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Hour of Power - 10.11.2024

GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

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

HS: It is a beautiful morning, and we are so happy that you're here. Let's worship the Lord today with all of our hearts and our soul, for He has loved us with an everlasting love, and He does not change. And we love you, too.

BS: Amen. Let's begin with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you so much that your Holy Spirit is here. Thank you that you love us. Thank you that whatever we're facing, it's not too big for you. Thank you that you're our provision, you're our healer, you're our leader, you're our provider, you're our life, that you're here to give all that we need, Father, and we just trust in you. We don't have to worry, we can trust you. We thank you. It's in Jesus' name we pray, all God's people said, amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – John 10,1-5 – Hannah Schuller

Would you open your Bibles with me to John 10:1-5. And again, there's something really powerful about reading the scriptures along with me in your own Bible. It will grow your faith. "Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

INTERVIEW - Duan "Dog" Chapman (DC) with Bobby Schuller (BS)

Duane "Dog" Chapman, best known to many as the reality television star, Dog the Bounty Hunter, spent years capturing thousands of criminals on his hit show. After his wife, Beth, passed away, his faith was tested. Although he didn't receive the miracle he had hoped for, he did see God's handiwork in healing him and redeeming him during one of his darkest seasons. His incredible story is recounted in his new book, *Nine Lives and Counting: A Bounty Hunter's Journey to Faith, Hope, and Redemption*.

BS: Dog, welcome to Hour of Power! We're so glad you're joining us today. Man, this is such a cool thing for me to interview you. I loved your show, I know a lot of people love your super successful show "Dog the Bounty Hunter." And I was surprised, forgive me for saying this, to know you were a Christian. I mean you've kind of have like a ministry and all this stuff, and I thought wow that would be great to talk to him, and you've got this new book. But for those who may have not seen your show or are not familiar with you, I can't imagine they haven't, but tell us a little bit about yourself and about Dog the Bounty Hunter and your life as a bounty hunter.

DC: Well let's go back to the beginning. Thank you for having me. And some people have said that to me. One time a lady, a reverend lady said 'oh Dog, I didn't know you were a Christian,' or 'I didn't know you believed in Jesus because you used like freeze, blah, blah, blah to get on the ground.' And I said well, sometimes why don't you say freeze in Jesus' name, here's a gun and try it, so she was like, or he was like oh I kind of see that. But I have learned to clean it up. So I was praying to God, I said man I don't like that when people don't know I'm a Christian. I'm a Christian, I'm one of your soldiers, what's the deal, God? Why don't they know? So my wife Francie saw a part on Southpark, and they.. what was it called, Francie?

