

Hour of Power Deutschland
Steinerne Furt 78
86167 Augsburg

Telefon: 08 21 / 420 96 96
Telefax: 08 21 / 420 96 97

E-Mail: info@hourofpower.de
www.hourofpower.de

Baden-Württembergische Bank
BLZ: 600 501 01
Konto: 28 94 829

IBAN:
DE43600501010002894829

BIC:
SOLADEST600

Büro Schweiz:

Hour of Power Schweiz
Seestr. 11
8594 Güttingen
Tel.: 071 690 07 81
info@hourofpower-schweiz.ch
www.hourofpower-schweiz.ch

Spendenkonto:

PostFinance AG, 3030 Bern
Konto: 61-18359-6
IBAN:
CH1609000000610183596

Hour of Power - 16.01.2022

WELCOME – Bobby & Hannah Schuller

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

HS: Greetings friends and church family. We are delighted to have you here. You know, you are so valuable to God, and no one, including yourself, has the right to demean what God esteems. You are loved.

BS: That's right. God has given you spiritual power to do great things in your life. Our encouragement, in fact, for you today is going to be to do those great things for God and to not waste the time that God's given you on this earth. Let's begin with a word of prayer and then we're going to enter into our worship service. Father, we thank you so much for all that you've given to us. We trust that your Holy Spirit is on the move doing good in our lives and the lives of people that we love. We ask, Father, that we could come boldly before your throne today, and ask you for whatever it is we need. Father, we love you and it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.

HS: Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Acts 7,54-60 - Hannah

In preparation for the message, Acts 7:54: When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Look, he said, I see heaven open and the son of man standing at the right hand of God. At this, they covered their ears and yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragging him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Then he fell on his knees and cried out, Lord, do not hold this sin against them. When he had said this, he fell asleep. Church family, like Stephen may we never waste our life but always live with the end in mind. Amen.

INTERVIEW – Lee Strobel (LS) with Bobby Schuller (BS)

Lee Strobel is a former investigative journalist who, for many years, professed atheism while searching for evidence of Jesus. Upon finding the answers he was looking for, he became a Christian and subsequently wrote the best-selling book, The Case for Christ. Since then, he has authored dozens more books and has also become a teaching pastor and professor who truly wants the world to know the Lord. His new book, A Case for Heaven: A Journalist Investigates Evidence for Life after Death, looks at what we can expect when we leave this earth.

BS: Lee, hi, welcome.

LS: Hi, my friend, how you doing, Bobby? Good to see you.

BS: I'm great. It's so good to see you again. For those who don't know your story, it's an amazing one. Can you begin by sharing with us your journey of faith?

LS: Sure. I was an atheist for much of my life. My background is in journalism and law, so I tend to be a very logical, rational person. I didn't think that faith was rational, and so I rejected it. I married an agnostic and she one day came to faith in Jesus, and I thought it was the worst news I could ever get.

Dying with a Purpose

And so I decided to use my journalism training and legal training and investigate, is there any credibility to Christianity or any other world religion.

I spent two years doing that until ultimately I came to the conclusion that based on the historical data, I was convinced that Jesus not only claimed to be the Son of God, but He backed up that claim by returning from the dead. And that's when I bent my knee to Jesus, received forgiveness for my sins and God took me, has taken me since then on a great adventure all around the world telling people the good news about who He is.

BS: That's awesome. I remember you saying that you wanted to save your wife from a cult.

LS: Yes, that's right.

BS: You worked at the Chicago Tribune, right? At the time?

LS: That's right. I was legal editor at the Chicago Tribune.

BS: Yes, that's wonderful. So I think so many millions of people have loved your book, *The Case for Christ*. I know my daughter loved the movie. She was telling me that earlier about how much of an impact it had on her life, and that's why I'm excited about your new book coming out, *The Case for Heaven*.

LS: Yes, exactly. Several years ago, I almost died. My wife found me unconscious on the bedroom floor and when I woke up in the emergency room, the doctor looked at me and said you're one step away from a coma, two steps away from dying. And so I lingered there on the edge of death for quite a while and sort of hovering between a life and the afterlife. And so when you have an experience like that, it's very clarifying. The only thing that is really important in moments like that is what happens after you close your eyes for the last time in this world. I survived that incident, but it really got me thinking – how do I know that the Bible's teachings about the afterlife are true? What does science say about it? What do history and theology and philosophy say about it. And that led me on an investigation that's resulted in my book *The Case for Heaven*.

