

Hour of Power Deutschland
Steinerne Furt 78
86167 Augsburg

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

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

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

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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. Good morning.

HS: And welcome, church family. This is your church. Thank you for being here this morning. You know there is nothing healthier for your life than bonding with other people. It is the heartbeat of God. So may God bless us with deep and abiding friendships. Amen.

Would you turn around and shake the hand of the person next to you and say God loves you and so do I.

BS: Well good morning. We are just so glad that you're here today. And we have a lot of honored guests in the house, and one of our favorites, Tom Tipton is here. Tom, we love you so much. So glad to have you. Hi. Welcome to our honored guest from our Hong Kong board, Mr. Francis Tsui. We're so glad you're here, sir. And it's going to be a really great day. Whatever you're bringing into the house this morning, just let it go. God is so strong, so capable, so faithful, so loving. God knows about the little things and He wants us to pray even about the little things. It doesn't bother God when you pray and ask for Him to help.

So in Jesus' name, Lord, we come to your house with open hands and an open heart. We want to leave this place full. Break every chain, we pray in Jesus' name. Give us all the freedom, all the intellect, all the wisdom and courage to do what you called us to do. Help us to connect deeply with one another and with you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, Lord, amen.

HS: Amen.

SCRIPTURE – Genesis 1:27-31 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for Bobby's message, the words of our Lord found in Genesis: So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground – everything that has breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

God saw all that He had made and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning – the sixth day.

We, church family, are called to co-create with God. We are better people when we become aligned with His purpose. Amen.

Interview – Bobby Schuller (BS) with Natasha Bure (NB)

BS: Well what a joy today. We have the real privilege of having Natasha Bure in the house who is an incredibly successful figure in social media. She has an amazing voice, and she's actually going to be singing for us today. Natasha also keeps very busy, especially for a teenager..

NB: Yes.

BS: ..you have competed on "The Voice," you're designing jewelry, you're a model, you're a blogger, and you found time to write a book..

NB: I did.

BS: ..that is, by the way, compelling and everyone should read it. It's not just for young people or people into social media. It really touches on the deepest human need, which I think is to be vulnerable and connect deeply with others, and to not have to pretend all the time. Her book is called Let's be Real. Would you welcome with me, Natasha Bure.

NB: Thank you. Hi.
BS: Welcome, hi.
NB: Thanks for having me. Thanks for having me.
BS: So I said teenager; what are you 18/19?
NB: I'm 18. Yes, 18.
BS: And you have I want to say it's like over 300,000 followers on Instagram.
NB: Yes, I do.
BS: So that's internet famous. That's pretty sweet.
NB: Yes, it is a little bit.
BS: And so you really are an authority when it comes to the ways in which social media in general, whether its Facebook or What's APP or Twitter or whatever, how it's affecting our lives; the way we communicate with each other, and that's really where this book is, in many ways, coming from, right?
NB: Definitely, yes.
BS: Tell me about your book. Why did you write this book?
NB: I wrote this book when I had just turned 18, so I'm almost 19 now. I turn 19 in August. And I'd just graduated high school; I'm trying to figure out what I want to do with my life. I didn't go to college. I'm taking a year to kind of pursue acting and singing and all of that, and social media is always a huge part of my world, just being a teenager and everyone's posting on Facebook and Instagram and Twitter and YouTube, and I was just seeing this constant trend of girls and boys of any age comparing themselves to what they see online, of this perfect image of what you're supposed to be and what you're supposed to be like. And I think it's unrealistic for someone to compare themselves because those things that you see online are so filtered, so edited, and that's not actually our even 24/7 day to day life.
And so I wanted to write a book about the topics and the issues that I think all teenagers struggle with, and I think everyone as human beings struggle with, whether it be with body confidence, body image, faith, relationships, health, fitness, anything like that, I really wanted to open up and tell personal stories from my life as well, and just kind of give teenagers someone that they can go and get a little bit of advice from, and kind of see some situations and solutions that can hopefully help them during the teenage years.
BS: In many ways, the book is really about comparison, which is something we all do.
NB: Definitely.
BS: And I feel like, very often, like you always compare up, right? You never are like..
NB: Yes.
BS: ...you never like compare yourself to somebody that doesn't have as much as you, right? And it's so hard.
NB: Yes.
BS: Do you think Instagram, do you think Facebook can rob you of joy?
NB: I think it can, and I think that in another way, it can also bring you a lot of happiness of seeing..
BS: Yes.
NB: ...people you love and..
BS: Yes.
NB: ...and seeing happy moments, but at the same time, comparison is something that is.. I hate it because I think you can never be the person next to you, you can only be yourself, so to try to look at someone and compare yourself to the next picture or the next video, you're never going to achieve that, you can only strive to be the best version of yourself..
BS: Yes.
NB: ..so I think it's important to always keep that in mind. And even though I'm saying it right now, I still have to remind myself every day..
BS: Totally, yes.
NB: ...not to compare myself to the next girl or the next boy.
BS: In our service today, we're reflecting on connecting deeply with each other, and living with a sense of purpose. And I feel like if you use it right, like any social platform, like anything, like writing letters or anything else, it can allow you to connect deeply with others, but social media can also make it hard, right? Where you don't take a first step in doing something good for God, or maybe you don't connect with others deeply because you feel shame, like I'm not attractive enough, or I'm not successful enough.