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They.. (FRANCIE ANSWERS – a skit) a skit that they paradigm’d me, is that the word? (FRANCIE – yes) And so the guy was the hall monitor, and of course he was Dog the Bounty Hunter. And so he arrested some guy for smoking or something. So he said, as he’s sitting on the bench outside the principal’s office with this basically prisoner, here’s the cigarette.. you need a cigarette, bra? And then he said go with Christ. Jesus is Lord. So once he said that, not you in particular, because you’re a preacher and you may not watch reality TV, but once he said that, I felt well the people that need to know I’m a Christian, know I’m a Christian. So with the book, this book, we are able to, in a lot of books you’re not able to use your Christian faith or say too much about it, and you can’t base the book on your Christian faith. So with this Nine Lives and Counting, we, my wife and I and the author are, and a lot of people, actually, helped with the book, can express my Christian life, how I got to be a Christian at an early age, some of the lives I’ve lived through, like some are almost I died, some are almost I died, and some are almost I was dead. So not just physically but through what God had done. So I believe very strongly as I’ve lived my life, it’s all scriptural, He already knows what’s going to happen. The word is called predestined. So way before we knew, God knew what was going to happen, and what’s going down. And so that really pleases me, and I’m the kind of guy where I said listen, if I’m really not going to make it to heaven, I cry a lot, number one, and I love really hard, but I will throw down if I need be. But I ask the Lord, if I am not going to go to heaven, you know all this, and if I am not going to do that at the very end, take me right now because if I go to hell, it’s your fault. And God told me, if you live for me, I will be proud of you. So at that point, about five or six years ago, five years ago, and especially when I met my wife Francie, because I asked for a Christian holy ghost powerful woman, I got one, so with her help and kind of mentoring me, I would say in a way, that I have been able to lay hands on the sick and they have recovered. I’ve been able to spread my testimony. When you meet someone, and because I have a television career, they want to know all about you. Tell stories of how I got my name, how I became a bounty hunter, what crime was I convicted of, what year was I in prison, all those stories, it’d take you a day to sit down and tell people, and each time how God got me out of prison, how God, and I’ll just say right now, a lot of people know, how my nickname spelled backwards is god, because I spoke about Him a lot and the devils disciples, and being with some of the hells angels in the 70’s, so to all those questions, it’s like handing someone a business card, you know, what do you do? I climb skyscrapers, I need my windows washed, do you have a card? So with this book in any world, especially in the Christian world where they’re used to hearing and reading, okay, so I really am excited about this. It’s like handing someone a card. I really want to say, I’ve done so many interviews in my career, I really want to say.. I mean not with you, Pastor, but I want to say they ask the question, is now I can say read this particular book, and then I’ll call you in a couple days, then you can ask me questions. Because then they’re going to.. I think, wow, wow, how did I go from riding in a number one outlaw motorcycle gang, and becoming Dog the Bounty Hunter on a number one successful television show that’s showing still in seven countries, excuse me, and in the United States. We have plans for a lot of other things that God is giving us now in Christian world. My wife and I speak a lot, we still chase killers down, we still have the backseat ride..

BS: I didn’t know that, so you’re still doing bounty hunting then.

DC: Oh yes, we still do that. Only for first degree murders, and men that.. or they attack women and children. We can’t get political, but a lot of people expect now that when you get arrested, you just get out for free. So if we spend our life and put up our life and our time and expenses to catch someone, and then they let the guy out or girl out, but by the time we go home, and they call us four hours later, and they’re let out to go free, why do it because if it’s not going to deter them, the Bible says that. Without some kind of deterrent to a sin or a crime, you’re not going to stop. Look at Satan. He got one person to go with him, one angel, then he got a third. It just started rolling, so yes, we chase, we talk about the Lord, the book’s going to help to again, give people a card..

BS: I love the title of your book..

DC: ..and know what we are.

BS: ..that it’s called Nine lives and Counting, because one of the thoughts I had was I’m like how many times has this guy almost died? I mean there’s probably multiple times where you came this close. What is maybe the.. and maybe you don’t want to talk about it, but what’s the most gnarly, like hardest, closest to death moment you’ve ever had?

DC: Well a lot of the Nine Lives are not just death, okay, but I have been shot in the top of the skull. There are a lot of different.. one time I was driving down the street and it was snowing when I was in my 40’s in Colorado.

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And sometimes in Colorado there’s snow sticking out of the side of a truck and so that night I hit it and it (KOOSH) went all over. The next night, I’d seen it again because it was snowing bad in Colorado, and I dodged it, and I don’t know why, then I went home and couple days later it melted, and there was huge railroad ties sticking out. That’s why the snow had gathered. And I would have died at that spot. And I was struggling with.. not the word struggling, but I was living how I should have been and God was kind of telling me that, and that at any time I could die, and I would say oh I’ve been raised Assembly of God. I know exactly when to repent, just as I’m dying. And I would have never been able to repent. So in the Nine Lives, because I’m Dog, my wife named it that, and it’s not like I’m a cat, and it fits in with stuff. Go ahead, preacher, I’m talking too much.

BS: No, I love it, and I’m really excited to read the book, and I want to encourage people at home to check it out, as well. The book is called Nine Lives and Counting: A bounty hunters journey to faith, hope and redemption. Dog, thank you so much for putting this book together. I know people are going to love it, and thank you so much for joining us. We appreciate you.

