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GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

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

HS: Hello visitors and church family. We are just so, so happy that you're here. Paul in the Bible prays for the church that we would have a revelation of God's incomparably great power at work in us who believe. Wow. You are loved.

BS: Amen. Let's pray. Father, we love you, and we thank you so much, and we're grateful for your Holy Spirit doing a good work in our lives. We pray, God that as we bring our challenges and our questions, we bring our families, we bring our jobs, we bring it all here to this place. We thank you that you're here with us, and that you have answers, and you have power, and you have life. So we just receive it by faith, and we thank you. It's in Jesus' name we pray, all God's people said, amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Matthew 25,24-29 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for the message, the words of the Lord – Matthew 25:24. "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'" "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! You knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. "Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. The word of the Lord.

INTERVIEW - Jay Hewitt (JH) with Bobby Schuller (BS)

Jay Hewitt is an author who truly embodies what it means to have resilient faith. In his new book, *I Am Weak, I Am Strong: Building a Resilient Faith for a Resilient Life*, he tells his very personal story of keeping the faith amidst a brain cancer diagnosis. Even in the midst of challenging circumstances, he put his faith into action by completing an Ironman Triathlon in the middle of his cancer treatments.

BS: Jay, hi, welcome. Wow. What an awesome story you have and I'm so glad.. you're a local here in Orange County. You have a church here in Orange County, as well, right? What's your church?

JH: Friends Church in Orange. I'm also at Friends Church in Yorba Linda.

BS: Oh my gosh! Wait, hold on a second.

JH: I know, I know.

BS: We planted a church in the American Legion Hall.. aren't you guys..

JH: At the same time that we were planting just down in the packing house.

BS: It was like right next to it. That's amazing. That's cool. That's a small world. That's a great church. Well congratulations.

JH: And likewise.

BS: Well I love the story so much because I think it's totally at the heart of God. Let's start at the beginning. You were diagnosed with brain cancer. To me that sounds like the scariest one. I mean that's pretty high up there. What was your response as a pastor, as a Christian? Tell us the story.

JH: Yes, well as a pastor, as a Christian, as a human being, I think a diagnosis like that is devastating. You ask the questions like why me, and you're tempted to walk away from your faith. But for me, I was in a Dunkin Donuts parking lot, and I got really honest with God, and I asked Him, what are you doing? Because it made no sense. I was so confused.

The Cost of Not Investing

I asked Him what are you doing, and then He was gracious enough to answer me. And through the Holy Spirit acting just like Jesus promised He would act, as I asked God 'what are you doing,' He took my heart and my soul and my mind to second Corinthians 12:9-10 where I knew this scripture is for me. As the scripture tells us, God's grace is sufficient, His power is perfected in our weakness, and then just as the Apostle Paul concluded, so did I. Well then when I'm weak, I'm actually strong.

BS: So your response then was like I'm not only physically weak, I'm sure your faith at times was feeling weak. You decided to take action in a pretty radical way. What was the action?

JH: Yes, because after you pray, God what are you doing, then you must ask the Lord – how can I cooperate? How can I join you?

BS: Almost like you say God what are you doing, He's like what are you doing?

JH: Right, exactly. And so I got this kind of crazy idea of what if I did something that I never imagined I could do at my strongest, what if I attempted it at my weakest? And so I decided I'm going to attempt an Ironman Triathlon. That's a 140 miles of swimming, biking, and running all in one day, and I thought what if I do that while I'm going through really harsh cancer treatment.

BS: Had you ever done anything like that? A marathon or anything?

JH: No. No.

BS: Skip the marathon altogether and tack on the other stuff.

JH: Just jump in. And so I wasn't even a high school athlete, and that's why I knew that this would demonstrate God's power through my weakness better than anything else, because nobody would say oh, that's just Jay. It was obvious that it was God's power working through my weakness.

BS: I love that response. So why, of all things, why was that the response?