NB: Definitely. I think there's a lot of pressure when it comes to social media of how you're supposed to be online and how you're supposed..

BS: Yes.

NB: ..look and I think that that can definitely lead to negative decisions or how you view yourself. You will compare yourself to other people, and I think it's important to be authentic when you're on social media and use it to be a light and to talk about topics that are important, and to be that person that is spreading positivity.

BS: Yes, and you do that on your Instagram account, which I'll follow, by the way.

NB: Okay.

BS: That's great. And of course a big part of your life and your ministry is really your faith in Jesus Christ. I believe that this is one of the most amazing times to be alive. The world has never been more connected internationally, there's never been more happening technologically, which is amazing, and yet I feel like it's one of the hardest times to be a young person, especially with these types of challenges like seeing.. everybody looks perfect and everybody's doing so great. How has your faith in Jesus helped you navigate through that?

NB: I was born into a Christian home. My parents raised me up in the church and I went to a Christian school all the way up till 10th grade, so I've always had that faith influence and I've always had a relationship with Christ. And I think because of that, it's definitely helped me be the person where I am today..

BS: Yes.

NB: ..know my foundation, know where my core is at, but at the same time that's not to say that everything's always been perfect and that my relationship with God or my faith has always been just smooth and steady. There's obviously been bumps in the road and I think that's how I grow, that's how I'm going to learn, that's how I'm going to become a stronger person, but it's definitely impacted my life in the way that I act and the way that I go about friendships or relationships or life at home, anything like that. It's definitely at the core of who I am.

BS: That's great. Well the book is terrific. It's called Let's be Real, and you're just so great at observing people and society and a great storyteller, and I would just love to recommend to everybody, not just to teenagers, but to everyone. It can be struggle with feeling like you can't be your true self, or you compare yourself to others, Let's be Real is a great way to get back on the path of all those things, and we just appreciate it so much, Natasha Bure..

NB: Oh, thanks.

BS: ..for all that you're doing. And today we're so thrilled, too, because she actually agreed to sing for us.

NB: Yes.

BS: You're singing You're Beautiful, by Phil Wickham.

NB: I am.

BS: Incidentally, our executive pastor, Chad Blake, his wife walked down the aisle to that song.

NB: Yes.

BS: So it has a special meaning for him..

NB: So awesome.

BS: ..and for all of us, but thank you so much, Natasha.

NB: Oh, thanks for having me so much.

BS: Let's give her a hand and welcome her. Thank you again.

NB: Thank you so much.

BS: Appreciate you.

NB: Thank you, thank you.

PREP FOR OFFERING – Chad Blake

Well yes, I know you're all thinking it. I did cry when Hillary turned the aisle, and not only did I cry, I started weeping so loud that all of my groomsmen and all of her bridesmaids started crying, so yes, the song has special meaning to me.

Speaking of social media though, as Natasha was, this morning I woke up and I flipped open Instagram and one of our employees, actually, he had posted a fortune from a fortune cookie this morning. And the fortune said, "If you give continually, you will have continually." And I thought that's actually scriptural. That is so true. And I started reflecting upon the people I know that tend to have the most fulfilled sense of life, a life that's just worth living are the people I know who are the most

generous people. And I'm not talking about money or how much money you have, I'm talking about just the general spirit and orientation of your heart. The people who give the most, the people who give the most money, give the most of themselves, give the most of their friends and family are the people that tend to be the most fulfilled.

