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GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

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

HS: Welcome friends. It is such a joy to be with you. Worship is not just for when we feel good. Worship is also a rally cry to the Lion of Judah to inhabit any situation we are facing. Let's worship today. Thank you for being here. You are so loved.

BS: Amen. Haven and I just got back from Holland. We had a great time. I'm sorry. And we had lots of stroopwafels and coffee and we went to that, what was that festival called, the..?

HAVEN: The Kirkenhof?

BS: Yes, that's pretty good. Kirkenhof. It's like a tulip festival. So, we missed you last week and grateful for Chad for preaching for us. Thank you, Pastor Chad. And, grateful you all are here with us today. We just believe. We're going to leave here full of life, excited about the coming week. And let's just begin with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you that your Holy Spirit is here. We come boldly before your throne in Jesus name. And we thank you, God, that even now you're bringing into us fresh vision, fresh life, fresh words. I pray, Father, that you would forgive us of our sins and renew us and help us to become the kind of leaders in our communities that our communities need. Father, we love 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 – Acts 3,12-19 – Hannah Schuller

Would you open your Bibles with me to Acts 3:12 through 19.

When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we have made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see. "Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord. The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

INTERVIEW - Jess Connolly (JC) with Bobby Schuller (BS)

Jess Connolly is an author who has written several books in the last decade. She and her husband, Nick, have also planted Bright City Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Her new book, *Tired of Being Tired: Receive God's Realistic Rest for Your Soul-Deep Exhaustion*, helps women identify fatigue and how to create a lifestyle that includes sustainable rest.

BS: Jess, hi, welcome, we're so glad to meet you and I'm so excited to hear about your book *Tired of Being Tired*. And I know a lot of people are feeling that way, feeling tired, exhausted from work, a lot of pastors and people in ministry are feeling tired, but they feel like they're sort of feeling tired for the Lord. You and your husband are church planters, and now pastoring a great church, Bright City Church. Let's talk about your book, but before we get there, tell me a little bit about story and your background. How did you get into ministry, and why do you talk a lot about like this personal energy and sort of how to get it in life.

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JC: Oh, such a great question. Well thank you so much for having me. It's such an honor to be here. I met Jesus when I was 15. I had kind of a radical conversion experience. I had been in the church my whole life, but I knew I was not saved, I knew I didn't have a relationship with Jesus, I wanted nothing to do with Him. I had just kind of been around church people. And then one night in a worship service, just something flipped, I thought I want God, I want to be a part of His kingdom, I want to tell as many people as possible as I can about Him, and to be totally honest, that's kind of what started my journey of exhaustion, as well, because I really quickly, as soon as I met Jesus, just wanted to use everything I had for His glory. I wanted to use my hands, I wanted to talk, I wanted to write books, I wanted to teach, I wanted to encourage, I wanted to serve, I wanted to do everything I could to just kind of bring heaven to earth. But somewhere along the way, I really missed some of the expectations in there of what God expected from me, of what He was asking from me, and so that also led to my personal journey with exhaustion. But yes, for the last two decades, I've just been in church ministry and in different forms of ministry and trying to do whatever I can to leave this world knowing more about God than I found it.

BS: It's interesting, I know you and Nick, you guys have four kids, you've got this church, you do all of these things, and it's interesting when you.. like I feel like I connect very much with that experience when you read like Paul and other things, you just see him like getting beat up and thrown into jail and just going, going, going, you think that's what I got to do all the time. I got to like.. basically it's almost like a lot of churches kind of teach like burnout or exhaustion as like just the price you pay for the gospel kind of a thing.

JC: Yes. Absolutely. I used to say, I mean I used to even teach or share publicly for years that when I pictured Jesus, I pictured us like two soldiers on horses, like just riding through the forest and doing whatever we could do and finding the next adventure and taking out the next enemy, and to be totally honest, in the last few years, just talking to God and reading scripture, I've been so encouraged by Jesus' words in Matthew 11, where He says come to me, all who are weary and burdened and I'll give you rest. And I started to kind of change that picture I had of Jesus and I honestly started to see Him like pull His horse over and get off and sit by still waters and say where are you going so fast, and like who told you you had to be riding through the woods.