JH: Well I think because as a father of a young daughter, I wanted to not just say the gospel to her, I wanted to show her the gospel. I thought this is a moment to show her what resilient faith looks like and how that leads to resilient living, and to show her that all things are possible with Jesus.

BS: Amen, yes, wow. How did she respond to that? Was she there? Did you finish? Did you cross the finish line?

JH: I did cross the finish line. Yes, and there were moments that I wasn't sure if I was going to. About 120 miles into the race, my body started shutting down as a result of the chemotherapy. But as I prayed for help from the Lord, strength from the Lord, He provided and I was able to cross the finish line. And now, she was only four years old when this happened, and that's part of the reason why I wrote this book, and there's also a documentary called Dear Hero that's streaming on Amazon Prime. But what it allowed her to do is to see that the scripture is true. It's trustworthy. And now, I see her building this resilient faith. I got to baptize her a year ago, which is just.. the father's heart just crumbles with joy and pride at that moment.

BS: That's awesome. It is amazing, isn't it, when you're facing a tough time like this, it's easy to, if you're just doing it for yourself, to kind of give up, and I'm sure you felt down times like that. But when you've got someone else, especially a kid, a spouse, a family, a team, and you think about them, it's amazing how that can give us also something to do it for. Does that make sense? I'm sure that was, in a way, your daughter was a gift to you to also have a reason to push.

JH: Absolutely. Because I told her, Hero, I'm dedicating this race to you, because I knew what I wanted to tell her at the finish line, and I got to. I got to cross the finish line, and then really finish what I set out to do – got down on one knee, and I said honey, God's going to put dreams in your heart. Go after those dreams, but do not be surprised when your enemy knocks you down, but hold onto the hope of Jesus and His power, get up, stay strong, press on and then you'll see that all things are possible with God.

BS: Amen. Now this was just a couple years ago, you said. Are you still struggling with the cancer? What's the result now for you?

JH: Yes, so as of this moment, as of this moment I am 100% tumor free. Praise the Lord.

BS: Amazing. That's amazing. Yes, and I'm sure they didn't promise that to you, right? That's just God doing His thing, right?

JH: No, quite the opposite. Quite the opposite. They gave me the prognosis of this is terminal. There is no cure for this. But with the Lord, all things are possible, and I'm seeing that. I'm living that.

BS: Amazing. Wow. What an encouragement. That's amazing. What do you say, I mean, there are a lot of people right now that feel like maybe they're mad at God or they're confused, or they're just like I don't.. or maybe they're not any of those things, but they're facing something like what you went through, and they're like I just don't know how to get through this. I still have my job and all my responsibilities and all of that. What encouragement do you give to those people?

The Cost of Not Investing

JH: One of the things that I talk about in the book is you have to wrestle. You can't pretend that everything's good. You have to admit your weakness and wrestle with God. And so I think the starting point.. actually the real victory wasn't at the finish line, it was in the Dunkin Donuts parking lot when I said God, what are you doing. And so I'd say start there. Ask God what He's doing, know that He's big enough to handle your doubt and your anger, and that He's gracious enough to lead you even in those times. So wrestle with God, but hold onto hope.

BS: Amen.

JH: Knowing that that hope of Jesus is going to pull you through.

BS: Amen. And we just continue to pray for you and for everyone out there, and trust that your sickness is crucified with Christ and He's going to heal you, He's going to protect you, and He's going to get you through it, so we want to encourage everybody in that way, too. This is a great book and I want to encourage you to get it. The book is called I Am Weak, I Am Strong by Jay Hewitt. Pastor Jay, thank you so much, my friend. God bless you. What an awesome story. Thank you for doing it.

JH: Thank you, pastor.

BS: It's great.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

No matter who you are, we're so glad you're here. 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. Thank you, you can be seated.