We see this same promise in scripture. We see it in the Psalms, we see it in Proverbs, we see the Apostle Paul talking about it in Corinthians, and we see Jesus himself talking about this idea that the more we give away, the more we're leaving room to be fulfilled and blessed.

And so this morning I want us to reflect upon that as we prepare to receive this morning's offering. So I'd like to invite the ushers down this morning.

WELCOME/COME VISIT – Bobby Schuller

Good morning, we're so glad you're joining us today. And thank you for watching. We are praying for you, we believe in you, and whomever you are, we want you to know we love you and God loves you. And if you're ever around southern California, the closer you are to Disneyland, the closer you are to us, not only because we love Disneyland, but it's only a bike ride away from our church. So come visit us. I'd love to shake your hand. Hannah and I would love to give you a big hug and just pray for you and we would love to see you come down here.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

One of the things we do every single Sunday is we say this creed together. Would you hold your hands out like this as sign of receiving from God: 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. Thanks, you can be seated.

MESSAGE/PRAYER– Bobby Schuller "Yahweh Bore: I Am Your Creator: You Are My Sons & Daughters"

Today, we're beginning a series on the name of God and we're going to be spending a lot of time in the Old Testament. We're going to talk about what it means to carry the name of the Lord and how the different sort of names in the Old Testament for Yahweh – Yahweh this, Yahweh that, what they mean for you, and what it means to walk every single day carrying the kingdom of God in your body. Today we're going to talk about the name Yahweh Bore, and I'll get to that in a minute, but I want to tell you a story about finding purpose. We are all searching for a sense of purpose in the world; a sense of meaning that why – why am I here, and believe it or not, I'm going to answer that question for you and if you hear it, your life will be better. And the why is this – the reason you were created is to connect deeply with other people and to co-create with God; to Abad and Shamar; to work with God and God's behalf. I know this because I have seen people who have been in despair, hurting, broken. Once they started connecting deeply and honestly in vulnerable ways with their friends and started doing things that were meaningful in their life, you watch as their whole life transformed and became more positive, more fruitful, and their faith totally blossomed. That's because your calling is to connect deeply with others and to co-create with God.

I remember when I first became a Christian. I received Christ at the Anaheim Convention Center across from Disneyland on the 4th of July in 1996. And I remember there making a decision after hearing a crazy New Orleans evangelist play rock and roll music, he was Pentecostal and he screamed a lot and he was off the wall, and yet this man convinced me that I should follow Christ. And it was not long after that I moved to Oklahoma with my mom – my parents were divorced, my dad was still here, and it was there in Oklahoma I got a whole new set of friends and a whole new life. And I got involved with this church One-Eighty, incidentally where I met Hannah, well actually the youth group was One-Eighty, the church was called Church on the Move, Willie George. You might remember him. What was he called again.. his TV show? Gospel Bill. The Gospel Bill show. You might remember that. And he had this great youth group one-eighty.

I remember the first day I went to One-Eighty they had this thing called The Swat Team. The Swat Team was a group of teenage kids who would try and create a hospitable environment for those who were coming to the youth group, and so at like midnight, one in the morning they would drive around to all the people who came to the church for the first time, and they would put these signs in their yard so that you are like a 15-year-old kid and you went to, at the time the biggest youth group in America, and you get up in the morning to go to school, you're all bummed out, its Thursday, it's not

even Friday yet, its school, school stinks. And you get out of your house and there is this giant sign signed by a bunch of your new friends from church that says 'we're so glad you came to One-Eighty. Come back.' So I thought this was cool, right? I mean this is like my first time to church and I have this sense of purpose, and I'm like staying up late with these Christian guys doing something that feels a little rebellious, but is somehow fun and friendly.

From that, one of the guys at the church, he asked me where I went to school and I said Broken Arrow. And he said you are the answer to our prayers! I said I am? He said yes! We want you to start a school ministry at your house. And I said I'll do it. So I did. So they had this thing called Team One-Eighty where they would have students from different schools in the city throw parties at their houses before youth group. So like the parents obviously got suckered into ordering pizzas and baking cookies and ordering sodas and then all the kids would gather at the house and then a bus would come and take all these kids to church. So I did that, and we had like at one point two or three buses that were coming to our house.

