

Hour of Power vom 06.08.2017

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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.

HS: Good morning. We are so honored to have you here today. It's such a joy. Thank you for being here or being tuned in with us. It is not an accident that you are here this morning and the Lord has a word for you. He wants to speak to you. His spirit is here, his spirit is in you, and we are excited to have you here. Would you turn around and shake the hands of the person next to you and say God loves you and so do I.

BS: Father, we thank you that you have called us here. All of us are here because you want us here. So we pray, Lord, that you would help us to open our heart, open our minds, our spiritual ears to hear what you have to say. Lord, we know that you love us, you want the best for us, you haven't given up on us, you believe in us and you want to see us be world changers. So Lord, we come with faith, asking for your help, asking for your breakthrough in our challenges, asking for the forgiveness of sin. Help us, Lord, we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

SCRIPTURE – Luke 6:22-23, 26-28 - HS

You may be seated. In preparation for Bobby's message, hear the words of our Lord from Luke 6:

Blessed are you when people hate you. When they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil because of the Son of man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. But to you who are listening I say love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you.

May we be people who put faith in what God says about us above what people say about us.

INTERVIEW – Bobby Schuller (BS) with Amick Byram (AB)

BS: My guest today is Amick Byram. He's a successful solo recording artist, as well as a two time Grammy nominee, and an Emmy nominated performer. Amick sang the role of Moses in the animated feature film "Prince of Egypt" and hundreds of other films, television programs, and commercials, and on Broadway cast albums. Amick is the president of Oodles Entertainment, a company focusing on producing films, animation and music for the whole family and you are also a friend of my grandfather's, is that right?

AB: Yes I am, proudly so.

BS: So Amick, we're so glad you're here today. You're going to be singing for us in a minute, but I wanted to just talk to you a little bit about your life as an entertainer. I mean first of all, you were in Star Trek.

AB: That's right.

BS: Pretty cool. In the Star Trek Next Generation.

AB: Anybody bring any trading cards?

BS: Yes, that's great. So I mean you've done some pretty cool things in your career as an entertainer, but you're pretty open about your faith and it's an important part of your life, even in the world of entertainment, music, acting and all that. Talk about that a little bit.

AB: Well I was raised in a Christian home. My dad's a pastor. And I knew all along that God had given me some gifts, and I also knew that I was to use those gifts for his glory. And whether those gifts are used for his glory in the church or in the general marketplace, I felt called that my ministry was supposed to be kind of in show business, well in show business.

BS: Yes.

AB: And so I ventured out here from Oklahoma years ago and just trusted the Lord and the Lord has been very, very gracious to me and has allowed me to have somewhat of an impact in multiple spheres of the entertainment business. But I give God all the praise and all the glory because even though he's given me some gifts, it is always God who offers the opportunities and actually just drops things in your lap as a possibility.

BS: Is that kind of how your career sort of took off? I mean did it just feel like God was dropping these things in your lap?

AB: Well I mean there was a lot of work. There's always a lot of work and a lot of disappointments, too, along the way. But I really felt all along that God had really called me in this business. And slowly but surely, I started to get work and have some sort of an impact in the recording business and as an actor. And so I think the key thing is really obviously just trusting the Lord constantly. And in this business it's hard because you're dealing with gifts and talents and egos. It's a tough business but trusting the Lord makes all the difference in the world.

BS: And of course like you said, in your industry it can be a challenge when you're kind of open about your faith and you won't make certain compromises, because of whatever principles, and it's something everybody deals with, right? Unless you're in ministry, right? I mean most people who are working day to day, very often their Christian faith, if you're open about what you believe or your boss wants you to bend certain rules and you're not willing to do it, it can actually be really hard on your career.