MESSAGE/PRAYER – Bobby Schuller: The Cost of Not Investing

I want to encourage you today to take a risk. Take a risk for God. I remember when I was a kid. I grew up in San Juan Capistrano, it was kind of a horse town near the ocean, not too far from here in the Southern part of Orange County. We had a beach very close to us. I could ride our bike there called Salt Creek. Some of you are familiar with it, a famous surf beach and I had a lot of friends that surfed. And the day came that it was my turn to learn how to surf. Now up to that point, I had done boogie boarding, which is where you just kind of lay on your chest, I'd done skim boarding, which is where you sort of ride when there's like an inch of water on the sand, but never done surfing. And so one day we're on vacation, I'm ten years old. I'm this little guy, I'm like fully tan, and my dad says it's time to learn to surf. And I'm all signed up, I'm ready to go. We rent a little board, we both have two of our boards, and we go out there, and now I am scared. I've never stood on a wave before. This was a new thing for me. And I remember how my dad, in a very good way, continued to urge me, even though he could tell I was a scaredy cat, and I was. You can do this. Try it this way. Try it that way. I began to get frustrated as I would fall over and mess up. At one point, I yelled at him, I said, all these other surfers out here are pros! And he goes no they're not, and he called out some guy next to us. He goes, hey you, are you a surfing pro? He goes no, this is my first time. I'm from Ohio. I went okay, okay. Finally, I caught a wave, and the elation of breaking through the fear and the challenge was amazing. In fact my family still makes fun of me to this day because when I got back, I saw my step mom and she goes how did it go? And I literally looked at her and I go I've changed. This little guy – I'm a surfer now. And we think of these moments with our parents when they taught us to ride a bike, or maybe your parents taught you to cook, you're frustrated, you didn't know how to do it, or some kind of a sport. We have these memories, some of us, with our parents. And not all of them are good. Not all these memories. And I just want to pause for a minute because I know there's some people here as I'm thinking about this that maybe today is a good day to forgive your parents. That's not what this sermon's about, but I just want to pause for a minute because maybe you didn't have this, or the way that your parents pressed on you, it felt oppressive, or it felt like they were mean, or they were absent. Maybe we can forgive our parents today. Some of your parents are gone, but remember that they were kids, too, and maybe they had hard parents. Maybe that's how they were taught. Maybe they faced war and other things. We can forgive our parents today. It doesn't mean what they did was right, but we can forgive them. So good parents, though, they push a little bit, don't they, especially fathers. Fathers kind of push and mothers kind of pull. Right? Fathers urge you to go, mothers encourage you to get well or stay safe. And we kind of need that balance in a perfect family. And so parents cause us to want to experience life!

