remember holding that little peanut in my hands, right? If you have kids, love them. If you have a job, work at it with all your heart. The Biblical word for work in the Bible – avodah, Hebrew, it also means worship. Worship and work. It's the same word. It means that our work can be our worship – that we can honor God with our lives. You signed up for that job, you hoped you'd get the job. Maybe you complain about your boss and your job and things are unfair, do your job with all your heart. Watch how your life changes. Maybe you signed up for marriage and you've given up. Maybe you're not divorced, but you're over it. You say she hasn't done what she said she would do. He doesn't love me. He doesn't care about me. They don't listen anymore. And I hear that, and that's sad, and that's hard. But here's what marriage can be for you. It can be an opportunity to grow as a person. Now I haven't verified this, I should have done it between the services, but I forgot because I was eating a donut. But I heard a rabbi say this on YouTube – the Hebrew word for wife can be translated as benevolent adversary. What do you think about that, Tim? Benevolent adversary. What does that mean? It means somebody who pushes back against you, but it's for your good. Somebody who helps you but it doesn't feel very good. Now here's the point. Here's the point of Christian marriage. The point of Christian marriage.. here's the point of marriage in the world, okay? Here's the world's definition, societies definition of marriage – it's to be happy, right? Or here's the definition of society's marriage – I don't want to be alone. Or here's the society's – I want to get flowers every month. Or I want to whatever. I want to feel love all the time, right? And those are wonderful things, right? Those are wonderful things, but they are secondary things to a healthy marriage. And here's what a Christian view of marriage is. Here's the point of marriage in Christianity. You know what it is? Its discipleship. The biggest point of being married is to grow as a disciple. I know that's not the answer people like to hear, I know that doesn't feel very good, but can I tell you if you make that the point of your marriage, all these other things will happen.

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Here's what the Bible says – iron sharpens iron, so does one person sharpen another. Now think about that for a moment. Iron against iron, right? It's abrasive. It's hot. It hurts. Sparks are flying. It doesn't sound good, right? Iron sharpens iron. Now here's your choice – you can be iron sharpens iron, and that hurts, or you can be dull. So which one is it? Now you don't need to be married for iron to sharpen iron, right? You can get that from a friend, you can get that from a church, you can get it from a mentor, but let me tell you, you can get it from your spouse. I heard once it used to be I'll scratch your back, you scratch mine. This is what marriage is, or friendship is. I'll help you, you help me. But I heard a man say once, this is really what it should be – I will work on me for you, if you work on you for me. That's what good marriage is. That's what I think. Take it or leave it. I digress. Faith, friends, your dreams, your goals, your job, your kids, don't miss out on the life you RSVP'd for, especially just because it gets a little hard and a little abrasive. So an invitations coming, invitations coming for you from the Lord. An invitation is coming to you. Will you be ready? Will you be ready for the opportunity of life? Will you have eyes to see and ears to hear about the opportunities that God has for you? We already said one way we can be ready, and that is to be bored. That's good. Anybody feeling bored right now? Terrific, raise your hand if you're feeling bored. Wow, no one. That's good. That warms my heart. It warms my heart. So being bored, having empty space, but here's another thing is that you work on yourself. You have the skills. You have the heart. You have the way of thinking. Yogi Berra says the future ain't what it used to be. That's a good line. You want a future that's different? You want a future that's changed? You got an idea of where your future will be and you want a different future? You got to be a different person. You got to be a different person. And you become a different person by inviting the Lord into your life and by practicing His disciplines and by engaging in the things that change the heart and the mind. Here's one way of saying it – the future doesn't come to you, it comes from you. Now if I was taking notes that would be one I would write down. I know it's very philosophical, but boy this is the truth. The future doesn't come to you, it comes from you. I'm going to ask you three rapid theological questions in order. Here's number one – what's the number one subject Jesus talked about, if you asked most people in a seminary. What are they going to say? They're going to give you the right answer, and the answer is the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. Okay? He talks about that all the time, almost every sermon. Number two – what is the kingdom of heaven? Or what is the kingdom of God? We could say something like