AB: It can be, and I've experienced that. I've experienced situations where I've had to turn down work for just conscience reasons, conscience that is hopefully driven by God's purposes. And at the time, it's difficult because work is hard to get. But when I did, I always found that the Lord blessed that decision even though it was a struggle to make that decision. But the way that you have an opportunity really to minister to people is oftentimes by the excellence that you have, and that takes a lot of training, and a lot of commitment and hard work. But its excellence that actually opens the door for people to hear the gospel, particularly in that business because that's what's highly regarded and highly respected. And if you have excellence at what you do, it gives you a platform and it gives you an opportunity to share your faith.

BS: And today I'm talking about really the importance of not giving too much weight to what people say about you like whether it's good or bad. And that's hard to do, especially in entertainment, isn't it. I mean do you have any advice for that? Obviously you have some inner strength to be able to navigate through criticism, through slander or through misunderstandings about who you are as a person. I mean everybody's going to struggle with that, but what kind of advice can you give us when like in daily life when you get a bad email or something like that. I mean what have you learned in this industry?

AB: I think the best advice is go back to what your life is founded upon. If your life is founded upon your salvation in Jesus Christ, always go to that rock, always go to that foundation even though you have been mistreated, even though you have been denied because of your faith always go to that foundation. And that's probably the best advice. I mean it certainly helps and it allows God the opportunity to do something else that you did not anticipate because of your struggle.

BS: And of course even in the midst of your entertainment, you've been really creative. Tell us about the Oodles World. What is that?

AB: Well I started out in the business singing and acting and I'm still doing all those things, but I also got a business degree. And so I was kind of like I have this right brain/left brain thing going all the time. I've always been, even since a small boy, just curious to know why things work and how they work.

And so 15/20 years ago I started being presented opportunities to do things that were outside of or at least in concert with performing and that has led to some producing. I produced some theater in New York. I've produced recordings. I have done that kind of stuff that's little more business oriented. And so now about five years ago, I was asked to be the president of Oodles World, which is a company that produces faith and family products for the marketplace, and we're now opening a branch called Oodles Entertainment. And we're opening an office here in Los Angeles, and we're going to be producing movies and television shows, which I'm thrilled about. That's the world I've been living in my whole career and it's something I know very well. And we're very, very excited about our properties and they will be redemptive products for the faith and family marketplace with a redemptive thread in them.

BS: Great. Well Amick, we're so glad that you're here with us today. And we're going to get a chance to hear from Amick today. So you're going to be singing for us this morning?

AB: Yes, I am.

BS: We can actually see how fantastic a singer he is.

AB: Oh, go on.

BS: Let's give him a hand and welcome him again. Thank you so much, Amick.

AB: Thanks, Robert.

BS: God loves you.

COME VISIT/TWITTER/DECLARATION – BS

Good morning, how are you? It's a good day to be at church. All right. Thank you for joining us today. If you're at home watching, we just want to say thank you, that we love you, we believe in you, and you should get on down to Shepherd's Grove, today! It's not too late. If you've got kids, bring 'em, we want to teach them the things of God. If you don't have kids, come anyway, we'll teach YOU the things of God, right? I mean whatever. Whoever you are, we want you to know we love you here. We just want you to come as you are and Shepherd's Grove is a great place to plug into a church. Also, if you're on Twitter, follow me on Twitter and I respond to everyone at least once. It's a way for me to get a touch point with everyone.

All right, would you stand with me? We're going to say our confession this morning. Hold your hands out like this. Take a deep breath, Joslyn, right? All right. And we're going to say very slowly, here we go: 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 the world. Amen. You may be seated.

MESSAGE – BOBBY SCHULLER "You Are Not What People Say About You, But God Will Say Great Things"