BS: I've certainly heard philosophical arguments and historical arguments, but I have not heard scientific arguments for a case for heaven. That point really stood out to me just as you were speaking. What scientific evidence is there for an afterlife or for heaven?

LS: There have been a thousand scholarly studies that have been done on the phenomenon of near-death experiences. Now I was kind of skeptical about those, but a couple of things convinced me that they really do indicate that our spirit, our consciousness survives our physical death. And the one thing that I learned is that we have corroboration of many of these experiences. For instance, there was a woman named Maria who died, clinically dead. Her spirit floated out of her body, she watched the resuscitation efforts there in the emergency room. Her spirit floated through the hospital to the roof, and when she came back into her body, she said oh by the way, there's a man's tennis shoe on the third story ledge on the roof of the hospital, and it's a blue shoe, its left footed, it's got a little scuff mark over the toe and the shoelace is tucked under the heel. And they went up and looked and sure enough, it was there. That's just one of many examples of corroboration that we have that our spirit does survive the physical death of our body. In fact one researcher studied about a hundred different examples where people have had verifiable observations that they have made while they were out of their body, and 92% of those observations were absolutely accurate, another 6% were almost completely accurate, so like 98% accuracy of people seeing things that they otherwise could not have seen. In fact we have records of several blind people who were blind since birth, and when they had this near-death experience, they can see and then when they come back in their bodies, they've lost their eyesight again.

BS: You mean it's like they're blind..

LS: I think the corroborating..

BS: ..you mean like a blind person died.. you mean like a blind person dies and then they can like see their hospital room or see themselves for the first time?

LS: They actually see people who preceded them in death, yes.

BS: Wow.

LS: Now the other thing that I found fascinating was research by John Burke shows that even though there's a lot of differentiation in the peripheral details of these near-death experiences, the core experiences that people have are consistent with Christian theology. That was a real revelation for me and that was important, I think.

BS: Let's talk about that because a lot of people who are watching already believe in heaven, but it's interesting as a pastor, I've had the honor of being with many people when they died, either right when they took their last breath, or within the last few days to just spend some time with them and encourage them and pray with them. Most of the people I've met with are really at peace with the transition in their life, but every once in a while, it's really sad when you meet someone who seems kind of scared. They either are not sure about their faith or about the afterlife, and I always do my best to just encourage people. There's a part of me, I'm like well you'll see in just a second.. not like just a second, but I think like you'll be okay. But I really want people to be encouraged during that time so they can focus on having those last moments with their families and to leave in a spirit of joy. Is there something you would say to someone in that moment if they were sort of feeling afraid or not sure?

LS: I hope my book's an encouragement to them, but I think what I would say is I love the way that Jesus uses the metaphor of a home when He talks about heaven. He said His Father's mansion has many rooms in it. And it just reminded me, if you've ever traveled maybe in a faraway land, you've been gone for a long, long time, and you're tired, you're exhausted, you're homesick, and you finally get home and you get in your own bed, and there's warmth and security and love and comfort and I love the way Jesus uses that metaphor of a home to help us understand that this is where we really belong. We're going to spend a lot more time in eternity than we spend in this world. And that warmth and love and grace, that imagery of home, I think is very comforting to me and I hope to people who are facing some anxiety as they pass from this world.

BS: Yes, that's right. One of the sad things about a television interview is they're only six or seven minutes. You can't go in that long form. This is a really interesting subject to me. I think we could go on this for at least an hour and really dig into some of those things, but if you're at home and you're wishing this could be longer, I want to just say well the good news is there's a book! And get it. It's called The Case for Heaven. The Case for Christ was amazing, really a wonderful work. And I want to encourage you to get The Case for Heaven. I know it's going to touch your heart in a profound way. Lee Strobel, thank you so much for joining us today.

LS: Thank you, Bobby. Love you. God bless you and all your people there.

BS: God bless you. Thank you.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Whoever you are, would you stand with us? We're going to say this together. Hold your hands out like this as a way of opening your body to the Holy Spirit, we're going to 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. Its 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!

MESSAGE – Bobby Schuller "Dying with a Purpose"

The sermon I'm going to preach today, my biggest concern about it is that it will come across as works righteousness or the theological idea that I am what I do. And if anybody leaves here thinking that, I will have failed. So before I get to the message of today, I want to give you a deeper message, that if you forget this part, the rest of what I'm about to say won't matter, and that is that you are so loved, you are so full of spiritual power. If God were in the building, and He is, and if you could hear His voice, and by the way you can, but if you could really tune in like a radio, you said 'Father, who am I really? How do you see me?' He would look at you and say you are my beloved child.