BS: Before we were taping, you said something really interesting behind the set, and you were kind of saying when you were looking for resources for Christians to not be exhausted, you felt like a lot of the guides were not practical. You're like I'm a mom of four kids, I can't go have a day or two of silence and solitude, or whatever. So tell me a little bit about that experience, and you clearly have a solution to this. You've written a book on it, and I think it's really useful for a lot of people. I imagine you're providing a practical solution. What is that practical solution? How did that journey kind of go for you about like discovering that?

JC: That's the question, yes. That's definitely what happened for me. I would read all the books on rest, I'd hear all the sermons on rest, but I thought realistically, I have these people I need to love and serve. This job I have to keep showing up for that I want to keep showing up for. I can't live kind of a quiet hushed spa-like existence. I have to keep doing this life that God gave me.

And so there had to be a more practical solution, and really what I found, the biggest, most practical tip that I'd like to share with anyone that I share in the book is that we can't actually receive realistic rest until we know what kind of tired we are. And the truth is, there's multiple different kinds of fatigue. So some of us are spiritually exhausted, some of us are physically exhausted, some of us are mentally exhausted, some of us are emotionally exhausted.

And so it might sound like a little bit more work when you're already tired, but figuring out what kind of tired you are helps you then take some practical steps to get that kind of rest, because I think we've all experienced that phenomenon of we go on vacation, and we come back and we say like I need a vacation from my vacation. Or we take a day off but we're still exhausted when it's time to go back to work. And it's most often because we're resting in a way that's not necessarily needed or most helpful for us.

BS: That's such a great way of framing it. You help people discover how to do that in your book, right. I mean you actually have a way that they can go through that. That is a great way of framing it because it's true, there's some kind of tired that's almost like a good tired. You go to the gym or something, you come back and it feels great. But there's a different kind of exhaustion where you literally like you're out of gas but you can't refill the tank no matter how hard you try. And you kind of help people do that. There's a quote I put down here from your book, you said Jesus Christ did not die on the cross for us to live a life of punitive exhaustion.

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How do you get out of that, because you definitely want to do more, do great things for the gospel, you want to achieve your dreams, but how you do that and not get to a place of burnout for people that are worried about that.

JC: I think it really comes back to a lot of us letting God be our Father again. Letting Jesus be our Savior again, and realizing He’s not standing over us saying like do more, do more, figure this out, why haven’t you gotten it together yet. Why haven’t you done more for my kingdom? Instead, He’s moving toward us in mercy and compassion, and honestly it’s receiving that mercy, that compassion and that rest that actually compels us to work. And so I don’t worry about people taking kingdom rest and then not working ever again, because when you really receive God’s rest, you want to use what you’ve got for the good and the glory. But then you want to come back to rest and get what you need to fill up your cup again.

BS: That’s right. I find, too, that for me, I was really lucky to have a mentor that was also not only spiritual director, but a clinical therapist, and so I feel like he was able to help me when I was in exhausted phase. What I realized is that by taking care of myself in this regard first, I was able to accomplish a lot more and be a lot more effective. So it’s kind of like very often we think if we just give it more effort and keep trying, keep trying, but really that works against us, doesn’t it.

JC: Yes, absolutely. And I like to think of it as like a pendulum, and honestly as far as we’re willing to swing into rest, we’ll often swing back in to productivity, and that’s in all different areas, as far as we’re willing to let God nurture us in our emotions, we’ll swing into emotional health and being able to be stable and helpful for other people, as well.

BS: That’s great. Hey, I want to recommend, those of you at home, to get a copy of this book, *Tired of Being Tired: Receive God’s realistic rest for your soul deep exhaustion*. Jess Connolly, thank you so much. I know you’re going to encourage a lot of people, especially people in ministry to help stay fueled and stay excited for the gospel. Thank you so much, Jess.

JC: Thank you. So grateful. Thanks for having me.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Well no matter who you are, 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 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: “How to Have a “Greater Things” Life”

Today we’re going to talk about this command, and yes it’s a command from Jesus, to do greater things than He did. Not only can we do greater things, He commands us to do it, and the scripture gives us two ways that we can do that, and we’re going to talk about that later in this message. I believe that if you watch this whole message, or listen to this whole thing, you’ll know these two things and you’ll be doing greater things than Jesus, which is saying something.

But first I want to begin with a great story I just read, it’s not a joke, it’s a true story. An atheist is sitting down with a Christian and they’re discussing faith, and things going on in their lives, and this atheist is telling him about a recent story. He was hiking through Alaska, and as he was going through, a brutal storm came passing. He was miles away from any help, his cell phone didn’t work, and he was trapped. And as the day was going on, he was getting colder and colder and was losing his way, and thought he was going to die.