The Cost of Not Investing

And to expand our lives. And to grow our lives. And whether they're good at it or not, most parents, this is what they're trying to do. Well this is what the Holy Spirit is trying to do in you, as well, and that's the point of today's message. The Holy Spirit is always in us, and is always urging us to walk by faith, and not by sight. To walk by faith, by an absolute trust in Him, to know that this is His world, that even what I see around me is crazy or chaotic or horrible, I will walk by faith and not by sight. That's what Pastor Jay Hewitt did in his story. Walk by faith. I'm not going to curl up, flip over, I'm going to run a triathlon. Do you say run a triathlon? I don't even know. You do a triathlon. That's funny. Jonah, called by God go to Nineveh to the most dangerous person in the most dangerous city in the most dangerous country in the world and tell them to repent or die. God tells Moses, go to Egypt and talk to Pharaoh and tell him release my people. God tells Peter step out of the boat and walk on water. What? It's just a storm. God tells His disciples go and heal the sick, and by the way, when you go, don't bring anything with you. These are examples of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of the prophets, the disciples, the believers, urging them to do things they thought were impossible. To take what they feel is a huge risk in order to attain all that was set before them. One way to think about it is absolute confidence in God's favor for you. There's a key word in our faith, its grace, we use it a lot. In Greek the word is "charis." Everybody say charis. You got to use your guttural. Charis. Now every translator, when they're looking at the Greek, has a choice between two words. They can choose grace or favor. In English, it technically means the same thing. I don't know about you, though, but for me when I hear that word, it doesn't feel the same. Grace, the word grace feels.. it's a good word, but it feels more like mercy or forgiveness. But another word "favor", I mean that's the same word, and its unmerited favor. It means you didn't earn it, you didn't do it. That it was earned for you. In other words, it's like saying you're God's favorite. And we don't like saying that, but what if it's true. What if God sees you and His heart is overflowing with favor and love for you. This is what Jesus is experiencing in the baptism, by the way, when He goes down into the water and He comes up out of the water. You remember what the Holy Spirit says around Him. You hear this voice that says this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Right? Jesus is actually experiencing God's grace in that moment, not as forgiveness, He was sinless, but as favor, as life, as love. And we can have absolute confidence that God has more in store for you than mercy. He's got years of life, power, achievement, friendship. He's going to use you to touch lives. He's going to use to change the world. He's going to use you to impact your family. He's going to use you to make a difference, but it's up to us to first start by taking a risk. Amen? And that brings us to the parable of the talents. Now last week we talked about this very weird parable I had never heard a sermon on from Luke chapter 16. Today I'm going to preach on a parable I think of like maybe once a week. It's also a strange one. It goes like this. We have some Bible experts in the house, I think. A man comes to three servants, he's a master of them all, and he gives them each a portion of money. Now the word we use here is "talent." Talent is a measurement of gold. The NIV likes to translate it as a bag of gold, but I don't feel like that's a good translation. Here's why – a talent is a hundred pounds. Now think of like one gold coin is an ounce, so one pound is 16 coins, so a hundred pounds, basically a talent would be about 1600 gold coins. That's a lot. It's like maybe a treasure chest? Today, what would that be, two million dollars? Two and a half million dollars of gold? That's one talent. So this man gives the first guy, remember how many he gives him? Five talents. The second guy he gives, you remember? Two talents. And the last one, the newbie, the rookie, what does he give him? He gives him one talent. That's right. And the Bible says that they are given gold according to their ability. Their ability to what? To make it grow. To make it increase. And so for all of these guys, money, in general, is kind of relative about how much is a lot. How much is this gold.. if this guy can sort of almost at, not random, but kind of spontaneously give away whatever this is, eight talents away to put under the care of these guys, how much is one talent to him? The answer is probably not a lot. But if you're broke and you're poor and you receive one talent of gold, how much gold is that for you? And the answer is it's a lot. And so I think what's happening is this man receives this treasure thing full of gold and he's like I've never even seen this amount of money before, I don't even know what to do with this money. And so we know the story. The master leaves and he comes back and the guy with the five talents, what did he do? He doubled it, right? And the master goes wow! You doubled it! I picked the right horse for this one. Way! Whoa! Five became ten. Well done good and faithful servant. Then he goes to the guy with two bags. What did he do? He doubled it again. Whoa! Another winner! Hundred percent return on my money. He turned two bags into four bags. The final guy, bag of gold or treasure chest of gold, what did he do with it? He begins with a speech. Remember when we were kids and like you'd get in trouble, you like prepare your speech?