And the reason I tell that story is that One-Eighty was so great as a church because the first thing it did was give teenagers a sense of purpose for their faith. The first Sunday I was there I was invited to do something for God. And it was a little weird and silly, but it really didn't matter, I think, to a lot of those kids that woke up.

Nothing brings our faith in Jesus Christ to life more than having a sense of purpose and doing something great for God; having a project, a purpose, meaning and doing it with other people. And this is because the greatest human need we have is to connect deeply with others and live life with a sense of purpose and calling, and to do good things.

And today, if you hear anything I say, it's that you are worthy of love and belonging, you are worthy of great friendships, good relationships, great relationships, and God has really called you to do something tremendous for Him.

Now the world, secular world senses this inner need, to their credit, for a greater purpose than oneself. And yet philosophically the secular world has sort of cut itself off again from what philosophers call a meta-narrative. A meta-narrative means that there is one big gigantic story that we're all connected to. And for centuries, millennia, philosophers tried to define that meta-narrative well. But ultimately secular philosophy said there is no meta-narrative. There's your narrative, and there's my narrative. There's your story and there's my story, and our stories only connect if we want them to. Christianity, and other world views argue against that and say whether or not we like it, all our stories are connected so we got to get along.

And so what you find is that there are a lot of people looking for purpose in a world with no meta-narrative; with no big story. And so what happens is you have a lot of people politically on both the right and the left, and in other ways just like dying for a cause, but they don't devote their lives to the cause because without a meta-narrative, the cause becomes self-serving and even narcissistic. Without a show of hands, how many of you know someone who is a moral narcissist? Without a show of hands, I said. You know that person who has a cause but you get the sneaking suspicion their big cause is really only about them.

And that's what happens when we respond to the knowledge that we have a need for purpose, but our purpose is not ascribed to something bigger than us finding a purpose to feel good, or bigger than ourselves.

Finding the meta-narrative – the big story and locating yourself in that causes your purpose to be actually for other people. It's not about you getting credit, or about you getting glory, it's about helping people in need and co-creating with God; being a part of His good redemptive work in His good world. Can I get an amen? I believe it.

I don't mean to be critical. I don't want to condemn you because I want to say if you are someone who thirsts for a cause, way to go. You've got that that first step down. Of course all of us have a need for cause, but I want to just tell you that that cause must be located in the will of God. And when you find that, it's going to be good, and you'll devote your life for it, and you might even die for it, and you'll be happy to do so. That's how awesome it is. That's what happens when you take on the name of God; when you carry the name of God.

In the story of Moses, Moses was.. let me back up. In Egypt, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.. Jacob's family of 70 moves to Egypt for safety. Joseph, the 11th son of Jacob becomes a governor, and this tribe in Egypt of 70 begins to blossom into an immigrant people. They become hundreds, thousands, and they grow and grow within the capital city of the biggest empire and most powerful empire in the

world. And hundreds of years later, Pharaoh now hates these people and feels threatened by them. And because there is this massive people that he says may overthrow Egypt, we got to kill them all. So he begins by slaughtering the children of these Jewish men and women. And what God does is one of these women takes her son, Moses, and puts him in the river on a little.. I don't know what.. I'm basing this on movies, not scripture now so forgive me, but I always picture a little grass floaty thing, like in "Willow." She puts him in the river and sends him down the river, and of course it goes right to Pharaoh's house. And it is there that the princess grabs this baby Moses and raises him to become a prince of Egypt. And so you have this character, Moses, a young Moses, who knows he's Jewish, and yet he's a prince. He has everything he needs, all the money, all the food, everything. He's very popular. He can do whatever he wants. He's the man. And all of that comes crashing down when he sees his own people in slave labor, and one Egyptian soldier begins beating one of his fellow Israelites, and to defend him, he goes and kills the guy. Its murder. He murders a guy, and then flees out into the wilderness. And in one moment he loses everything that makes him him. He's not a prince anymore, he loses all of his money, he's afraid that if he goes back he'll be killed, so in one moment of something that he thought was good, really wasn't, he ends up just kind of losing everything and thinking his life is over. Maybe you're there today. Maybe you made some mistake and you've lost everything, or maybe it wasn't a mistake but some cataclysmic thing happened in your life recently and like Moses, you find yourself out there in the wilderness. Well the good news for you and the good news for what Moses is that God called him from that place.