Dying with a Purpose

I have you here still for a reason and its important. The things you're going to do, if you could see them, are incredible. You're full of my power, my authority, my life, my love. I am so proud of you and I am so proud of who you're becoming. That's what He'd say to you. Believe it today. We know what the Lord says about us because we can read it. We know what it says about us. That He loves us so much that He laid down His life for us. Greater love has no man than this that He lay His life down for His friends. You are a friend of God and He's got great plans in store for you. If you believe it, say amen. Now I sort of feel bad for Hannah on occasion, especially when ministry gets hard, and I shouldn't. I know you enjoy being married to me; I hope. Thumbs up. I got a thumbs up. That's good. When Hannah and I were engaged, she was not engaged to a seminarian or a guy who was planning to be a pastor. She was engaged to a businessman. I was in school, business school. I was a real estate appraiser and I was working for, actually, a second job, a real estate investment company, and then I was also scouting around at different financial company's where I had some connections through various friends and stuff. When Hannah and I got married, I was kind of a catch because of the.. you know what I mean? Maybe not as much in the looks, but in the wallet department I had a high, very high potential. And we were in love and when we got married, none of that was really factoring, of course. I think though, I mean, we both were very passionate about ministry, we were both missionaries, we both did a lot of humanitarian work together, we both worked at the same church, and when I say worked, I got paid \$50 a week to lead worship. Ministry was always important to us, but what we thought when we got engaged is we would build a life in business, and we would use the financial resources that God gave us to encourage the church, while also volunteering and doing ministry and things like that. That's what we thought would happen, I believe. It was when we got married that we really felt a call to ministry, and I know I've said this before, but I really felt up until that point that business was the way for me. And there was this crux of a moment I'll never forget. I was spending a lot of time at a hedge fund. I had a friend who was just a year older than I was and so at the time he was a pretty young guy, and he had just bought his mom a house in Dana Point with cash. And I was like I want to do what he's doing, and I can do what he's doing. And so I started hanging out at this hedge fund and the guy who sort of helped run it was introducing me, and I got to know some of these people and what I started to find out very quickly was that most of the people that were working there, most of them men, who were youngish, in their 30's, let's say, late 20's, a lot of 30's, almost none of them were married, or if they were, they were divorced. Most of the guys at this group were alcoholics, had maybe some drug issues. One guy told me, 'we make a lot of money, but we have no time to spend it.' And then the final straw that broke the camel's back is I remember noticing that so many of these offices had showers in them. And I remember asking a guy once, I was like why do all these offices have showers? And he said, well, sometimes we work so late, and the stock market opens so early that if we were to drive home and drive back, we wouldn't get enough sleep, so it's better to just sleep here and then you'll get six hours of sleep and then you can still shower and be ready for the day. And there was something about that idea that I was like nope. Nope. I got to find something else. I got to do something else with my life. Hannah and I, when we were married, we were married at the Crystal Cathedral, and it was that day we both started to feel a call to ministry. That's why I often say I wasn't called, and Hannah wasn't called to this ministry, we were called. I really believe it's a couples calling. Don't hear me say that it's bad to go into business. That's not at all what I'm saying. A lot of the people here watching today are called to go into some kind of business or something like that. But for me it was that shower thing that put me over. Of course, years later, we would actually work with my dad. We came to the Cathedral and our goal was to help my dad, who was becoming the new senior pastor, bring in more young people, and many things happened, but eventually we became church planters.