this – it's the present rule and power of God. Right? Finally, question number three, and this is a good one, where is the kingdom of God? Where is it? Now in Jesus' day, is an answer, He answers this question, the rabbis and Pharisees of His day say Lord, when will the kingdom of God happen? Right? When's it going to come? That would be like someone asking me pastor, when will the rapture happen? And here's what I look at them and I say, the rapture is not coming in the future, because the rapture is within you. They would go wait, what? Now rapture, you know what the word rapture means, that means immense feelings of joy. Oh, I digress, I've lost everybody. Here's what Jesus says: where is the kingdom of God? Where is the kingdom of God? He says the kingdom of God is within you. It's in you. If you try to get the kingdom of God out there before it's in you, its legalism and it makes things worse, actually. The kingdom of God is inside of you. And that is where your future comes from. When we get our whole life, our whole mind, our behaviors, our thinking, our books, our friends, our church, everything, we get as much in line with the power of the spirit that's inside of our body with the life of God that's inside of us, everything gets better. Everything. The kingdom of God, the power of God is in your body. Now this last week I had the real privilege of baptizing my nephew, Bennett, whose 13-years-old. Wonderful guy. He said I want to follow the Lord. I want to make this decision in front of my friends and family. So we were at the beach, and I pulled him aside and I shared the scriptures with him and taught him. I said Bennett, I know everyone's having fun and it's okay, but this is a serious thing. This is not something we take lightly. This is a death and life. This is a new transformation. And so we said the words and the traditions and the scriptures, and I spoke to the congregation, and spoke to Bennett. And then, just before I lowered him into the water, I began to pray over him in the Spirit. I laid my hand on his chest and on his head, and I began to pray for him, and then I baptized him and brought him up. And after that, he came to me and said 'Uncle Bobby, when you placed your hand on my chest, I felt like physical fire and heat. And when you put it on my head, I felt the same thing. I felt it go down through my whole body.' I said that's the Holy Spirit! And see, that's actually happening. The kingdom of God in my body is doing something important in Bennett's life, you see. Preparing him, not only to be a man, but preparing him to be a Christian. And God was doing something special, not because of me, but because I was a catalyst, I was a thing that the Lord could work through.

How to Seize the Golden Opportunity

We need to get this inside of us. This is the most important thing we have to have right is that we understand that we're carrying something inside of us. Inside of us. It's inside of you. It's inside of you. It's inside of you. In your body. It's in there and it's around you. And so begin to believe that the disciplines that we practice in life prepare us for a new kind of life. You want a different future, become a different person. You want a bigger life, become a bigger person. It's all available to you. It's all available to you. People say, what are some of these disciplines you talk about? It doesn't sound very spiritual to me. Practicing guitar, learning German, that doesn't sound very spiritual. I'm learning German, by the way. Learning is a little bit of a.. not like taking a class, I'm just doing my own. Am I going to do it? I don't know. When I ran into the word for squirrel, I was like I don't think this language is for me. I still said it wrong in the first service. I'm going to try it again. You know what the word for 'squirrel' is in German? (SPEAKS GERMAN) That's hard. Did I get it right? Did I say that.. oh yes, we have Germans here! Where are they? Did I say that right? (SPEAKS GERMAN) If I say it just slightly wrong, it means little chicken. So this is a problem. This is the problem. Hey you got some Swiss.. did I say it right? (SPEAKS GERMAN) I got it. (SPEAKS GERMAN) See what I'm saying? The "ch" in the middle. Okay. German doesn't seem very spiritual, does it? What about driving the car? Is driving the car spiritual? Let me ask you another question. What about cooking? Is cooking spiritual? That one's easy, of course it is. What about working on computers? Is that spiritual? Here's something we have to learn – in God's kingdom, it's all God's. All disciplines are spiritual and they all stack. If God's calling you to learn how to work on cars, or sew flags, or build or work with wood, and it's from the Lord, it's important. It's important. It blends with everything else. Why would German be from the Lord other than it being a great language? What if I have to preach in German? What if I pray for someone in German? What if I read a theological text from a hundred years ago in German that I couldn't read before? And this is true of driving. How is driving spiritual? If you drive to visit someone in a hospital or you drive.. you get it, right? So keep growing and keep training. Expand your life with God. Expand