So in an act of desperation, this atheist looks to the sky, raises his hand dramatically and says ‘God, if there is a God, save me and I’ll believe in you!’ And his friend looks at him and says, ‘well you’re sitting here now having dinner with me, you obviously were rescued. Why don’t you believe in God?’ And no joking, his atheist friend said ‘well God didn’t rescue me. You see, an Eskimo came along, found me, and helped me back to civilization.’

Now that’s a funny thing for us as Christians to hear. For us as Christians, we say of course that’s the way God would save the man. God likes to use people. That’s how He would do it. But see what this man imagined, I guess, was an angel coming down, maybe something parting in the sky, maybe the snow melting, some natural phenomenon, and this is a major problem with so many people who are spiritual but not religious, is that we forget this idea that God likes to use people. See this atheist could not imagine that God could use an Eskimo to save him. The Eskimo was the answer to the prayer.

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God's preference is to answer prayers with people. This is the foundation for what we want to talk about later in doing greater things for God. The reason we need to do greater things is that you are supposed to become the answer to someone's prayer. Someone's praying for the person that you're going to become when you become a disciple of Jesus. There are maybe kids praying for a greater dad, a greater mother, a greater grandfather. Students praying for a better teacher. Churches praying for a better pastor. Countries praying for a better citizen. There are people that are waiting for you to get better. Things don't get better in your life when things on the outside change. Things get better for you when you choose to get better; when you choose to implement and practice the teachings and ways of Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be a disciple. God's preference is to answer prayers with people.

You know what, very often our preference is that, as well, believe it or not. Funny story, kid was scared at night, a big storm coming through and it was loud, thunder coming down. Dad comes in to pray with him. Prays with him and the son says 'where you going?' He said 'don't worry, I've prayed with you. God's here in your room. He's not going to leave you.' The son says 'dad, don't go anywhere.' And he says 'son, don't worry about it. God's going to be here, He's with you.' And the boy says 'I want a God with some skin on Him!' How many of you know we serve a God with some skin on Him? How many of you know this is what Israel was crying out for for all those years; a God with some skin, His name is Jesus Christ. God with some skin on Him.

And in theologically, we refer to this “God with some skin on Him,” we refer to it as incarnation. Incarnation, which is a Latin word. Anybody here speak Spanish? What is carne mean? (AUDIENCE MEMBER – meat) Meat! Yes, thank you, Fernando. Carne. If you want a burrito with some carne on it, right, and you're asking for a little extra bacon or something. So this is what incarnation means. It means to put meat on something, to put flesh on something, to put skin on something.

So theologically, when we talk about the incarnation, we're talking about what happens in John chapter 1. “In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word became –” what? Flesh? Right? So this is what we're talking about, but it's not limited to that. Incarnation theologically also means that we put skin on God. Now I want to be careful here. You're not God in your baptism. You don't become a God. You don't become divine. You're still a creation. But it's important to recognize that God's presence takes on flesh in baptized believers who are full of the Holy Spirit. It's an orthodox belief that Jesus is literally in the bodies of many people in this room right now. That when those people pray for me, Jesus is also praying for me. When those people lay hands on me for my sickness, Jesus is laying hands on me in the flesh. It's not just something that we say in nursery rhymes. When we say “Christ is in us” it's literally two people are praying for me when you pray for me, if you're a believer. You and Christ. You see?

And this is the important thing that we have to understand why the greater things kind of life is a command from God. Greater things. So how do we have this greater things kind of life? It's through discipleship. God wants our mind to catch up with what happened in our spirit. God wants our actions to catch up with what happened in our spirit in our baptism. That we have a renewed mind and we become a transformed person.

Here's what discipleship is in basic terms: its learning and copying Jesus. One of the most fundamental, most important questions you can ask in your life is what would Christ do if He were in my shoes, literally. One of the most important questions I can ask when I wake up in the morning is what would a 42-year-old American man, who's married and has two children, who's a pastor of a church in Irvine, what would he act like and do today, and copy that image to the best of my ability. That's what disciple is.. discipleship is, okay?

So, towards that end, we want to begin asking how do I live in that life, how do I attain that kind of life, how do I become a new kind of person through discipleship? And that brings us to Acts chapter 3. Hannah read part of it this morning. I'm going to read the early part.