Dying with a Purpose

And I remember, when we started leading this church, after a long, horrible string of a lot of drama, and a bankruptcy and the loss of this building, and all these things, we came into sort of help and lead and eventually I became a senior pastor. I remember our first property in Garden Grove. My office was in what was called the rectory, which means it's a dormitory for priests, and it was one of the most run down, smelly buildings you've ever seen. But my office in the rectory had like various spots everywhere, stains, there was like a carpet that looked a million years old. There was this part that was like.. I always called it the fun house because it was like when you walked it was super wavy like this. You kind of go up and down as you're walking. We had a terrible cockroach problem and it never really went away. I never found the cockroaches alive, which was good. I'd just find them dead randomly. And then we moved to Irvine. You know, Garden Grove is a lovely town, but so is Irvine. There was a lot of good that happened when we combined with Irvine Pres and we lost some things, too when we left, but the biggest thing of course was we left our \$75,000 lease, which was crushing us. But more than that, it just started to feel like things were turning, that we were going to have a home and a stake in the ground. I remember when we first moved here, and I still feel this way, just loving this campus and loving this neighborhood. And I remember when we knew that we were going to have to move here and stuff, we got a tour of the office and the office here is so beautiful. It was built in I think 2005. It's gorgeous. It's done by an architect; everything is clean and oh it's nice. And I remember them taking me to the senior pastor's office. You guys should see this office. I would never build an office for myself like this, but I am so glad that pastor Mark did. God bless you, pastor Mark, if you're watching. My office has 18 windows. It has this giant bookshelf on it that can hold all of my books. You should have seen my book mess from seminary. Mountains of books. It looks like from *Sword in the Stone* with.. what's the wizard's name? How did I forget this? Merlin. Thank you. Merlin. Looks like Merlin's living room or something. And I got to put all my books up and they had a fan and the big beautiful windows and a high vaulted ceiling, and as she's showing me, and I'm like this is the senior pastors office. This is cool. And the other person that was showing us said you have your own private bathroom. I thought wow, that's amazing. And then pointed and said "and look at this – you have your own shower!" I never told anybody this story, but there was something about that moment, getting my own shower in an office that now all of a sudden was starting to look more like an apartment than an office, and wondering would I be staying up all night? There was some sinking feeling in my heart that on that day when I said I'm not going to do a job where I need a shower because I can't go home and see my family. I am not going to waste my life. I'm going to use the life God has given me to make some kind of an impact. And then to be gloating about my new office and find out that it also, don't forget, comes with a shower. It made me think. It's interesting how in life we, in ministry especially, can get caught up in the business of ministry and people in business who start a business to help others can get caught up in the business of business, that we just forget that life is about so much more. Your life, if you can get ahold of this, is meant to make such a big impact for God. Whether you're in ministry or business or whatever it is you do, whether you're a stay-at-home parent, whether you're building something now, never forget what the end has in store for you. Never forget that someday you will stand before the Lord and give an accounting for what you did in this life. You will show the Lord, Lord the precious gifts that you gave me, the time that you gave me, the people and the resources that you gave me, the education that you gave me, this is what I did with it. Let that moment, make sure that moment is a good moment for you. That when you come before the throne of God, you can know with all your heart, Lord, this is what I did, and He will look at you and He will say well done good and faithful servant. Enter into my kingdom. You have a lot to give, a lot more than you think. Make your life count. That brings us to the life of Stephen. St. Stephen, who was the first martyr of the church is a famous character.

It's important that we understand Stephen and the Christians of Stephen's day don't call themselves Christians, they call themselves Jews, and consider themselves Jewish thoroughly. There are at this time, I believe, very few or almost no Gentile Christians. But this hangs under a grievance injustice, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. If we can see the temple real quick. The Sanhedrin, think of it as the supreme court of Israel made up of its seventy greatest religious leaders with one high priest or president or someone called a nassi that leads the court. We might be familiar with this. This is in the first century what the temple looked like. It was on the back side of this wall. There was a room called the hall of hewn stone. Do we have a picture of that? Looks like this, and this is where the Sanhedrin would meet to adjudicate and try various people. Keep in mind there are almost no accounts of the Sanhedrin putting someone to death. They almost never, ever do it. And when they do, it's a big, big deal, okay? The Sanhedrin has three main rules. Number one: never meet at night. Number two: always meet at the temple, at that hall there. And number three: never do it during a religious festival. Okay? When Jesus was crucified, in Israel, He was a celebrity. This wasn't like people hadn't heard of Him. Everybody knew who Jesus was. Everybody who was sick wanted Him to heal them, everybody was talking about Him. When He came into the city, there was a massive parade. When the Sanhedrin tried Jesus, though.. remember the Sanhedrin is made up of some of the most strict people who get on people's cases about mixing fabrics, and get on people's cases for breaking the Sabbath in weird, obscure ways, right? Incredibly legalistic. When it came to Jesus, someone they wanted dead desperately, where did they meet? Can we bring those rules back up one more time? They meet in the morning or they meet at night? They met at night. Did they meet in the temple? No! They met at Caiaphas' house, in secret. And they met during Passover, during a festival, one of the holiest festivals there was. They broke the only three rules they have. Think about that. They hold people, as Jesus said, to these little rules and they break the biggest rule ever in killing what most people in that day, at the very least considered a sage rabbi or a prophet. Wow. Now, and so it's that utter hypocrisy that's hanging in the air. By the way, I just want to pause real quick and just say if you've been somebody who's been hurt by a religious person, or by their hypocrisy, that is Satan doing his greatest work. Satan's ministry is founded on deception, and he loves to use religious people the most. That's why many rabbis consider taking the Lord's name in vain the greatest sin. Not saying oh my god, but taking the Lord's name in vain means doing evil in God's name. Okay. We'll keep going. That's hanging in the air. Now the early church is gathering, and in Jesus' day again, there was sort of two types of Jews. There were Hebrew Jews, which seems like obvious, right? And then there were Greek Jews. Now Greek Jews were those who were coming in mostly from places like Babylonia. They grew up speaking Greek, they would read the Bible in Greek, the Greek Bible in fact today is called the Septuagint. They would use that. As these people would mingle together as they were moving back into Israel into places like Galilee, there was this tension between cultures and languages. And that worked its way into the church, since the church was mostly Jewish. The Bible says that the widows that were Greek speaking, even though they were Jewish, were being overlooked in the disbursement of food and resources. And so the apostles noticing this, decide that this issue has to be addressed. And this is what I want you to catch about this story. The 12 apostles who are miracle workers and powerful people, they look at this problem and instead of solving it themselves, they say let's delegate seven Greek people to solve this, and they say this: shall we wait tables? They say shall we wait tables? In other words, serving the widows was not as important to them as going out and doing something else they called ministry, which was preaching, right? Like what I'm doing. They wanted to preach, they wanted to teach, they wanted to do the important stuff, and they wanted to delegate someone else to care for the widows and to care for the orphans. They appoint seven people to do it, all of them Greek speaking Jews, and there is this one guy who kind of leads the group that rises to the top. His name is Stephen. And this is what I love.