DC: Yes sir, thank you, and I’ll send you a copy, brother. Thank you.

BS: Thank you.

DC: Send me yours, too, please

BS: All right, I will, God bless you. Thank you, Dog.

DC: Thank you. Yes sir, aloha, thank you.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Would you stand with me? 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 one can take it from me. I don’t have to worry, I don’t have to hurry, I can trust my friend Jesus and share His love with my neighbor. Thanks you can have a seat.

MESSAGE/PRAYER – Bobby Schuller: "5 Ways You Can Hear God’s Voice

Hey, are you going through a challenge and you don’t know the answer? You need a word from God. Maybe you just went through some horrible tragedy, some difficult thing you never thought you would face, you need a word from God. Maybe you’re in an important crossroads in your business or in your family, your school, big decision, you need a word from God. This is a good thing to ask for, as a Christian, to ask God for a word. One word from God can transform your life forever. Hearing from God is not easy, but it’s something that we can do. It’s something we can learn, and today I’m going to talk about five things, five ways that we hear from God. Now there might be six, there might be ten, but these are the five that I see in the Bible from the least common to the most common. And we’ll start with number five. You ready? We’re just going to jump right in. Number five, one way in the Bible that we see that God speaks to people, is through dreams and visions. Dreams and visions. Now I have found that in the Bible, when we have dreams and visions, it’s usually for unsaved leaders or it’s for Christians or Jews, God’s people, who don’t want to hear what God has to tell them. Maybe they want to hear about a healing, they want to hear about a new idea, they want to hear that God loves them, but there’s this other thing that God’s been trying to tell them, and they won’t listen, and so when they go down to sleep, boom, then He hits it with them. So first, to unsaved leaders. Think of Pharaoh. We know the story of Joseph, has this dream, he’s in prison, Pharaoh has this other dream, and nobody can interpret it. Gathers all the wise men, gets the smartest men in the land, nobody knows the answer. And someone says hey, you’ve got a guy in your dungeon and he’s a professional at this. They call up Joseph, he interprets the dream, and Egypt is saved. Famous story in Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar has a dream about an angel is going to come down and chop down a tree. And Nebuchadnezzar doesn’t know what this means. What does this tree, what is this chop down? Somebody says hey, we know a guy, his name is Daniel. Daniel comes down, tells Nebuchadnezzar I’m sorry, oh king, you’re going to lose your marbles. And he does, he loses his mind. Or the one that comes to mind – Peter who after the cross and resurrection, Peter is now the head of the church. He’s leading. And he’s standing on a rooftop, its evening time, time for dinner, and he can smell the food cooking down below. And then the Bible says he goes into a trance, and maybe he’s sleeping, maybe he just.. I don’t know, something happens. And he has a vision, and here’s the vision: it’s a blanket full of animals Jewish people aren’t supposed to eat. Four legged animals, maybe swine. There’s birds, reptiles. God says to Peter: Peter, kill and eat. And Peter in this dream or vision says I can’t eat that stuff, it’s not kosher. It’s not clean.