If you have your Bible's, Acts chapter 3, verse 1. It says “one day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer at three in the afternoon. Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts.” Everybody say every day. (AUDIENCE – every day) This is going to be an important point later, okay? Every day.

“When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John, and Peter said look at us. So the man looked at them,” gave them his attention, expecting to get what? Some cheddar, right? Get a little dough. Get some money. “Expecting to get something from them.

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Then Peter said," famously, "silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have, I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk. Taking him up by the right hand, he helped him up and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet, and began to walk. Then, he went with them into the temple courts walking and jumping and praising God." "When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him." Let me tell you something that is crazy about this passage, something that almost everybody misses. In the timeline of this story, just a few weeks early, something else really important happened at the gate called Beautiful. It happened on Palm Sunday. Jesus is on a donkey. He's coming into town, everybody's shouting 'Hosanna.' I think everybody thinks He's going to go to see Pilate at the Antonia Fortress, but instead He goes where? To what? To the temple? And if you might remember, the main entrance to the temple is on the southern side. But there's this area where these steps go up on the southern side of the temple. First you go to the Mikvah, you wash, you ascend, and everybody goes into this gate, and that's the main entrance that everybody would go to worship. That gate is the gate Beautiful. That's where the money changers are, that's where this guy is begging for money. So we know the story that Jesus goes into the temple, He goes to where the money changers are at the gate Beautiful, clears them out, right, whips them, does a little bit of shouting, right? They all enter, that's the first thing He does, then what? Then He just starts healing people like crazy. Where? Where's He healing people, guys? Come on. At the gate Beautiful. Okay, so here's Jesus, He's healing all these people at the Beautiful gate. Now the Bible says this guy was there every day. He had been there for years, 30 years, 40 years, been there begging for money every single day. He had to be there. If every day means every day, he was there the day Jesus was healing people, and he didn't get healed. Here's the question: why? Why didn't Jesus heal that guy? Why not? And the answer was it was preordained by God that Peter and John would do it for a purpose. For a purpose. When Jesus was healing on Palm Sunday, He'd not been crucified, there had not been a resurrection; salvation had not been made available to anybody. On the day that Peter and John raised this guy from the dead, the scriptures goes on to say that five thousand people came to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and were saved. So why? It was Peter and John's job. We can say that Jesus did heal him, He just took a few extra weeks. Right? Three people healed that guy. It was Peter, John and Jesus, right? Jesus was in them. Jesus was literally present in the flesh of Peter and John. Well it's easy for us to say of course Jesus was in the flesh in Peter and John. They're special. They're not. They're not more special than you and me. In the same way that the Holy Spirit was in Peter, He's in you, and half of understanding the sermon today is getting that point alone. That you're putting skin on.. Christ is present in you. He's in you right now. So faith is understanding that, and acting like that. Let's believe it, amen? So if you want that kind of life..

Interesting story. Thomas Aquinas, a famous theologian, thousand years ago or whenever it was, walking with the Pope in the Medieval Age, Catholic church is the center of the world, right? It's the most important institution. And the Pope kind of joking, he's just having fun, he doesn't mean anything by it, brings Thomas Aquinas to the treasury and he shows him this room. And he says look at all the.. shows him a dragon hoard of gold and treasure. Look at all of this gold and tapestries and art and artifacts, look at all this wonderful stuff. And the Pope kind of goes ha, ha. Thomas Aquinas, no longer can we say silver and gold have I not, huh? Ha, ha. Right? And Thomas Aquinas looks at him and says, neither can we say rise up and walk. Whoa.

See that is something about money in the church, isn't it. Or about anything in the church. That anyone can get money. Anyone can get a room full of gold. But who can get the power to say rise up and walk? Only those who are filled with the real person of Jesus Christ. He's here in this building right now, did you know that? He's right here. Where? He's not in the air, He's not floating around like some spirit, He's not like in the gas and the air or something weird like that, He's inside of the people here who were baptized and believe. Thank you, Lord, amen?