Today I just want to begin by talking to you. If you just got a bad email or a text that really got you down, maybe you didn't sleep last night, maybe somebody said something at work that wasn't appropriate. If you find yourself always caught in a trap of pleasing other people and caring deeply about what other people think about you, perhaps egotism is a struggle for you, that you're always focused on yourself. Or maybe, you have lots of anxiety about going to a party or being in a group of people because what they might think of you. If that's you, today's sermon is for you. And by the way, you're just a human being, welcome to the club. I mean all of us have these kinds of experiences where we are worried and bothered daily by what people say about us. And so today we're talking about one simple fact that although people talk, people say things, people write things, sometimes very publicly, God is saying things, too, and you know what? God is saying some pretty great things about you. God is saying that you are his beloved. God still speaks today, and he speaks about you and he says great things, like he loves you. God loves you and I love you and you need to know today that although people will say stuff, the most important thing that's being said about you is what is said by God and that is that you are his beloved sons and daughters. And that although we make mistakes, and although none of us are perfect, and although we don't we don't always get everything right, and although people will criticize us and sometimes people say horrible things and they're the truth! Even then, there is something deeper and truer than anything that anyone says about you and it is very simply this: that you're loved, that you're blessed, that God takes great pleasure in you. Not because, by the way, not because you did anything, not because you have anything, not because you do everything the right way, he just loves you cause you're his sons and daughters, and that's very good news, isn't it.

You see God is faithful. Unlike people, God is faithful. He is not on an emotional roller coaster when it comes to his opinion of you. If you're here today, I just want to reiterate you are loved.

Today we're continuing a sermon series on what it means to daily walk in the life of the beloved; when we train our hearts and minds to be free from the addiction of approval, and free from reputation management. You want to get there? Then today is the day because of the three things we talk about, what I have, what I do, and what people say about me, I think the most powerful of the three is what people say about you. Losing something can keep you up late at night. Messing up on something can keep you up late at night. But when you hear somebody was talking about you - that will really keep you up late at night. Can I get an amen? There is something about hearing that somebody misunderstood, or published online, or whatever, when we read the things, especially

negative things that people say about us, it keeps us up at night. We think about something that somebody said to us at work, or that text or email we got, we think over and over in our heads about how we should respond, or what people think about us. It keeps us up.

And so what people say about us is one of the sources of our greatest worry. It's one of the things that plagues us most in our walk with God.

Many people have low self worth, a low sense of dignity, and although many preachers like to say that well who cares about dignity, who cares about self worth, and who cares about self esteem, I'm here to tell you that although those are modern words, scripture really does talk about the importance of understanding God's love for us, of understanding our value because being dignified in God's love, being treasured by God is the thing that gives us the power to do what is right. If we have no dignity, if we have no self worth, it is so easy to fall into darkness and to treat others the same way. Amen?

So people speak, right? People say stuff. People say good things. People say bad things. People tell the truth. People bend the truth and even lie. People misunderstand. People speak without first listening. So people talk, and very often we're like a cork in the sea, right? Just floating upon what people think about us. But you know what? God speaks, too. And as human beings we will always put our faith in somebody's words. And my question for you this morning: in whose words will you put your faith in. There we go. In whose words will you put your faith?

And that's an important thing, right? Because how can you put your faith in God's word if you don't know God's word? And this is a major problem today is that many of us; we spend a lot of time reading the word of the world. We spend a lot of time on Facebook. We spend a lot of time in newspapers. We spend a lot of time reading blogs. These are words and ideas printed, and they're important and learning is good, but we spend most of our time reading that word, but what about the scriptures? As the years go by, I see fewer and fewer Christians reading the scriptures, studying and meditating on the scriptures, debating, discussing or writing about the word of God. And I find even fewer Christians that understand what it means to hear God's voice, that make time to listen to God's voice. Most of us spend 99% of our time listening to the words of the world, that is what people say about us, what's printed in the media, and about if we're really good, one to five percent of our time studying the scripture and listening to God's voice.

So let me ask you again. Not whose voice are you supposed to put faith in, but in whose voice are you actually putting your faith? Because what you do is a reflection of what you believe. Where do you put your faith? Where do you put your trust? Is it in God's word, or is it in the words of people? And see the reason I challenge you in this way is that many of us are caught like leaves in the wind pushed around every which way. Always trying to manage what people think about us and we find ourselves lost. Put your faith in the voice of God and in the word of God that says you are loved and there is nothing that can separate you from this love in Christ Jesus.

