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GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby and Hannah Schuller

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

HS: And welcome, welcome church family. We are thrilled to have you here. Did you know that loneliness and healing are opposites? It is impossible to heal in the midst of loneliness. We need each other. The Lord has called us together to heal each other and those around us.

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. There is a bus of church folk from Brethren Church. Would you raise your hand? Welcome! We're so glad that you're here, various churches from Pennsylvania. It's such an honor to have you. I hope I get to meet you guys after the service.

Let's pray: Father, we thank you, God, that you love us not as we should be, but just as we are. Lord, that we are your beloved children is amazing to us, and so I just pray, God, that today would be a time of energy, life, joy, Lord, that as we leave this place we'd be ready for an incredible week that you've prepared for us. So Lord, we release our faith, our joy, our gratitude. We worship you and say thank you, in Jesus' name, amen.

HS: Amen.

SCRIPTURE – 1 Thessalonians 5:15-18 – Hannah Schuller

In preparation for Bobby's message this morning, the words of our Lord found in Thessalonians:

Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. Rejoice always. Pray continually. Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

May we overcome our unquenchable desire for more with the power of gratitude.

Interview Bobby Schuller (BS) with Megan Smalley (MS)

BS: Well we hope you're feeling encouraged and lifted up. How are you doing so far? Great, all right. Well today we have such a great joy to welcome Megan Smalley, who's the founder and owner of the not so small business Scarlett & Gold based in Alabama. Scarlett & Gold is a faith based print and product shop founded on the principle of creating, giving and inspiring. Their "Give Grace" campaign supports and raises awareness for people experiencing infertility, a struggle Megan has personally gone through herself.

So please welcome with me, Megan Smalley.

MS: Thank you.

BS: Hi Megan!

MS: Hi. How are you?

BS: Great! It's so great to have you here, and thanks for coming. And so do you actually live in Alabama?

MS: I do. We live in Auburn so we're just an hour and a half south of Atlanta.

BS: Okay, great, awesome.

MS: Yes.

BS: Well thanks for being here. Why don't we just start first with.. before we get to your business, I mean, tell us a little bit of your story. So..

MS: Okay.

BS: ..you and your husband...

MS: Yes, so we'd been married almost five years and started trying to have kids about three years ago, and infertility was never something that I thought we would struggle with. And obviously month after month nothing happened and exactly two years ago this month we walked through IVF. The doctors told us that that was our...

BS: What's IVF?

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MS: ...in vitro fertilization.

BS: Oh sure.

MS: So the doctors told us that was our only option. And we had three sweet little babies implanted and none of them took. And so it was a really devastating time in my life. And so that's when the "Give Grace" campaign happened because IVF, I'm not sure if you all are familiar with fertility treatments, but it is really expensive and not covered at all by insurance. So my husband's a teacher and a coach and so \$14,000 out of pocket was really tough for us. And we just didn't have the funds to try again, so my team actually started the "Give Grace" campaign as a means to help us raise money to try one more time.

BS: Oh, I didn't know that.

MS: I know!

BS: So they started it in order that you could do an IVF one more time.

MS: Yes.

BS: And did you do it again?

MS: We are still praying through timing, so tentatively we're going to try again this fall. I just needed these two years to really like grieve the experience and let the Lord heal my heart. And that's such a huge important part of my message is just like letting the Lord heal you when you've walked through something hard, not rushing that grieving process. And before we stepped out and did that again, just being able to really grieve and walk through that.

BS: People don't understand, too, how hard it is on couples that are trying to have kids.

MS: Right.

BS: Russ and Deanna Jacobson have a story where they actually came to faith through this process of like trying to have kids. For years, they couldn't. And it taught them to ask the deeper questions. They actually ended up having the kids, but a lot of times these couples don't have kids.

MS: Right, right.

BS: So like what do I do with that and what do I do with that space?

MS: And that's such a big part of my message is what if God says no. And it's not just the struggle of having kids. I think in life so many of us walk through really, really tough things and I think as Christians we tend to give those stereotypical messages to encourage people like 'it'll happen when it's supposed to happen,' or 'this is God's will for your life.' But really just encouraging people to roll up their sleeves and love people through something hard. I think it's really easy to hide behind the excuse of I don't know what to say, or I don't know what to do, but really nothing you can say or do is going to change the situation so just loving people; rolling up your sleeves, being the body of Christ, being the hands and feet of Jesus and saying 'how can I love you through this?' Like if you don't know, just ask.