Okay. So if we want to live a greater things kind of life, here's the two things I believe that every believer ought to do every day to get greater and greater and greater things every day. Number one is so obvious, if you listen to my sermons, you know what I'm going to say: get the word inside of you. The word. The word of God. The Bible. Jesus is the word of God. This is the word of God. The words of the Lord. When the Bible is read, God's voice is heard. When the Bible is read aloud, God's voice is heard audibly. These are the words of life. This is the gospel. This is salvation. This is truth. This is the key. This is wisdom. This is life. This is bread. It starts with faith. Scriptures say we have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that this all surpassing power is from God and not from us.

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Do you see the image? It's a worthless, in those days, a clay pot. It'd be a couple dollars today. Almost worthless. It's not worth a lot, it just serves a very simple purpose. Except, sometimes those clay pots are full of wine. Maybe a special wine that's worth ten years salary. Or sometimes those clay pots are full of a valuable perfume that could be worth the equivalent of a hundred thousand dollars today. And what does the scriptures say? That these earthen vessels, that's us, right, made of clay, just like Adam and Eve, as earthen vessels are full of something. What is it? I just said it. All surpassing power. What does it surpass? All! All surpassing power is in here.

So we got to get it in there. We got to get it in there. And we get it through faith. We know how to get faith. We know how to get faith. We don't get faith through worshipping, but we love worship. We don't get faith through prayer, but we love praying. We don't get faith even by asking for it. We don't get faith by hoping that we'll get faith. We don't get faith by searching for faith. Here's how you get faith: faith comes by what? Hearing. And hearing comes by what? The word of God, which is both Jesus and the Bible. Faith comes by words, by the word of God. God's word is bread. This is bread. Man goes out with his friends to the world's best Italian restaurant, and they serve the world's best bread, and the server comes up and says we have the world's best bread, and it's free. You guys want some bread and olive oil? And this guy says, no, we don't need any bread. The server says what's wrong, are you gluten free? No, no, no, nobody's gluten free, we've already had bread. We had it on Sunday. We all know what bread tastes like. We don't need bread. I had bread when I was five with my grandma. I don't eat bread. Right? You eat bread.. I don't know about your house, but in my house, you eat bread every day. Bread, its bread! You eat it every day. It nourishes you. It tastes good. Get the word of God inside of you.

The Bible says that the universe was created with words. In the beginning was the word, right? We just said that. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. Let me ask you a question. What if that's true?! What if that's true that the universe was created with words? That would be an important thing to know.

Now for the ancients, the idea of the universe being created with words was very hard to fathom, but this is one of those rare occasions where for us, I feel like in our modern world, that's very easy to grasp. We call it coding. Now, we're making all sorts of things with coding. One of the most valuable assets in the world is a coding software called Facebook. All it is is a bunch of code. How much is that worth? Billions and billions of dollars. Video games and movies are using words to create whole universes that even twenty years ago we never thought we would ever see. Wow. Through what? Through words. Words. Coding. Coding. And just like a computer, we take up these words inside of us and it creates our own kind of software and our own kind of universe and our own kind of experience.

Here's a great question: the words in your life are creating a philosophy and a way of thinking that direct your life. Here's the good question: where are my thoughts taking me? That's a good question. Where are my thoughts taking me? Everything you have in life is the result of the person you've become, and the person you've become is the result of your thinking. Where are my thoughts taking me? Get new words. Get new thoughts. Get a new philosophy, if you want a new life.

A few hundred miles up the road, a little town called Palo Alto, Silicon Valley, Apple, Microsoft, Facebook, Google. Even here in Irvine we have many software companies. Blizzard is just up the road here. Here's something that they say at software companies when it comes to coding: garbage in, garbage out. When you're coding, when you're writing, garbage in, garbage out. If you do bad words in, you're going to get bad stuff coming out of that program. It's the same with life. Garbage in, garbage out. Garbage in, garbage out. If you get good words, if you get great words inside of you, you're going to get greatness coming out of your life. If you get good words inside of you, you're going to get greatness coming out of your life.

Famous story – Solomon presented with the throne of God, God is there in all of His glory, and says to Solomon, ask whatever you want and I'll give it to you. And famously, we know what Solomon asked for. Now, everybody always gets this question wrong. What did Solomon ask for? Say it aloud. What did Solomon ask for? Wrong! It's 50% right. He asked for two things – wisdom and knowledge. Two things – wisdom and knowledge. Wisdom and knowledge. It's not the same thing. Wisdom is what happens when you practice stuff, when you do stuff. Wisdom comes with age for a reason. Wisdom comes from experience. Knowledge comes from learning, it comes from reading, and other things like that. Wisdom and knowledge.