The Cost of Not Investing

He's ready, right? He says master, I knew you harvested where you never planted. I knew you were a hard man who had gathered in places you'd never sown, and you trusted me with this money, so I was afraid and I took it and I buried it, and I protected it, and now here's your money back. What does he say to him? Now this is one of the few Bible verses where Jesus calls someone wicked. Wicked. He says you wicked slothful servant. Now that's interesting to me. Why? Because you were afraid? You said it yourself, you didn't even put it in a bank or get any interest or anything, you just buried it? You just buried your talent? You just took your talent and you put in the ground? You just buried it? I could have buried it. See this is the problem. The man did not understand the assignment. The assignment wasn't to protect the talent, the assignment was to grow it! To grow. That's the assignment. To grow. To grow! As much as you can. This is the assignment God gives to all of us is to grow, to grow. Grow your resources. To grow your knowledge. To grow your experiences. To grow the amount of lives you can touch. To grow the amount of influence you can have. To grow your moral compass. To grow! To grow. And when you grow here, everything out there grows. When you get better here, everything out there gets better. How do the other guys grow? How do they grow their wealth, right? How did they do it? That's a good question. We don't really know. But we can assume those guys grew their wealth by taking some sort of calculated risk. They certainly didn't stick it in the ground. And they certainly didn't put it in a bank. They did something with it. And I like to assume, too, that both of these guys, it's not their first rodeo. I like to think these first two guys, they were given one talent originally, too, and they figured out a way to make it grow. And so they got an increase. They got two. And then they get five. And then now, this last guy gets ten. Whoa. And what does Jesus say at the end to the guy with the one? Take his one and give it to the who? The guy with the ten. There's a lesson there, my friends. Here's the lesson – God is not looking to grow money, He's looking to grow people. God is not looking to increase money, He's looking to grab talent for His kingdom, and you can be that person. Here's another way to think about this story. What would have happened if that one guy who was given that one bag had not buried it, had taken some kind of a risk and lost it all. What would have happened if the master came back? I don't know, but here's what I think would have happened. Here's what I think would have happened. The Bible doesn't tell us, but it sort of does tell us because we have other stories where people lost it all. Remember the Samaritan woman who had five husbands, and remember Zacchaeus who was a wee little man and climbed into a tree and stole money from people, and remember the prostitute who used the alabaster oil and cleaned the feet of Jesus, and remember the thief on the cross who said Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, right? Remember those people? What did He do? He forgave them all. See God is a God of do-overs. God can work with sin. He can work with that. He can turn it around. He can change it. God can work with people who give it a try and mess up. God is a God of re-dos. It is at the core of the gospel – forgiveness – that we get do-overs. But here's who God will never call. Here's who God will never, ever call. God calls sinners, did you know that? And God calls fools, and God can call crazy people, trust me. I've seen it. I'm one of them. He can make a crazy man sane. He can make a fool wise, and He can make a sinner a saint, but God will never call lazy people. When Moses is called, he's 80-years-old and he's still out in the field and he's tending to his flock. Wow. When Elisha is called, he's out in the field and he's plowing his ground with his oxen. When Matthew was called, he's collecting taxes. When Peter is called, he's fishing. They're all doing stuff. It may not seem important, but they're all doing something. They're all out there. They're in the story. They're in the game. They're playing their hand. They're making an attempt. They're taking a risk. They're doing something. And see this is the problem is this curse of let it happen, this curse of sloth, it plagues us all. Oh, I have been plagued by it. So have you. It sounds judgmental, but it's not. It's a call to freedom. That very often we think it's too easy to assume that it feels like the spirit of sloth is about pleasure or having fun or letting your hair down. It's really not that. Sloth is rooted in fear. See sloth is not this thing of just rolling over and letting it happen, its fear. Its fear of disappointing people, its fear of becoming a doormat, its fear of getting trapped, its fear of stepping on toes, its fear of letting down your parents or your friends or your boss, its fear of failure, its fear of getting stuck in the grind, fear of becoming a slave to somebody, and all of these fears, they engender inside our hearts the spirit of I'll just let it happen. It's a curse! The curse of let it happen. The curse that just says I'll let my life go by. I'll let this opportunity pass. I'll let this idea die on the vine. I'll let this person leave my life forever. It's a wicked spirit and it gets us all sometimes. It gets us all. And don't feel guilty about that, but be free from it because it's not the sloth that's getting you, it's underneath the sloth, which is fear. Fear. So how do we overcome our fear?