So there's Moses, now this kind of Bedouin shepherd. And he's out there and he is walking on the holy mountain of Horeb, and he sees a bush with a fire in it, and the leaves, as he's getting closer, he's like what is going on. The leaves are green. The branches are soft and bendy. And he realizes this bush is on fire, but it's not incinerating, it's not burning. What is this? And as he begins to walk closer, as though in some kind of dream or something, he hears this voice – "Moses, Moses, take your shoes off. You're on holy ground." Moses walks towards the bush and God is speaking to him. And it's like the first time in a long time God reaching out to His people, and He says, "Moses, I have heard the cry of my people and I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring them out of captivity."

Imagine what it's like being Moses. What does he think? If I go back there, they're going to kill me. How am I going to do that? How are the Israelites even going to follow me? I'm not really one of them. I'm only them by blood. He didn't say any of that, I just think he's thinking that. And he looks back at God and he says.. this is his question: "who shall I tell them is sending me? What is your name?" The reason this is so important is because in the ancient world, to be sent in the name of someone was to have all their authority as though it was they themselves who were doing it. An ambassador working on behalf of a king would say in the name of Queen Hannah or whatever. In the name of King John, I come before you. And what that means is that it was the same as if John himself were there. You can declare war, you can negotiate contracts, you can do whatever.

And in the same way God, in giving His name to Moses, gives Moses everything he needs to do what God has called him to do. He gives Moses his name and He says "I am that I am. My name is Yahweh. This is my name forever. The name you shall call me from generation to generation." In giving Moses his name, He gives Moses the promise, the power, the authority, the favor to fulfill his purpose to bring freedom to the Israelites, not in Moses' power, but in God's power.

Maybe you're here today and you feel powerless. You feel like you don't have the ability to do any of the things God has called you to do. God has given you His name. Carry it. Carry it. And in His name, do the will of God in everything you do. Amen?

So one of the names I want to talk about today is this name Yahweh Bore. Bore. I am your Creator. I am your Creator. In the creation story, Adam and Eve are placed in a garden that God has made, actually first Adam, and there Adam is placed and the first thing God says is it's not good for dudes to be alone. Out of that God begins to send animals (it's this weird story), God begins to send animals to Adam and Adam names them. And we often think this is like Adam's job to name animals, but when you read the scripture, when Adam is naming the animals, he's saying this is not my partner. This is not the one I'm doing life with. So he's like that's a turtle. No. On with them. No that's not the right one. That is a dog. Just.. maybe. Just put him over here.

So in naming all these animals, he is essentially saying they are not the ones I'm supposed to sort of do life with. So then it says "and no animal was suitable for Adam." So out of Adam God creates Eve. And together, naked, and that's important and I'll tell you in a second why, together they are called to Abad and Shamar creation. Abad and Shamar. And that essentially means to serve and to

watch over God's good work and God's creation. So they're placed there to serve creation and to protect creation.

Another way of thinking about this is they are placed there to be a part of God's good redemptive work in creation; to co-create with God Himself. That's why every single person is creative. If you're an accountant here today, if you're an engineer, you're creative, okay? People are given a sense to make, to build, to fix, to serve, to protect, to guard; that is the calling. And not only to do it alone, to do it together. That is so important. That together they are called to a purpose.

In fact I've talked about this before. A lot of people say when did you feel called to ministry? I didn't until the day I got married. When Hannah and I were married at the Crystal Cathedral, neither one of us.. I was in business school. Neither one of us were called to ministry. We'd been doing ministry things, we had a huge heart for God, but it was there we both on the same day, felt a call from God. God's calling to ministry wasn't for me and it wasn't for Hannah, it was for us. And that's why very often God will call people or your calling will be located in a people, in a tribe, or a group of somebody of people doing stuff. There is a connectivity that is always necessary in your calling.

So God calls Adam and Eve together naked, meaning that they felt no shame. They trusted one another and they were called to Abad and Shamar, this garden, this great thing God had created.