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And God says to him, famously, because you didn’t ask for the death of your enemies, you didn’t ask for money, you didn’t ask for honor, you didn’t ask for this and that, I’m going to give you not only wisdom and knowledge unlike anyone’s ever seen, you’re going to get all that other stuff, too. So what does that say? Wisdom and knowledge. Words. The words. New words make a new person. New words get new results. I cannot tell you, I’ve been teaching this for years – the more I teach it, the more I see it’s true. I see it in every person in this church, I know it with all of my friends, I know it with the people I work with. Philosophy, your thinking, your words, it is your future. Your future does not come to you. Your future comes from you. It comes from the person you’ve become, and becoming a new person comes from getting a new idea, a new philosophy.

I told Haven not that long ago, I said if I had to be locked up in prison, I think I could make it if you just gave me two things. You need this thing right here, and I need.. I forgot at both services – a yellow legal pad. I am a huge fan of the yellow legal pad. Why? Because as is famously said, you don’t just learn to write, you write to learn. When you write things out, there’s something about that process that helps you develop as a person.

Here’s what I want you to do, and I gave this idea to our staff. I want to encourage you to begin to write down what kind of life you want. What kind of results do you want to get? Where do you want to go? What do you want to do? Who do you want to become? This is not against Christianity, this is a part of our life. Part of being a student is clearly defining what the end goal is.

Here’s something you can do. Take an hour, get the grandparents to watch the kids, or whatever it is, take a break from work, take at least an hour, go somewhere, turn your phone off, take a legal pad, push through the first ten minutes of boredom, go somewhere really peaceful and write down what you want your life to become like. If you were to rub a lamp, and a genie were to come out, and he said hi, I’m a genie, but I only give you one wish, and here’s the caveat – you only get your wish in five years from now, so you got to ask now, and then five years you’re going to get it. What would you write down? That’s a good question! If you’re full of God’s spirit, if you’re full of God’s life, you’re going to get a good answer to that question. Write it down. And begin to write down what you want to change in your life, and what you want to experience, and what you want your life to look like, and then you’ll have a reason to grow.

Okay. So the first thing for a greater things life, get the word in you. A second thing – get the word out of you! Do the word. Practice the word. Put it into practice. This is hard in the west. We think learning is enough. It’s not. You’ve got to do to really learn.

Peter and John had to ask the man to rise up and walk. Why is it that faith is always associated with action? It’s always, almost always.. faith means that you do something. Peter didn’t believe he could walk on water until he got out of the boat. Why is it that Jesus asks the blind man to wipe the mud from his eyes? Why didn’t He just heal him? Why is it He asked the lepers to go and show themselves to the priest? Why didn’t He just heal them? And the reason is in all of these cases, I believe, maybe He’s not sure they believe. Woman, your faith has made you well, the scripture says. Your faith. And what was her faith? It was reaching out and touching Christ, even though that was embarrassing. You see, it is the action, it is the action that shows. Link your words with action.

Here in the west, we have a major problem referred to as the knowing/doing gap. We think if we learn something, that all of a sudden we know it or we understand it. A guy at a university gets an A in ethics, and then later murders somebody. We see no problem with that. If he got an A in ethics, shouldn’t you not murder people because of what you learned? No, no, he learned it here. That’s enough. He got an A on his exam, you see. Problem. That’s no. No, no, no. Not in this church.

Here’s what learning is. Learning, and I heard this from a friend of mine, is a rate of behavior change. If you can hear everything in this sermon, and you can go out to your friends and you can recite every line of this sermon word for word, but nothing changes in your life, you have not learned anything, you see. Learning means something changed in your action, what you do. Do the word.

We like to do this anyway. When we experience a personal change, we like to associate it with some kind of outward symbol. Think about weddings for a moment. What a crazy thing weddings are for the amount of money and effort that we put into a wedding. Here’s all you have to technically do for a wedding – a man and a woman sit down with a judge and they both sign a piece of paper, and they’re married. That’s it. All they have to do is sign a contract. But nobody does that! Right? As Jim Gaffigan said, we all have to get together and pretend we have a kingdom! Right? And the wife is a princess, right? And so we spend all this money and we have rings and a cake and all sorts of symbolisms and prayer, and it goes all day and it’s this picture of.. oh! Right?