The Cost of Not Investing

I only know there's only one way that I know of that has worked for me to overcome this kind of resistance, this kind of fear that plagues us all the time, and that is to stand on the word of God and go. To just go. To get out the door. To take that first step. To take action. To get back in the game. To get back into my story. To go! To go! Go! Here's a clue about scary stuff in your life. Although it is scary, and although it plagues us, and although it is like a blister on our heart, scary stuff is clarity. It's a signpost because fear gives you clarity about where you're supposed to go. If you're tossing and turning every night about something, it's probably a clue that that's where God wants you to be or go, or something He wants you to do. See I'm not scared of getting in a rocket ship and walking on the moon. That doesn't keep me up at night. I'm not rolling over worried about that. But you know who probably was was Buzz Aldrin. He probably felt that way. I'm not worried about planting a church in a school on that little village on Everest, up all night on Mount Everest thinking about how do I get the beams up there and how do I get food up there and how do I get books up there and la, la, la, la, la. But you know who might be is James Davis, who's doing that exact thing. It might keep him up at night. But I'll tell you some things I was scared of. I was scared of getting engaged as a 21-year-old man. That's young. And I was scared of planting a church. I was scared of having kids. I was scared of writing a book. Why? Because those are all things I was supposed to do at the time. Those things kept me up at night. And boy, what a blessing it is when we learn that if there's something keeping you up at night, it means it matters to you. It means it's one of the most important things in your life. It means that it's probably where God is sending you to go. In all those cases for me, there was something dark that was always pushing against me saying doing it tomorrow, roll over and go back to sleep, go watch your favorite show. Always something pushing against, against, against. I wish I could say I never gave into that. I wish I could say I never buried a talent or buried a dream or let go of a person that was supposed to be in my life. I wish I never gave into the let it happen spirit, but boy have I, and so have you. We call it being human. But what we can learn from the pain of those mistakes is that I'll never do it again. That the good thing about being old is I know the price of doing that. That the older I get, I know the steep cost of letting it happen. Of letting it die on the vine. See the greatest risk in life is not taking any risk at all. I was sitting in the Crystal Cathedral and I heard Tony Campolo say one of the smartest things I've ever heard. He said very funny, Italian guy, "I do not want to tip toe through life only to arrive safely at my death." That's no way to live. There's a huge cost to sloth, a huge cost to giving into your fears, a huge cost to kicking the can down the road, a huge cost to letting it happen. As the late great Jim Rohn said, "wait till they send you the bill for that one." Wait till they send you the bill for not investing in you. Wait till they send you the bill for not pursuing your dream. Wait till they send you the bill for not becoming all you could become. It's a steep invoice. It's a sharp accounting. It costs a lot to put your head in the sand, to roll over in bed and go back to sleep, to bury your talent in the dirt forever. Someone here needs to burn their ships. Someone here arrives on the shore of their dream or their goal or where God's supposed to send them, and when things get tough, they get back on the ship and go home. It's time to burn those ships for someone here. Someone needs to rent an Air B&B. It needs to be expensive and they need to go there and finish their book. And they need to come back with a completed book, because if they don't, they're going to get in trouble with their spouse, because that was expensive. Somebody here needs to throw away their PS5. Somebody here needs to delete the apps on their phone. Somebody here needs to strike out on their own and become their own boss. Someone here needs to buy a plane ticket to that place you said you were going to go, and they need to do it now. And when the person says do you want a ticket that's refundable, what are we going to say? No! No refunds. You go or you lose. Somebody here needs to be pay for their class, because if you pay for it, you'll go. And somebody here needs to do something and set it up in a way that there's no going back. It's you and the Lord. Think about it. Think about it. Peter, is called by God, holding his nets, all this equipment. Took him a lifetime to get it together. What does he do with his nets? Does he bring them with him? Does he keep fishing? No, he drops his nets. Elisha, dream comes true, he's called by Elijah to be his disciple. What does Elisha do? He's got all these oxen and it's like wealth. In those days, he's got all this equipment to farm. What does he do? He chops up his plow into bits, uses it as a grill, slaughters the oxen, cooks it all, feeds it to the poor and his families and everybody, and leaves it all behind. We call that burning the ships. Or maybe we should say burning the oxen now, make it a little more Christian. Make a sacrifice and do the thing. Make a sacrifice and do the thing so that doing the thing sets you on a course that you can't turn back from. Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Most of us have the first few bits on that triangle. We've all seen it. You remember what the one is at the very, very, very top? It's called self-actualization.