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I've never eaten that before. And God says Peter, do not call unclean what I have called clean. Wow. See, Peter didn't want to hear that message. And this is a problem for the early church, is that all these gentiles, these non-Jews, they were coming into the church, they were coming to believe in Jesus. And Peter was a little bit resistant to that, and here God has to reveal it to him in a dream or in a vision. So very often, why do we hear from God in a dream? It's very often because God's trying to get through and we're not listening. So He's going to get you when you're sleeping! Now I just want to say again that this is very unlikely. It's more common that people just had too much pizza with pineapple on it or something. I, for one, have only had one time where God spoke to me in a dream in my whole Christian life, and it was something I really needed to hear. But there's one more thing I want to say about dreams before we go into the way God talks to us, number four, and that is that dreams really can give you a look into your unconscious mind. They can help you. You have this whole part of your soul, of your thinking that's going on. If you find yourself overreacting to certain things that you shouldn't. If you find yourself worrying about things you shouldn't. Now I'm not a professional, but there's this whole unconscious life going on and dreams can give you a look into that, and God can use that. I had a good friend, Tully Wilkinson, you might remember him, he was a worship leader here. He was in my small group, and you might remember, if you've ever seen the movie I'd recommend it, "Interstellar." They're looking for a new home world, and they find this planet with water on it, and it's got good temperatures. They land on the planet, and the whole planet is like a kiddie pool. The waters only two feet deep or so, it's up to your knees. And they're looking for land, and somebody says hey, look, there's a mountain over there. And somebody says oh yes, look at the mountain. Another guy says the mountain, the mountain, it's moving towards us! Somebody says that's not a mountain, that's a wave. And a huge wave the size of a mountain. Now Tully said that was my dream! I had that dream almost every week for a long time. And once he said it aloud and we prayed for him, wouldn't you know it, the dream went away. But it gave Tully something to know about himself, and it gave him an opportunity to talk about something unconscious. Maybe you've had one of these dreams before and you think you're the only one. You've ever had a dream where you show up to school, or to work, and you're in your underwear or you're naked, apparently that might mean that you're feeling like you're pretending a little bit, or that you're acting phony, or that you're hiding some of your shortcomings. You ever had a dream where you're losing your teeth? Feels like they're falling out, and you're holding your teeth in your hand? You're like oh no! No? I bet you have. This happens a lot when we're feeling self-conscious about our looks, or self-conscious in general, or self-conscious about our communicating. And so these dreams, although they might not be from God and they usually are not, they can give you a look into your soul, and God can use that! Amen? God can use it, so bring it before the Lord. All right. So number five is dreams and visions. Number four – we call it, it's in the Bible, word of knowledge. A word of knowledge. The Bible says a word of knowledge is a spiritual gift. That means that the Holy Spirit gives it to some people, not everybody. Some people have a gift. Some people are given it later in life. I've heard this a million times from people that knew Dr. Schuller, my grandpa. They said 'your grandpa knew exactly what to say right when I needed to hear it.' You ever have a pastor, a grandma, grandpa, a leader in your life, they just know exactly what to say? See I believe a lot of times that's from God. God's using that person to give you a gift, something you need in that moment. Word of knowledge does not need to be 'here ye, God has told me a word for thee!' Someone might say that. But very often God just impresses it on the person to tell you. And the other thing I've noticed is its usually spiritual elders. I don't mean the elders in church, and I don't mean old people necessarily, I mean people who have been believers in a deep way, in a spiritual way for a long time. People that are really in touch with the Holy Spirit, very often, they receive in this special way, a good word for you. You got to watch out for this one. I went to Oral Roberts University, a Pentecostal university, and it was a running joke how often a guy would say, 'the Lord hath told me that we're going to be married.' And I'd think wow, wow, the least good looking guy in school has been told by God that the best looking girl in school is going to be his wife! Wow! Oh, isn't that just like God! But God didn't tell her. I don't know about it. The least interesting guy is going to marry the most interesting gal. No. Here's a good example, though. There's a man in high school, he was a chaplain in the Navy and became our Spanish teacher. Went to Fuller Seminary; one of the reasons I wanted to go there. Morris Passmore. If you know Morris Passmore, have him send me an email. I was going through something in life, and he said, like this, 'hey Bobby, I kind of feel like the Lord's telling me to tell you X, Y and Z.' And it was exactly what I needed to hear. But you hear the humility? I'm not sure, maybe this is from the Lord to you, just feels like something I should tell you. That's usually how it's done. Number three.