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Now if this is a guy talking about a wedding, it would be a lot more positive. I should be more positive, but I love weddings.

Or, I have four sisters, and a mom, and a step mom.. I have a lot of women in my life, and I noticed a long time ago, I think all four of my sisters are here. I should probably not say this, but it's too late. I noticed that women, when they go through a change in life, they always change their hair. My sister comes home and her hair is short and it's a different color, I'm like oh my gosh, what happened to her? Oh no! Is this a good one or a bad one?

But that's how we are as human beings. We like to symbolize a change in our life with some kind of outside action; with some kind of something. And I think that's fine. Sometimes it's actually good to burn the ships. Sometimes it's good to just burn the ships to the ground and say I'm not going back. Symbolically, literally to say I'm just not going back, I have decided on this road and that's what I'm going to do. I'm going to do, do, do.

That's what Elisha did. When Elijah called Elisha, what does he do? He takes all of his wealth, which is all of his cattle, and his plow, and what's he do? He slaughters every steer, or ox I think it was, slaughters every ox, chops up all of his equipment which was made of wood, has a huge barbeque, and serves the meat to all of his neighbors. What's he saying? I'm not coming back. I have nothing to come back to. You see? I'm taking action. I'm going to follow the prophet and I'm going to become a new guy, a new creation.

So all I'm saying, my friend, is take action. Execute. Execute. Do something. Just go for it. Do something different in your life. Many of you who are watching on YouTube or on television, you grew up in the 80's as I did. If you're watching YouTube, please subscribe. I want to get that up to a hundred grand. That's my dream.

If you grew up in the 80's, I still remember 1987 opening this new beautiful box I got for Christmas at my Grandpa Pursley's house and it was called a Nintendo entertainment system. And I remember sitting with my grandpa, reading through this nine page manual line by line. Super Mario Brothers, and reading through the manual, to jump you press A, to do, you go forward, right. And I still remember, then you put the game in, and it's like.. you start the game and you're like okay, to jump like that was the last video game manual I've ever read in my life. Right?

Here's how you learn how to play a video game. You stick the game in and you play it. It reveals itself. It reveals itself. Here's when you read the manual – you read the manual when you get stuck. So you do, and then you come back to the manual to fix what's wrong.

Let me say it another way – imagine you're about to get a very dangerous surgery, and you get to pick between two doctors. The first doctor comes in, he says Mr. Schuller, congratulations, this is a very dangerous surgery. You're in good hands. I went to Harvard. Not only did I go to Harvard, I graduated with straight A's and honors, and this surgery, I have read every book on this surgery. I've taught courses on this surgery. I know it all. One problem though, I've never done a surgery before. But it's going to be easy, I know everything there is to do about this surgery, it will go great. Okay?

Next guy comes in, looks like an Italian barber. Right? Has some bread on his shoulder. That's a hyperlink to the beginning of the sermon. Bread on his shoulder, brushes it off, says Mr. Schuller! I don't know. He goes, Mr. Schuller, says Mr. Schuller, this guy went to a junior college, not Harvard, and his medical degree is from somewhere in the Caribbean, and you're not sure it's real, right? But he says to you, Mr. Schuller, this surgery is very dangerous, I can tell you, but I've performed it 2000 times. And in the last 1800 times, I've not lost a single patient. Who are you going to pick? Who cares about Harvard, right? I want the Italian barber, right? You want the guy that's done it. You want the guy that's doing it. You want experience to do it.

We forget this in the West. You got to do it. You got to take action. Now, in a perfect world, you want both, right? Knowledge and wisdom. But if you had to choose, choose wisdom. Choose the guy that's doing it. Choose experience. Okay.

Never forget that God's commands to us are for our benefit. He gives us His commands because He loves us. The fourth command in the Ten Commandments, for those of you who are super students, who knows the fourth of the Ten Commandments? You all know it. I'll say it. I'll start it and then you'll know the rest. It goes like this: Honor the Sabbath and keep it holy. Now that's not the end of the commandment. Here is the full commandment: Thou shalt work six days and on the seventh day you shall rest. In the modern world when we hear this command we say, bummer. And we say that is not a good command. Right?

But here's why God had to give them that command, is because they loved their work. If you loved your work, you need to be ordered to stop one day a week.