Words are powerful. This is a deeply Christian idea – words are powerful. Words form everything. Everything. Everything exists because somebody first spoke it into being. This building exists because somebody said let's put a building there. And then a group of people said let's make the building look like this. And before there was a drawing and before a brick was laid, people spoke it into being, am I right? Wars exist because of words. One country says something to another country, or one contract is made to another country and war breaks out because somebody speaks war, right? Family exists because a man and a woman get together and make vows. Or somebody decides to be together and say let's form a family. Everything that we have is the result of people first speaking it into being. And we pretend as though words don't affect us. They do. Words build and words destroy. Words encourage and words rob people of dignity. I'm convinced that people that take their own lives very often do it as a result of words. Words kill. Words bring life.

So the words that we speak and the words that we hear are so, so important. And the logos, and I think the scriptures says the logos, the word of God is what made the whole universe. That God spoke it into being and so it was. And so words can have power over you, or have no power over you. And what is it the thing that makes it powerful is whether or not you give ear. If you listen to words, they will have power, but if you can find a way to be free from listening to many of the words that are spoken over you, then you will find freedom and power. Can I get an amen?

So when Jesus, for example, goes into ministry, the first word that he hears before he does anything is "you are my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Jesus carries the voice of God in his heart. And then when he goes into the wilderness and he's tempted by the devil, how does he rebuke the devil? Do you remember? With the word of God, with the scriptures. Every time the devil says

something to Jesus he responds: "it is written." So Jesus puts faith both in the spoken word of God, that is the word he heard, and the written word of God, that is the bible.

And so built into Jesus' life is both an understanding of scripture and an understanding of God's voice, that is the source of Christ' power. So here's the problem: many of us live our lives and we say I'm not going to listen to the bad stuff, but we say also I'm really going to listen to the good stuff. And here's a problem is that it goes both ways. That is you can't put faith in the bad things that people say about you, but there's this weird thing, too, that you can't put faith always in the good things people say about you. You have to put your faith in what God says. The reason it's dangerous to put your faith in the good things that people say always is then you build your life around wanting to maintain those things. Have you ever felt that way? You had somebody in your life, and man they just thought the best thing about you, but all of a sudden you felt like you couldn't be yourself around them; like you're wearing a mask. Like there's this hidden part of your life. Like I hope they never find out about these skeletons in my closet.

Look, when people say bad things about you, it's always going to hurt. When people say good things about you, it's always going to feel good, but there is a way to sort of bring the volume down. There's a way to diminish the power of those words in your life, and that is to put faith in the word of God and to trust in the things that he says.

Listen to what Jesus says. In Luke chapter 6, he says, "Blessed are you when people hate you. When they exclude you and insult you, and reject your name as evil because of the son of man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy because great is your reward in heaven for that is how their ancestors treated the prophets." You hear that?

And then he says, and if you go down to verse 26, "Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. But to you who are listening I say love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you." Jesus says essentially that when everybody's saying good stuff about you, there ought to be an alarm that goes off. And when everybody is saying bad stuff about you that might mean you're doing something really good in the world. Isn't that weird? Jesus' teaching for believers, for those who are truly walking in faith is that if everybody is saying something good about you, there's probably something wrong.

That means very often we are addicted to what people say about us. And so like chameleons, we change who we are depending on who we're with so that no matter who we're with, they say good things about us. Well what happens if those people all get in the same room? And one person thinks you're a Democrat and the other thinks you're Republican. Right? I mean these are the things that we do. We talk about political ideas, religious ideas, we bend our principles, we bend who we are, we shape our color so that people will like what they're seeing. This is a part of our need for approval from others and it will make you a slave! It will keep you on the roller coaster of always wondering what do people think about me. Do they still like me? And that is just not the way that we should live our lives.

We should live our lives living for one opinion. We should live our lives for the opinion of God. And if we do that, man so many things will go right in your life. You see here's the thing: you can't just stop listening to what people say, can you. You have to listen to something. That's how people are. And the more we listen to God's word, the more we listen to the voice of the beloved, the less we become trapped by the opinions of others, and it's very good news.