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So number five is dreams, number four is word of knowledge, number three: throwing the fleece. Throwing the fleece. You might remember this story from Gideon. Goes like this. The Midianites are invading Israel. God calls Gideon to lead an army to kick the Midianites out. And the way He tells him, an angel appears to Gideon, tells him what to do, Gideon makes an offering. The angel touches the offering with a staff, it burns in flames and goes to heaven, angel disappears. Gideon now knows for sure what to do: raise up an army, fight the Midianites. Immediately he cuts down the totem pole, which is an idol thing in his community, destroys the altar to Baal, and then raises up this army, and just before he's about to attack the Midianites, there's been some time, he takes a piece of wool, and he says to the Lord, I'm going to put this wool out, and I'm going to leave it overnight, and in the morning, if you want me to attack the Midianites, I want it to be wet and I want the ground to be dry, and that's how I'll know. mWakes up in the morning, you might know this story, ground is dry, wool is wet. Wrings it, bunch of water comes out like he's washing his car. Wow. He's still not sure! So he says God, I just want to make sure, I don't want all these young men to die. We're going to invert this. I'm going to leave the wool out, I want the wool to be dry in the morning, and I want the ground to be wet. Gideon wakes up, the wool is dry, the ground is wet, Gideon attacks and wins. Now here's how it's often taught by pastors and maybe they're right. They might be right. This isn't something we should do. Gideon doesn't have any faith, etc., etc., I don't agree. I don't think that's what it is. I think Gideon had faith. I don't know about you, but if an angel appeared to me and lit my food on fire and disappeared, I'd believe him. I wouldn't need a bunch of wool. But there's been some time, and Gideon is a soldier. Everybody say soldier (AUDIENCE – soldier) Soldiers like to verify the general's orders. That's what I think is happening. There's been time, he's just confirming this is what he's supposed to do. There's nothing wrong with that. Nothing wrong with thinking before you attack. There's nothing wrong with verifying with God, verifying with God's word. So this is how I think of the fleece. Take it or leave it. A fleece to me are the confirmations and encouragements that you're on the right path. Many of the good things, all of the good things in life take time. It doesn't usually happen overnight. It requires chipping away, working on it, applying yourself, and it's easy to wonder at the 11th hour am I doing the right thing? Did God really say? Am I on the right path? And very often God will give you these little things, some people call them God winks, these little God winks to say my son, my daughter, you're on the right path. Keep going. Good job. I bet if I went around here and you had some time to think about it, you might remember a time you received a little God wink like this from the Lord, this little confirmation God's speaking to you, keep going my son, you're doing a good job. Keep going, my daughter, I'm proud of you. Not too long ago, my grandmother, who was old but she was super healthy and driving around and having conversations and going to the grocery store, going to Starbucks, making friends, passed away suddenly. And it was very sad. Took her a couple of days to.. she was in the hospital, for her to pass, and while she was unconscious there and we were praying for her and sort of keeping a vigil, especially my sisters and my mom, towards the end, there was this moment, I didn't see it, I was gone, but they said that there's like a light way above her bed, and that there were these little feathers like falling from the light and kind of disappearing, and they were marveling, and they all said it. A few people in the room, and Brittney then decided to take a video of this because she couldn't believe it. What are these feathers, and they did disappearing and they're coming down. She takes a video, and later she goes to open the video and the video deletes itself. And I'm a skeptic guy, so I think oh, that's nice, that's lovely. I wasn't there. Everybody keeps having these feathers in our family: this feather was here, this feather was there, this feather. And after grandma died, we're all grieving. This feather, this feather. All right, I get it, feathers, feathers, whatever, there's a feather, right? One night in the middle of all this after she's passed and we're still in the middle of everything, I'm putting my son to bed. My daughter and wife, they're out getting their nails done and its bedtime, and I always put my son to bed, and when I do, when there's nobody around, oftentimes I'll pray for my son. He's been recovering from a brain disease for ten years, and so I spent some time in the spirit praying for my son. And then I put him to bed like normal, turned the light off, and walked through the hall, and as I'm walking in my office, a feather falls in my face to the point where I go (MAKES BLOWING SOUNDS) like this. And I watch this feather and it disappears. Now I looked on the floor, maybe it wasn't a feather, maybe it was a this, but I almost swallowed it, and I thought hey, a feather! Texted my sister, hey you know, you're not crazy. There's feathers going around. There's feathers! There's feathers going around. I don't know. I don't know what it means. Is it my grandma? Is it God? I don't know. But it was nice. Hey, it's a God wink. Just take it. Maybe you have an example of this in your business, your music, your art, your ministry, your marriage, and you just get a sign from God. Hey, it's just an encouragement.