The Cost of Not Investing

What is that? Self-actualization means becoming all you could become. Finding out what you could have done. It means living a meaningful life. Don't you want to know? Don't you want to become who you could have been? It's not too late for you. Don't you want to see? Don't you want to see what's possible for someone like you? Especially in a place like this? At a time like this? There's never been time for more opportunity, more open doors than there is now, especially for someone like you. It's not too late. Don't you want to know who you could have become? Don't you want to know? What if God shows us when we get to the end of our lives and He says my beloved son, my beloved daughter, here's how you could have lived your life. Here's who you could have known. Here are the lives you could have touched. Here are the things you could have created. Here are the things you could have made. Here are the languages you could have spoken, the songs you could have played, the parties you could have gone to, the prayers you could have prayed. Here's the lives you could have changed forever. What if He says that? You know what? He won't. But He might tell you if you ask Him. That would be a scary thing. It's not too late for you, my friend. People are living longer than they've ever lived. People are living healthier than they've ever lived. Don't let your mother or father, grandma, grandpas words of "well you're too old." Don't let that stuff get in your head. That sounds like a spirit of let it happen. Ninety is the new forty, you know. What is 40, I wonder then. What's 40, I don't know. It's not too late. It all starts with our thinking. There was a day when if you couldn't swing a hammer or swing an ax, life was pretty much over for you, but that's not true anymore. You can make millions of dollars with a cell phone or a computer. You can build an organization with a cell phone or computer. You can send a message to a billion people with a cell phone or a computer. You can change the world today in a way that you couldn't even 20 years ago. Age is not the same restriction it used to be, if you still got your wits about you, and you do or you wouldn't be listening to a sermon from me. The Bible talks about the thoughts of our heart. As a man thinketh or as a person thinketh, as a man thinketh in his what? Isn't that weird, it doesn't say as a man thinketh in his head, as a man thinketh in his mind. It's almost like there's thoughts that we have up here, but then there's thoughts we have here. This is where God wants to change us today. In our spirit, our will. Our will. This is where the change needs to happen. You change here, everything changes for you. You grow here, everything grows for you. You improve here, everything improves for you. Doesn't Jesus ask before He heals the blind man on multiple occasions, doesn't He ask do you believe I can do this? He wants to hear them say it aloud – I believe. I believe. I believe. Do you believe you can do this? Do you believe Christ can do this in you? Do you believe He can touch more lives? You think He can make a difference? Do you believe you can live a completely different life than you were living yesterday? I believe. Do you believe? All right. I'll finish with this. Here are Bobby's faith killers. This is just my own observation, all right? Bobby's faith killers. I don't know if I framed that right. I'll find out later. Here are the things that are strangling your faith in your life, probably, at least they did for me. Number one is the news. Look, this is not a Bobby Schuller sermon unless I make somebody mad. Stop watching the news, on TV especially. Here's why – the news on TV especially is always based on fear. If it bleeds, it leads. It teaches you to blame the world for all of your problems. It trains you to look to the government, to look to this and to that, to look at all of the wars and all the horrible things that are happening, and at the same time, to be powerless to do anything. So it trains you into a way of thinking that says I'm powerless. Well Bobby, shouldn't we be informed? Yes. Read the news, and do it like once a week. And do it on Substack or get a good newspaper. Remember those. Remember newspapers? No, nobody remembers. Ninety-nine percent of TV news is Chicken Little, that's all I'm saying. All right? Number two. Here's something that's killing your faith. A culture of apathy, doubt and sloth. If this is a description of your friends, you need new friends. If this is a description of your church, you need a new church. If this is a description of your school, you need a new school, trust me. You can't choose your family, but you can choose your friends. Make a change. Here's number three - rigidity. Especially rigidity about the scriptures. You know us, we love the Bible here. We adore it. But the Bible, frankly, doesn't always make sense. I had a friend, a pastor actually, lost his faith over one scripture. It wasn't even one of the good ones. This was like one the dumb ones, and I was like no, it's just a mistranslation. He completely lost his faith over this stupid thing. And I was like you should have called me, but it had been like years. He was like oh, I already lost my faith. But that began with rigidity. Number four - I call it did God really say syndrome. Remember what the snake says in the Bible. He tells Eve to eat of the apple, and what does she say? He goes did God really say? She's like you know what, it was like 10,000 years ago. I don't remember. Do you remember? Did God really say? When I went to seminary, there was a lot of did God really say.