Dying with a Purpose

The Bible points out the contrast that the 12 left to go preach and do miracles, but it is Stephen, the guy who is just available, the guy who just says sure, I'll help widows. It's him that the Bible says all of a sudden he begins to preach with incredible power and just droves of people start coming into the church and the ministry. And then it says that as he's serving widows, that he starts to operate in power, miracles and tremendous wonders come out of his life, and you hear almost nothing of most of the other 12. The ones who said I want to do the important thing, God took from many of them what they considered the important thing, and gave it to the person who was willing to do the grunt work, who was willing to serve the widows and the orphans and the people who were suffering. Isn't that just what Jesus always talked about? Yes, we will see that Peter and James and others are going to do great things later on in the story, but Luke, the author of Acts really wants you to see this, that when they delegated that chore, they delegated that calling. Did you hear what I'm saying? When they delegated 'shall we wait tables,' they also delegated spiritual power to raise the dead, and He gave it to Stephen, and Stephen did it with power. And just to drive the point even more, when the Sanhedrin wanted to kill the leader of the church and they looked at the whole group and they saw Peter and they saw James and John and all these people, who did they pick? They picked Stephen: the guy willing to wait tables. Hear me, friends. Hear me. The Sanhedrin arrests Stephen. They bring him into the temple, during the day, not during a festival. And instead of Stephen defending himself, he gives his fellow Jewish leaders a scathing sermon. He says, we Jews, our father Abraham, God made a covenant with him and brought him out of the land of Chaldeans. And decided He was going to make a covenant people to know Him. They're like yeah, yeah, we know. We got the Bible memorized. Go, keep going. They're like, go. And then he says, and out of him he created a family, and from him there was a son named Joseph who was the most loved by his father Israel. And Joseph was betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery. They're like yeah, yeah, we know. And you remember Moses? Moses was called by God and brought freedom to his people, but many of those stiff-necked people turned their backs on Moses and there were two slaves that Moses rescued and one of them later said will you kill me like you killed that Egyptian? They're like yeah, yeah, we know. And then he says you are not like Joseph! You're like his brothers. You are not like Moses! You're like those stiff-necked people. His sermon is a fulfillment of his own life where he says you think you're great, but in the kingdom of God, it's these little things that matter. You betrayed all of those rules and killed the Lord, and you killed prophets, and you killed good men so you can keep your power. And as is typical, when people are called out about their injustice, they prove the point. And so the Sanhedrin, not having any further hearing, they gnash their teeth and enraged they drag Stephen out of the city and as was the custom in the day, they would throw him into a pit or off of a cliff so that the legs would break, and then they continued to throw stones at him until he dies. Okay? So they prove the point that he's saying, that you just killed somebody and you broke all of your rules. This is what I love. You remember Stephen's last words? First he says look, I see the Lord standing at the right hand of the Father. That's the only time in the Bible Jesus is not sitting at the right hand but standing. And then his final words, as they're breaking all the rules, as they're doing something horrible, unjust, unfair, he totally fulfills the heart of God by saying to the Lord, Lord, do not hold this sin against them. And all those who knew the Sanhedrin was corrupt who were not Christians but were thoroughly Jewish, watched their brother do the most Jewish thing ever. He fulfilled the word of God. One of those Jews watching was a very faithful Jew who was holding the cloaks of those who were executing the man, his name was Saul. And I believe the church traditionally teaches that it was when Saul, who in his fervor held these cloaks, that a seed was planted in his heart in this moment when he watched the rules being broken so they could kill someone they thought of as dangerous to their ideas, that a seed was planted in Saul's heart. That man became Paul, probably the greatest apostle in the Bible who wrote the majority of the New Testament.