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Isn't that great? God loves us, just sometimes He just likes to encourage us and lift us up when we're going through hard times. Nothing changes overnight, and sometimes you just need a little encouragement. All right, number two. Now I was challenged by Hannah that this not number two, this is number one, and she's right. But I don't want to mess up my slides, so we're just going to say its number two, okay? Number two: the Bible. The Bible. Famous quote from Leonard Ravenhill, this is what he says: when the Bible is read, God's voice is heard. When the Bible is read aloud, God's voice is heard audibly. This is God's word. God's word. What a gift that we have. What a gift that we can have God's word. That we can read it whenever we want, and we can hold it, we can study it, we can know it, we can learn it, and it is God's word to us, especially when we're in a challenge. Word of life. Here's what I believe – it's good to study the Bible, but that's not the best way to hear God's voice. It's good to read the Bible, but that's not the best way. In fact, the Bible tells us what to do with the Bible. And it doesn't say study or read, it says meditate. Over and over and over through the Bible it says to meditate on the Bible. My Hebrew pronunciation is always bad, so forgive me, but the word in Hebrew is “Hagah.” It means to say it over and over and over. And in first century Judaism, it literally means to memorize. To memorize. Meditate means memorize, and to sort of open your spirit to memory. Those of you who have memorized scripture, you see it does something different than studying does. Here in the west, we like to study. In the east, you meditate. You say it over and over. Psalm chapter 1, “blessed is the one who meditates on his word or on his law day and night.” Joshua says “keep this book of the law always on your lips, meditate on it day and night.” Again, that word meditate means to memorize. And what happens is when you memorize it, just kind of like gives you a Biblical mind, and it gets everything weirdly in your body in line with God's word. You hear and catch things in it that you didn't catch when you were studying it. In other words, studying is good, but memorizing is better than studying. It's the memorizing that transforms you, because again, it gives you a Biblical mind. The Bible doesn't say all the stuff we should and shouldn't do. You don't need a Bible verse for every little thing in life. Christian comes to me, he says ‘pastor, can I do meth?’ The answer is no.. no, no, you can't do meth. All right? You can't do meth. He says all right, pastor, where is the Bible verse? I don't have one. I don't think there was meth two thousand years ago, but you don't need a Bible verse to know that meth is bad, right? That God doesn't want His people to be doing meth. I'm just using an extreme example. But the point is clear is that there's many things in life that when you've been sort of meditating on the Bible, rather than just reading it, when you're really memorizing it, it gets in your bones, it's like in you, and in the same way that everybody here is like obviously you don't do meth, you have different things in your life where you sort of get an inner voice, an inner guidance where you're like this is not in line with what this has trained me to become. You just find you become a more positive person, you have a compass in life. That is the result of memorizing. Another way we can hear from God in the Bible. Big question in Christianity – Bible flipping. Do you know what I mean by Bible flipping? It's this.. Bible flipping. Dear God, I have a question. (BRRRRRRRRRRRRRR) Bam! Right? What does it say? Can we do that? Can we do that? There's two answers to this question, right? There's two. Here's what they say in seminary. Okay, I went to seminary – can you do that, we had wrestled with this, the answer is no. No Bible flipping from the seminarians. I don't remember why because I thought it was dumb. My answer is absolutely! Absolutely you can Bible flip. Why not! I would much rather somebody Bible flip than do the eight ball thing. You know the eight ball thing with the little deal? I would much rather them do that then figure it out on TV. I would much rather them do that than just go with their emotions, which can trick us so often. Why? Because I don't think there's anything in here that's bad. Some mother says Lord, what do I do about my kids? She goes (BRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR) Destroy them. Lay them low. Let them not be counted among the righteous. But I'm assuming you're not a psycho, right? I'm assuming you're not a lunatic. And maybe the mother says, all right, maybe I'm not going to destroy my children, but maybe I'll give them a time out. Maybe I'll give them a time out. See God can use this to speak to you if you open your spirit to what He has to say. So that's fine. Bible flip. Why not. I think it's all God's word. It's the bread of life. It's our compass, it's all worth studying. It brings life. And again, it forms this Biblical mind. All right here's the last one, number one, number one is the Bible, I'm sorry, I got it backwards. We're just going to say last one, I'm calling it, and you might understand if you've been going here for a long time, we just call it boom, the stamp. There's just like this stamp. The Pentecostals call it a check in your spirit. There are others who say I had this gut, I felt it in my gut. And there is this thing that comes from God where it just impresses on you, not as real words, but it's in your spirit, you just kind of get this thing. John chapter ten, Jesus tells us this.