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Not a lot of standing on God's word, operating in faith, operating in power. Some of that's okay, but not a lot of that. It can become a poison after a while. The university today in general, especially in the world of philosophy, it's so rooted in skepticism that the people are getting dumber, actually. My old mentor Dallas Willard used to say in the university.. he was a philosophy professor at USC, used to say, it seems like now a-days that people say you just got to doubt everything. You can be dumb as a potato (this is his words, not mine) you can be dumb as a potato, as long as you doubt. All right. Number five – being indoors too much. Self-explanatory. Number six – not eating from the tree of life. Some of us are spiritually starving. See there's two trees. There's the tree of knowledge, and the tree of life. Right? Now we're eating from the tree of knowledge – we're learning. But there's this other tree, the tree of life. That's what we need to eat from. That is the prayer, the worship, the life of the spirit. We got to eat from that tree or we're going to starve spiritually. Finally number six – seeing the worst in others. This is choking your faith. You're like what does that have to do with faith? Well, because you need others to activate impossible goals in your life. And if you have a habit of not trusting people, having no faith in people, of always seeing the worst in others, if they always have to prove themselves to you before you like them, it's going to be very hard for you to have faith in God, or to get around faith-filled people, or to just give it a shot, or to give somebody a shot. When you see the worst in people, you're going to get the worst from them, by the way. This is just a good parenting rule, as well. When you see the best, you're going to get better than you would have gotten. Faith is important when it has to do with other people. Why? Here's what Jesus says – if two or three of you agree on anything, nothing will be impossible for them. Whoa! What if that's true? What if that's true? Well anyway, even when you are alone, you're not alone. The Holy Spirit's inside you. He's with you. He's not left you. Take the Holy Spirit by the hand. Take a risk, my friend. There's a whole story and a whole world that lies before you. It's full of amazing things. I'll just finish with this last thought. Some of us here, we have nice ideas of God, we like God, but we're not at peace with God. Won't you be at peace with God today? He gave His Son on the cross so that we could be at peace with Him, forgiven of all of our sins, to have a new start. He was raised from the dead that we could have eternal life in us and have the Holy Spirit. This may not make zero sense to you, but it still rings true. You know what the Bible says? If you have the faith of a mustard seed, you can move a mountain. If you're here today and you're listening to this and you're like a lot of me doesn't believe in this religion, or I don't understand it or know, but there's like this other part of me that kind of does believe, I want to encourage you give that seed of faith to God and see what He can do with it. Watch Him change your life. You don't need to stand up, you don't need to raise your hand, you don't need to come down, you can make a decision right where you are. It's how I came to faith, and I literally, nobody knew and I walked out and my life wasn't the same. You can make that decision today. I want to encourage you to do that. And if you do that, won't you text me the word HOPE to the number on the screen so we can pray for you? You don't have to do that either. But I just like praying for you. I want to encourage you. Let's pray – Father, we thank you so much that life is an adventure and that you've given us the tools, and even better, the favor to overcome what lies before us. We want to make every day count. We don't want to get through a day, we want to get from the day. We want to deliver, God, all that we can to the people that need us. We want to live the kind of life for you where we are not burying our talents, but we're able to show you the fruit of taking a risk, of walking by faith. No more fear, we pray, God. I speak and pray against the spirit of sloth, the spirit of fear, the spirit of let it happen. I condemn it to hell and I ask in Jesus' name that you would raise to life my brothers and sisters right now through your Holy Spirit a new mind, a new heart, fresh vision, new goals, new friends, new life and we pray it all in the strong name of Jesus, and all God's people said, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

And now the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift His countenance upon you and give you His peace, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.