That's why we should train into the scriptures and train into hearing what God says about us. That you're love, that you're wanted, that you're called to a purpose, that there's nothing anyone can do, including you that can separate you from God's love. That God is faithful when we are faithless. That God loves you, not because you did anything, he just loves you just cause, for the same reason fathers and mothers love their children.

Soren Kierkegaard, I think it was Kierkegaard, I couldn't figure it out but there are actually six different authors who took credit for this. I'm going to go with Kierkegaard, because he's my favorite. He said "God has made man in his own image and we have returned the favor." The idea behind what Kierkegaard is saying here is that God made us in his image, but we often think that God is like us. We think God's love is fickle. We think God's love is imperfect and broken. We think God's love is founded on the same principles that we found our love, and it's not. God's love is perfect and eternal. It's un-losable. Isn't that good news? And you can have faith in it. And you can have faith that you are loved and you are God's beloved child.

There are three reasons, practical reasons why we ought to be the kind of people who listen to the voice of the beloved and don't put our faith in the words of the world. You ready for them? They're really good.

The first one is this. The first reason we got to listen to the voice of the beloved and stop listening to the voice of others is number one: so that you don't quit doing good. Look, if you are a do gooder, if you are a holy rolling do gooder that wants to see good done in the world, people are going to hate you. It's just how it is. Can you think of one world changer, one person that's doing something good in the world today that isn't hated by a large group of people? The more public your do goodness is, the more people are going to hate you. That's just how it is. And so if you're called to do something great with your life, even if it's at your workplace or in your family, as you do good, people are going to say things about you, they're going to lie about you, they're going to slander you, and it's just a part of doing what's right.

For some people, its light being shined in the darkness, for other people, its jealousy, for other people its insecurity. In the end, let it go because as you do good, if you tune your heart to the voice of God that says I'm proud of you, keep going, do what is right, stand for your principles, then you just won't worry as much about what people will say and it will give you the energy and the power to carry on on what God is calling you to do in the world. Whether it's encouraging somebody that's unpopular in your workplace, or caring for the homeless, or sharing your faith with another, when you do good, people are going to take notice and the more good you do, the more people will criticize you.

I'll never forget, there was this kid who was wearing this shirt and I can't say what it actually said. I'm going to morph it a little bit because it was not only profound but it was also profane. It said: "if you ain't got haters, you ain't doing.." and we'll say "nothing." But you know the word. And I saw the shirt and I thought that's funny, and then I just kept walking and I'm like that is a profane way to say what Jesus said in Luke 6. If you ain't got haters, you ain't doing nothin'! That people who are doing something in the world will have people who criticize them, who bring them down. In this world, there are builders and there are breakers, and if you are a builder, people will try and break you. That's just how it is. Don't be a critic, don't be one of those people who stands in the back and makes fun of others, be the kind of person who will make the changes that you want to see. Don't criticize other Christians, be the Christian that you're criticizing of other Christians. Does that make sense? Stop criticizing Christians and saying that they're hypocrites. Of course they're hypocrites. All of us make mistakes, right? Be the kind of believer that you want to see in the world, or as Gandhi said, right, be the change you want to see in the world.

So don't quit in doing good. If you ain't got haters, you ain't doing nothing. And by the way, if you are a leader, your ability to make a difference; your ability to lead is equal to your threshold for pain. If you can't handle criticism, if you can't handle lies, if you're up all night thinking about what somebody you don't care about said about you, you're not going to make it very far as a leader. You need to find your strength in God's power, God's love and God's calling. Amen?

The number two reason we need to put our focus on the love of God and on the voice of God, and not on the voices and words of others, is so that you don't take offense when people do challenge you and give you wisdom. See that's the other side of the coin, isn't it. Very often we get so angry when people criticize us is that when people love us and actually have wisdom for us and have ways that we can be better or do better, we can't give ear to it at all because we're so offended by it. And we're so hurt by it, and so people feel like they have to walk on eggshells around us. Well, you're not going to grow much as a believer if everyone has to walk on eggshells around you.