your life with God. Here's something I've learned is that the Lord stretches us. The Lord stretches us. I took a class recently on.. where'd my mom go? She disappeared? Anyway. The rapture happened already? I know she'd make it! Yeah, I didn't make it?! I thought for sure I'd be in. Oh well. All right. Okay here's something I've learned. The Lord stretches us, and I actually took a class on stretching and I paid for it. It was like \$75 for this online class, and I learned a lot about stretching. One of the first things I learned is that stretching has to happen slow. I wanted to do it fast, it takes a long time. Here's the second thing I learned – stretching has very little to do with your muscles and tendons, did you know that? It has almost everything to do with your CNS – your central nervous system. So actually what you're doing is you're training your brain and spinal cord to relax your body. That's one of the most important parts of stretching. That blew my mind. And I think this is also true in the spiritual world that when God is stretching us, He's not just stretching what we think is stretching. He's stretching us here. He's changing us here. Dr. Schuller, I was in his office one day, and he asked me – 'Bobby, are you afraid of achieving your goals?' And I thought about it for a minute. I said you know what, no. I'm not. I am not afraid of achieving my goals. And he looks at me and he leans forward and he says 'that's the problem!' What do you mean?! Well what do you mean by that? He meant he always wanted people to have goals that were big enough that are not so much they destroy you, but big enough that it stretches you. And here's another way he would say it – have a dream big enough that God can fit in it. Have a dream that's big enough that you believe that God was a part of it, because you know you couldn't have done it on your own. Have goals and dreams for your life that are just big enough that it's stretching you. It's like a little scary. It's important to be stretched. In fact just open your heart right now, and just say Lord, in what ways do you want me to stretch today? What ways do you want me to change in my posture towards my neighbor? Maybe it's even closing your eyes, or just kind of quiet your heart, and actually listening to the spirit. What are some ways now that you can think that the Lord is stretching you, or trying to change you, or help you in some way? Now here's the thing about stretching – the more you do it, the easier it gets. But it also makes you bigger, makes you bigger. Maybe God's asking you to go first to reconcile. Maybe God's asking you to give more. Maybe God's asking you to confess a sin to a friend. Maybe He's asking you to put someone in charge of your church or your business. Maybe He's asking you to pitch your thing a hundred times. Maybe He's asking you to pray with someone or share your faith. There's a million ways that God will speak to you, but listen to Him. Lord, how do you want me to stretch? Like a tree stretches its branches to the sky, how will you stretch your life this week into God's kingdom? How will you get a bigger life? There's always a bigger life available to you, if you're willing to stretch.

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Some of you are here today and I just want to close with this. If you don't know the Lord, you don't know what I'm talking about, it sounds weird when I'm talking about praying for people in the spirit and heat and all this stuff, I want you to know the Lord today. Are you at peace with God? Many of us, we used to have a faith or we knew our grandparents faith, or whatever, but we say I'm really not at peace with God. This is a moment right now that you can know the Lord, you can be at peace with Him. Jesus Christ lay down His life on the cross that we could have a completely blank slate. He did it because He loves you. He didn't do it because oh I just want to get rid of sin. He wants to get rid of sin because sin destroys us, steals all the life out of us. He wants you to be close to Him. God wants you to have a home in heaven and to be full of His spirit today. So I want to encourage you today to make a decision to invite Jesus Christ in your life. To believe that He was crucified and raised from the dead for you, and you will be saved. If you make that decision today, I want you to text me the word HOPE to the number on the screen so we can pray for you. No matter who you are, let's pray together now. Father, we pray in Jesus' name that you'd forgive us of our sins. We invite your Holy Spirit to come into our lives. We ask you to challenge us, to stretch us. We know when you stretch us it doesn't harm us, but it causes us to be stronger, and causes our lives to be bigger. Lord, when we become less, you become more. Become more in our lives. Lord, help us to say no to the things that are harming us so we can say yes to your life in us. Lord, help us to know what it means to be a disciple, to live your way, to bring our lives in line with your word. Lord, put people in our lives that will help us do that. Lord, we love you and we thank you and it's in the strong name of Jesus 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