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And by the way, the command isn't to just stop, it is to work six days a week. Why? Because when we work, work is a good word. It means we're doing something with our hands. It means we're making something. It means we're adding value. Adding value to the family. Adding value to the community. Adding value to the country, adding value to the church, adding value to the market. When we make things with our hands, we're adding value. And the work works on you more than you work on it. Work maketh a man. It does.

And that's why this commandment is a blessing to us. And the reason it sounds like a curse to a lot of people today is because when we're working, we're not really working. When we're resting, we're not really resting. When you're at work, you're kind of like, you get there on time only because you have to, and then you're kind of like half into it, and you're kind of like checking your phone, and you're kind of like talking to people at the water deal, and maybe you leave a little bit early, and you're not into it. So you're not really working. You're not really creating value.

And then when you go to rest, you're not really resting. You're kind of like on your phone for hours, and then you're watching like more TV than you thought you would. You kind of hope to just watch like one show, but then you watched the whole thing on Netflix, and it's not very good, and you're like, where's my Saturday gone, right? So, you're not really resting. If we really work, and we really rest, we'll be in God's rhythm. His easy rhythm of grace, and we'll be blessed. So, when you work, work. When you rest, rest.

Here's a good phrase: whatever you do, do it with all your might. Do it with all your might. If you're going to do something, do it. Make it great. Do the best you can. Give it all you've got. And this is true, especially of doing the word. I saw somebody earlier in the alcove praying for someone. Thank you, Lord that we have a church that prays for one another. Thank you, Lord.

Here's what the world has to offer for somebody that's going through a hard time: sympathy. Here's what you have to offer because you put skin on God: prayer. Yes, we want to empathize with people, but man, can I tell you, I've prayed for atheists in every religion and every type of person. I always ask people, not always, I like to ask people to pray with them, but when I do, people are touched.

I know I probably said this a couple weeks ago, but if somebody's going through a rough time, pray with them. Say, hey, can I pray with you? If it sounds weird, if it seems like it's awkward for you to say to someone, can I pray with you, you're the perfect person to do it. If it doesn't sound weird, then you might need to dial back a little bit. But for those of you who, it feels a little weird, that's good, that means you understand social norms. Pray for the person. Pray for people. Share your faith with people. Invite people to church. Give to people in need. Do the word. Do the word. Believe that God will heal people when you pray for them. Don't pray faithless prayers. Pray prayers full of faith. And become all that you can be. And do all that you can do for God's kingdom.

Don't get through things. Get from things. Don't get through this week. Get from this week. Get from every meal. Get from every moment with the people you love. Get from every experience. Don't get through things. Don't get through the church service. Get from the service. Don't get through work. Get from work. Don't get through the day. Get from the day. There's so much that's available to you and to me.

I know when we're done here, when we're done with this life and this world, we want to go before God's throne and we want to hear those words, well done, good and faithful servant. Do all that you can do so that you know that will happen for you. It will. I believe it.

Last thing I want to say, I just want to encourage you to live at peace with God. There's no reason to not be at peace with God. Jesus Christ laid His life down on the cross and was raised from the dead that we could be saved. This is His universe. He makes the rules. We break the rules. And we need to be at peace with Him. There's no reason to not receive that free gift. Won't you make a decision to follow Jesus Christ? Do that and you will be saved.

Would you stand with me? Let's pray together: Father, we're going to believe that today is going to be a new day. We're believing that we can be a new creation in you. Father, we believe in the words that you say, that we can do more than you did, that you command us to do it. We pray that when we pray for the sick, they'd be healed. That when we share our words with others, they'd be full of faith and they'd transform hearts and minds. We ask that we can touch more lives. We ask that we can be the parents we need to be, the grandparents we need to be, the friends the world needs, the citizens our country needs.

Lord, help us to be a new creation, to add value, to make more, to do more. Help us when we work to add real value, help us when we rest to really rest and receive from you.

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We thank you, Lord that you've given us the words of life, that you've given us your Son Jesus, that the gates of heaven are open to us. That abundance is made available to us. That we don't serve a cup full God, we serve a cup running over God. We thank you that your Holy Spirit is here. We thank you that you can heal any sickness. We thank you that you can forgive any sin. We thank you that you can bring together any family. We thank you that you can repair any relationship. We trust in you, and we thank you, God, and we praise your name. Lord, we thank you. We thank you, God. We thank you that you're here, and we thank you that you're in us, and we love you. It's in Jesus name, all God's people said, Amen.