How to Have a “Greater Things” Life

He says “very truly I tell you Pharisees anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate but climbs in by some other way is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. When he has brought out all of his sheep, he goes ahead of them and his sheep follow him because they” what? “They know his voice,” see. “But they’ll never follow a stranger. In fact, they’ll run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” Apparently, if you are a sheep in the fold, you can hear God’s voice. Wow. You can hear God’s voice. Now we don’t hear it in the flesh, which would be our actual eardrums. We don’t hear it in our mind, we hear it in our spirit. Right? God has a spirit, who does He speak to? He speaks to our spirit. So it hits our spirit first, and then our mind goes to convert that into some meaning in English or whatever language you have. Here’s what it looks like. Ray Vanderlos was telling a story in the Middle East, throughout history, shepherds have always been teenage girls, almost always. In fact, you’ll look, many of the shepherds in the Bible, other than David, were teenage girls. Rebekah, for example, was a teenager. And it’s a female job. And so he’s spending some time with these Bedouins and he’s permitted to travel with these girls, there’s four of them, and they each have their own flock of sheep. And so they’re going out into the pasture, and as the sheep are eating, there’s literally hundreds of sheep, and Ray is standing with them and they’re all like eating nuts, and they’re all talking, and talking about the boys, and stuff, and going on and on. And meanwhile, these four flocks of sheep from four different places all begin to mix and mingle. And Ray said his anxiety started going up because he’s thinking oh my goodness, what a mess. This is going to be the biggest mess in the world, all these sheep, they all look the same, they don’t have collars, how are you going to know which sheep is going to go where. And he said the most impressive thing is the sheep spoke Arabic because when the girls split up, the four shepherds, they all started shouting at them in Arabic, and all the sheep went in the four different directions to each shepherd. Why? Because the sheep know the shepherd’s voice. They just can hear it. They can hear.. in radio you call it the signal through the noise. You hear the (MAKES RADIO WAVES SOUNDS) that’s the noise, and then there’s this voice that comes through, right, and you can hear it. It’s Vin Scully, or whoever. Any parents in the house here? The weird thing with parents, the same thing with your children. You’re at the playground, little kids, and they’re all playing. Kid screams, you’re on your phone, you don’t even look up. Ten minutes goes by, another kid laughs and then screams again, some other kid, you don’t even look up. Third time kid screams, you go it’s your kid! You just know the voice.. anybody agree with that? You know the voice of your own kid. You don’t worry about the others, but your kid, oh. Okay. This is what it’s like. We train ourselves to hear God’s voice. God has a language and it’s not English. Its knowledge. Its knowledge. Boom. You just know. You just know. Is it always right? Sometimes it’s wrong, but for the most part, we train it. We train it into us. What if you could hear that voice before? What if you could hear that voice before the big risk? Before the conflict? Before that purchase? Before you have the talk? What if you created some margin or some space? So many times we ask God, but then we don’t even listen. Some of you, you deal with that with your spouse. But you know, you ask God, and they don’t even listen. You don’t even listen to Him. You say Lord, I need help, I need help, I need help, and then you go right back into your thing. Let’s create some space for God to impress on our gut, for God to speak to our spirit man or spirit woman, and just create a margin for God to speak to you. Create margin. Create space for God to speak to you. Here’s a good idea from Dr. Schuller: never cut a tree down in the winter. All trees look dead in the winter, but most of them are still alive. So never cut a tree down in winter because you might cut down something that’s still alive. What does that mean? Never make big decisions when you’re full of negative emotions. You’re just full of all sorts of negative emotions, don’t make big life-changing decisions in those moments. Just give it some space. Go to God. Sleep on it. Give it a second. I once had a recent.. no, not too long ago, I had a conversation with a vendor. This guy just broke every rule in business without actually breaking the law, but got as close as he could. Everything he said he would do, he didn’t do. He did it through text message. It was the worst. And I tried to convince this guy to change, and I was getting so frustrated and I did my best, and then finally I knew it was not going to change. And so I have been a fighter my whole life, and I’ve been trying to be less of that. Hannah’s helped me. I fight the good fight, but not the dumb fight. And it’s easy for me to get sucked into the dumb fight. We fight the good fight of faith, not the dumb fight, right. And this was a dumb one, because it was already over, so what is the temptation? You rotten scoundrel and you said this and I’m going to tell everybody and blah blah blah blah blah, right. And I just prayed about it and I realized, no that’s not how Christ has taught us. We love everybody.