After the fall, the enemy, before the fall, says, "God doesn't want you to eat that tree because then you'll become like Him." But see that's such a great deception because the scriptures say that God made Adam and Eve in His image, and in His image He created them. They were already like God. And by taking their view of morality into their own lives, by saying it's not about God, it's about me. They actually lost, I hate to say this, but in a way they're divinity. They abandoned eternal life and they abandoned the garden. And the first thing that happens is the worst thing that can happen and that is shame. He goes over there, she goes over there, they hide themselves under clothing. I'm sure they don't even have a word for it. And as God comes, they hide from God. And when God finds them, they begin blaming one another.

Now you see how the enemy's goal is to rob you of your purpose, and to rob you of your nakedness; to rob you of your vulnerability; to rob you of being truly you around others. And God's goal, through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is to remove shame, fear, all pretending, and to be belovedly you. Just to be you as a loved child of God, and to just lean into your flaws and imperfections, and say in spite of all those things, I am going to work for God's purpose to the redemption and the good work of his creation.

And the most important thing you see in the Old Testament is God's world is good and we have messed it up. This world is a good world, and it is the evil of men and women and that self deception that continues to war against life in this world. And so to be called by God means to abandon shame, to connect deeply with others, and to lean into the great purpose and calling that God has for you.

Look this is at the root of every problem in the world, this one thing – connecting with others and purpose. It is at the root of all sin, it is at the root of war, it is at the root of why our political parties can't talk to each other. It is at the heart of every bad thing in this world is because this one great need is not being met for most people, including many Christians. You're called to connect deeply with others, and you're called to co-create with God; to serve His purposes, His creation, and to keep and protect it and that is so, so important.

And when we find our purpose in life or purposes in life, and we have deep friendships and deep relationships, so much of the things that wrecked us before just don't have any power over us at all. Many of us, we want to do something for God. Maybe you have a dream that God has put on your heart, a purpose God has put on your heart, but you're like I got to learn more. I got to be more qualified. I got to study more. Bobby, I did not get a college degree. Well, neither did Bill Gates. I mean the thing is, we always feel like we got to think about things more before we can go. And thinking is good, but I'm not encouraging you not to think, but sometimes we find ourselves spinning our wheels and missing out on the great things God has called us to do because what we call thinking is actually fear and dread, or insufficiency. I'm not enough.

Look, you think Moses was enough? You think Moses studied enough to get ready for what God was going to do in his life? You think Moses parted the Red Sea because he just studied marine biology and chemistry so well he came up with some.. like everything Moses did was in God's power, not his own. So everything God has called you to do is not on your righteousness, it's in His righteousness. Everything God's called you to do is not in your power, it's in His power. So to carry God's name means to carry His purpose, His authority, His power, His favor. Of course you don't have enough to do what God's called you to do. It's impossible! But that's why only God can do it

and why He'll get all the glory and why you're going to do amazing things for Him. God loves to use people like you to do impossible things.

When somebody says that's impossible, say amen! That's how you know it's from God! Can't wait to show you that an amazing God does amazing things through imperfect people all the time. That's good news. That's called grace.

So very often we think, okay I got to think first. I got to get my thinking right and then I'll go. Henri Nouwen challenges that in a famous quote. He says, "We don't think our way into a new kind of living, you live your way into a new kind of thinking." And I just very much believe that. If you want to do something great for God, start doing something small for God today. Just do something. Do something. Don't spin your wheels. Don't over think, just get out there and do something great for God, and do it with people; connect with them and watch as God uses that to do awesome things in your life. You're going to do great things. I'm so proud of you.

There's this terrific study that was published and written about an article in Huffington Post by Johann Hari. This journalist actually is very vulnerable at the beginning of his article. He talks about how he himself, he grew up in a family of addiction; as a child trying to wake up someone who had OD'ed in his house, trying to sort out why good people that he loved couldn't beat their drug addiction. Watching people he loved die, and so he devoted a good part of his life to figuring out why people were so addicted. He said my first thought was why do people use drugs. Because they're drugs, duh. Because they feel good. Cause they're addictive. Cause they do things to you that you want them to do.