Dying with a Purpose

Stephen's death was not a tragedy, it was a triumph. He died a kid, a young person, but his death is still rippling today! It is still having an impact on our world view and life today. One man's act of loving kindness and sacrifice, most of all, his final words – Lord, do not hold this sin against them. Forgive them. Just overflowing with compassion and mercy, even for those who are killing him. Wow! That is powerful. I want to live like Stephen lived, don't you? I want to be the kind of person that, although we have work to do, we have a task set before us, I will not fall on the slippery slope of wasting my life. Neither will you. Don't waste your life. Make your life count! Make it count! Make every moment count! Time is such a gift. Every minute with your kids, that's a gift. Every opportunity you have to help someone in need is a gift, an opportunity to make a difference, not just in the lives of others, but with your own life. Make your life count. I feel that in life all of us want to live with a purpose, don't we? We all want to make a difference. I don't think there's ever been someone who hasn't at some point in their life hoped that their existence made the world a little better. But, I think when we're young, we say I've got plenty of time. I got plenty of time to make an impact. And when we're old, we think I'm out of time. I don't have enough time to make a real impact. And both of those are deceptions. Look, when you're young, you don't know how much time you've got. You may feel you've got a hundred years. It goes by quick, my friend. And what you're doing today will probably be what you're doing ten years from now, unless you wake up one day and decide to make a change. We're creatures of habit. If you feel that you're too old, let me tell you, it's been a joy ministering to an older church because I have seen so many older people do amazing, amazing things. I don't need to belabor the point, but even if you have a minute left in your life, I know you can think of something really important to do with that minute. My friend, don't waste your life. Make your life count. Jesus tells us in the parable of the talents.. let me tell you some good news, okay? You want some good news before the bad news? Here's the good news, all right? The good news is you will not have to give an account for your sins if you entrust your life to Jesus Christ. Isn't that good? All the bad stuff you've done; choir, you guys got a lot of bad stuff, am I right? Me, too. I'm always using the choir. It's so good to have you back, my peanut gallery. Honestly, all the bad stuff that you've done in your life is forgiven. God gave you a completely new slate. And even though you continue to struggle with things, you won't give an account for your sins if you've entrusted your life to Jesus. But, you do have to give an account for what you did with your time. Jesus says in the parable of the talents, that when we come before God, He's just going to ask us plainly – with the gifts I gave you, with the people I gave you, with the time I gave you, with the place I gave you, you know how lucky we are to be American? With the freedom I've given you, with the education I've given you, what'd you do? What'd you do with it? On that day, I know that you will come before the throne of God, and you will be able to bring your sacrifice to Him and say this is what I did. Maybe I could have done more, but this is what I did. He will look at you and He will say, well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into my kingdom. I promise you, my friend, this is the most important thing in life that yes, we have fun stuff that we do, yes we have business that we do, but in the end, if we don't do the thing that counts, our soul will wither and die. We need to have and do the thing that matters. Don't let anyone convince you that you don't have something great to give to people today. You have something amazing that you can give to others, and that you can give to God. Believe in it! Believe in it and watch what God will do in your life. I'm so proud of you. You're doing a lot better than you think, and the things you're going to do in the future are going to be great. Lord, we love you and we trust you with our lives. And we ask in Jesus' name that you would make us more and more like your Son Jesus Christ. Help us to trust, God, that the use of our time and helping others and doing what we are called to do, that sometimes when it seems like a waste of time, that's the best use of our time. Lord, help us to understand the next right thing to do. Give us the courage to do it. We ask it all in Jesus' name, amen.