The scriptures say that a wise man loves criticism. Look at what Proverbs says. Proverbs 9 says, "Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you. Rebuke a wise man and he will love you." That's good, isn't it. "Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still. Teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning." Look – wise men and wise women love rebuke. Wise men and wise women love criticism because even if there's animosity in the criticism, they know they can find some kind of a truth in them.

If you find your personal identity in God's love and opinion of you, you're able to sift through all of the minutia of people's criticism and actually learn a lot and that's a real treasure. Ecclesiastes says, "It's better to be criticized by a wise man than to be praised by a fool." Can I get an amen? There is something good about that, and if you want to be the kind of person that a wise man can give you advice, a mentor can come to you and hold your hand and correct you and lead you and help you, you've got to find your identity in God's love and know that when people are helping you or giving

you advice or rebuking you, they're not rejecting you, they're helping you sometimes, cause they love you. And you'll be able to receive it the way God wants you to receive it.

There was this great story and if you don't have this, this is our study guide. I write a study guide for every series, so here in the church, if you're in a small group you can use these. There's this great prayer in chapter three, when we get to this sermon, about Bishop Nikolai who was a bishop in the Orthodox Church that was arrested and put in a concentration camp. And he writes this beautiful prayer called bless my enemies, Lord. And it's this prayer where he says, "Lord, bless my enemies and do not curse them," he said because it's my enemies who keep me from trying to attain all of the worldly things. See my enemies, I notice in the end my enemies always push me towards you, God, towards your love, towards your compassion. And so he says bless my enemies.

The number three reason that we need to be rooted in God's love. Number one is so we don't quit in doing good. Number two is so that we can hear the wisdom of others without being offended. And number three is you can change the world if you don't care who gets the credit. Isn't that another part of when we talk about being addicted to the good things people say about us? We put all this work into something, right? I worked so hard on making this thing or doing this thing and nobody noticed, and then we enter into a pity party. Yes, Harry Truman said it's amazing the things you can accomplish in this world if you do not care who gets the credit. So much of building our reputation around what people say and what people think about us is our desire for acclaim, for trophies, to go to bed at night and go yes, people see what I'm doing and its cool and its great and they love me. So much of what we're talking about in this series is just learning to let go of all of that stuff. To do what is good because you love what is good, and to reject what is evil because you hate what is evil. To become the kind of person that all you want in this world is what is right. And if we are addicted to what people say about us, whether it's good or bad, we cannot walk in that kind of power.

Friends, I want you to know this week, this month, somebody in line, or someone in traffic, or someone from your work, or someone in your family is going to say something bad about you. And that is going to be a temptation to lose all your joy for at least six hours. This will happen to you. Don't just wait till it happens. Be prepared. Be the kind of person that learns to abide in the word of God and the voice of God that says you're loved. Your life matters. Don't let yourself be brought down by petty criticisms, by critiques, by foolish things that people say offhandedly without considering what it means to you or how hurtful it is. Let it go. Let go of the opinions of others and hold onto the opinions of God who says you are loved. That's what the scripture says. Neither height, nor depth, nothing in all of creation can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus, and that's very, very good news. Amen.

Let's pray: Father in heaven, we want to hear your voice. Many people listening say I can't hear God's voice. You can, friends. Listen with spiritual ears. Father, we want to hear your voice. Can you talk louder to us so that we know your voice, the good voice that says you are my beloved. Lord, it's so hard not to walk in the opinions of others. Help us to be free from that. Help us to walk in your love in everything we do. Lord, we pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

BENEDICTION - BS

Thank you so much for being here today, guys. We hope you leave refreshed, renewed and restored. Friends, thank you so much for being here and know God is going to do great things in your life this week if you just live by faith and listen to his words.

And now the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you peace in your coming in, in your going out, in your lying down and in your rising up, in your labor, in your leisure, in your laughter and in your tears until you come to stand before Jesus in that day in which there is no sunset and no dawning, amen.