And he cites this one story. In the 70's there was a famous study that was done about.. they put a rat in a cage and they gave it two bottles of water. And in one bottle of water there was cocaine mixed with water, and the other was just clean water. And they watched how every single rat they put in that cage would drink the cocaine water until it died. And with that, they said this is how deadly and horrible cocaine is. It will ruin your life. You will use it till you die, so don't use it. So let's get it off the street, etc.

And there was a psychologist in Vancouver, a professor who saw that and he said now wait a second, we need to change this. He's like let me try this again. And instead, he created not a rat cage, but a rat utopia. He created a beautiful little.. in like big box, a rat park. He had little rat balls, he put a bunch of rats in there, not just one, he put in like little rat tunnels, he put in rat toys and really good rat food, and they're all like hanging out together in this little rat world, and then he put in, again, the same thing, a bottle of cocaine and a bottle of water. And what they saw was that virtually none of these rats drank from the bottle with the cocaine in it. They all just drank the normal water and they played together and they did life together. And I love that story. Maybe it's not as funny to you as it is to me, but I just thought it was so great.

And so he said, hello, if you put a poor little rat in a tiny little cage and the only thing you give it to do is take cocaine it's probably going to do it. And so what he did is he then argued that well what about addiction. What about people that are already addicted to drugs? What you did was preventative.

So then he took, did the same thing, a rat in a cage with only heroin or water, and took rats that had been using.. or not heroin, cocaine, had been using cocaine for days that were technically addicted chemically to cocaine, then took those rats and put them in the happy rat utopia park, and guess what – they all abandoned the cocaine and switched to regular water. That's amazing. And that's a rat. They don't have all the social complexities that we humans have.

And one of the things that this scientist, Bruce Alexander said was, what we realized is that what the left and the right have said about addiction are both kind of wrong. The right sort of says it's just this moral issue, you've got to try harder, and the left usually says something like it's a disease and you're kind of wired for it. He said no, it's neither of those things. He says, "Addiction is an adaptation. It's not you, it's your cage." It's not you, it's your cage. You put somebody in a cage with cocaine they're going to get addicted.

And though many of us are not addicted, I always think that addiction is a very human response and that many of us have our own sort of secret addictions. God believes in you and God has called you to do something great for Him, and when we have failed enough times, or gone through enough suffering sometimes we just don't have the emotional energy to step out in faith.

But if you're here today, I want to encourage you to have a full heart. A full heart! Leave here encouraged that it doesn't matter how unqualified you are, God will use you to do something great for Him if you just respond with the faith of a mustard seed. And those journeys always begin, not with a leap, but a single step. The smallest thing can become the greatest thing in the world. I mean

I was just talking to Shawn today, and I said 'what are some things on our volunteer teams we need.' He said 'everything! Every volunteer team at this church needs more volunteers,' from children's ministry, to the Greet Squad, to our new encouragement team. Did you guys like that? The kids that were holding the signs that said You Are Awesome, You Look Handsome Today, and all that. All the stuff Gudelia does, all our homeless ministry, I mean all this stuff. We need volunteers. We need ushers.

And very often so many times we either think I don't want that little thing, or we think I'm not good enough to do that, or they don't know this about me, or this thing in my closet, I can't do that. Look, we don't care. And God cares but God calls people who are unqualified all the time. I don't think God ever calls qualified people. Doesn't seem like it. In fact the qualified people always get upset at all these unqualified people being called by God to do great things! It really bothers them. And that is the nature of God.

So friends, I just want to encourage you. I want you to know God has seen the good things you've done, He has not disqualified you, and you have a great purpose for Him. And that your main goal in life, one of the best things you can do to honor God would be to step out in faith in small things; to do small things for Him, and to connect deeply with others. Carry the name of the Lord. Carry His authority, carry His life, carry His goodness, carry His will, carry His power, and watch as you do great things in your life.

Let's pray: Father, we thank you that you've called us here. We ask, Father, for your help. We need you, Lord. And many of us are coming here today saying I don't know what my purpose is. I don't know what God wants me to do. Lord, reveal it to us. And if you don't reveal it to us, give us the faith to just try something. Lord, we love you and we thank you that you love us, and we're going to be a part of the Yahweh Bore, a part of your creative redemptive work in the world. You are so good. We love you, in Jesus' name, 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 and give you His peace in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.