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I don't have any hate in my heart, I don't have any anger in my heart, I'm just going to let this go. It's over, it's what it is. So I texted him, I said I know you guys have to do what you got to do. I wish you all the best. Reach out to me anytime if you want to do something. What did he say back to me? He said wow, I thought you'd be more upset. I thought you'd be really angry. And I said in the text, I said well, I am angry, but I understand. You got to do your thing. And then what did he say? You know you should know it didn't come from me, it came from my boss. Oh. That's interesting news. And that was it. Here's what would have happened if I had let loose and said you guys are this and that, I would have gotten my own reply, right? I would have gotten a reply back – well you, and then I would have been stewing all night, and all of that love that my family and my friends need, it would have gone to this guy, and all of my attention that needs to go to my goals and vision, it would have gone to this guy. For how many days? Who knows, but it would have been days, not hours, and it would have been not one night, but many nights. Just let it go. Just let it go. Don't make a big deal out of nothing. It's only a big deal if you make it a big deal. Give God some room to speak. When you're going through something, you're going through a hard time, God desperately has something to say to you that can help. So pray. Listen to Him. Listen to Him and watch: He will have something. You want prosperity? You want success? Listen to the master. He's got something to say to you. He's going to help you. And train that muscle in your body. You'll be glad you did. Well for any of you who are here, I can't finish a sermon without giving you an opportunity to receive Jesus Christ. It's so important that we're at peace with God. Everybody in here has made mistakes and we've done things we regret, but God can throw those tapes away. God loves you just as you are, not as you should be. God's on your side, He's for you, and I want to encourage you today to receive Christ in your heart. That's how you go to heaven. It's a free gift so just receive it from the Lord today, and commit your life to be His disciple. If you make that decision, I want you to text me the word HOPE to the number on the screen. We have over a thousand people that have come to faith, and every time somebody does, all of heaven rejoices. Would you stand with me? Father, we ask that today we would be transformed by you and by your word. We make a commitment today that when we're feeling stressed, when we're feeling angry, when we're feeling hopeful, when we have a dream in our heart, we're going to give you some space to speak into it. We thank you and we love you, your word can change our life. We receive your blessing, we receive the victory, we receive the insight, we receive the power, we love you and it's in Jesus' name, all God's people said, amen.