And then just also on the flip side, as the person that's struggling, how do you deal with that of what if God says no and finding joy in that season. We don't have our happy ending right now, but I will say this past year has been one of the most joyful years of my life because of Jesus and the hope that he gives us.

BS: Tell me more about that because that's the thing. I feel like this touches on a deeper issue, which is this sense of insufficiency that people feel: I don't have enough time, I don't have enough money, I'm not at the place where I thought I'd be in life, or for a lot of people say I haven't met that person yet, I thought I'd be married by now. What have you learned about that? How can you have joy because of Jesus? Tell me about that.

MS: Right. Well I think for me, my life looks totally differently than I imagined it would. I thought we would have three or four kids by now, I would still be in sales and then God just..

BS: Are you a planner?

MS: Totally. Pre this struggle, I was a planner through and through. I lived for the future. But I think it's just taught me to live fully in the moment and I don't know, I think just walking through something like this it changes your perspective on what other people are going through. It opens your eyes and gives you sensitivity to what other people are going through.

So I think finding joy in that season - how I've done it is just counting my blessings. It's so easy to have the pity party and to say like oh poor, poor pitiful me, my life doesn't look like I planned it. I wanted this and I wanted that, but that's my plans. It's not God's plans. And laying down like fully, that's what we're called to do as Christians, laying our lives down at the foot of the cross and saying, God, you got this. Like your plans, not mine. And being able to really be okay with that and that's hard. A lot of tears came in the process but just being confident that God loves you and he is for you. And whatever he is bringing you through, there is light at the end of the tunnel. The light may not be kids for us, but he's blessed me with this amazing business and given me this platform

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to share my story. And I'm a really shy person by nature, and I think God calls us to things that we feel so unequipped for so that we need him and rely on him more fully.

BS: That's awesome. And it is a successful business, isn't it. I mean it's turned into this great thing, right?

MS: It really has. It's been a whirlwind of two and a half years.

BS: How do people, if they want to like support you or buy some of your stuff, Scarlett & Gold, how do they...

MS: Yes, so you can go to our website scarlettandgoldshop.com or you can follow us on Instagram at [scarlettandgoldshop](https://www.instagram.com/scarlettandgoldshop) so those are the best ways to find us.

BS: Great. Well just as your closing words, I really feel like you have actually a pastoral heart. As a pastor, I can see it in you that there's this wanting to use your own wounded-ness to heal others, which I think is like the way of Jesus to do ministry.

There are millions of people listening to you and they're going through all sorts of heartache: sickness, death, loss, financial troubles. What do you say to them?

MS: I would say to the person that's hurting, one, you are not alone. And two, share your heartache with somebody. Like the body of Christ, we are called to roll up our sleeves and walk through hard things with people. So share it with somebody and know that you're not alone. And two, on the flip side, if you know somebody that's struggling, step out of your comfort zone. Don't hide behind the excuse of I don't know what to say, I don't know what to do, I don't know how to fix it, just love them and ask how can I love you through this. How can I pray for you? And just know that no matter what, even if your life doesn't look like you thought it would, God can still use you in powerful ways for the kingdom, and that is really cool.

BS: Powerful word. Thank you, Megan Smalley. We so appreciate you being here.

MS: Thank you so much!

BS: God bless you.

MS: Thank you so much.

WELCOME/COME VISIT – BS

Thank you for watching today and wherever you are, we pray that if you're ever in this area, please come down to Shepherd's Grove. We want to meet you. We have an awesome community of joy, and this just might be the place where God can have you planted. We know that life is better when you're planted in a church, so if you're ever here, come down, we'd love to meet you.

DECLARATION – BS

Would you hold your hands out like this as a sign of receiving and we're going to say this creed 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 the world.

MESSAGE – Bobby Schuller "Gratitude in an Anxious World"

Well, today I almost want to say thank you because today I am beaming. I have spent the whole week writing this sermon on gratitude and have decided to sort of put it into action this week as I'm writing to make sure I'm sort of in the spirit of the theme. And because of that, I've arrived happier! I have had an easier week, I have seen the good things in my life, I have been less stressed, I've been more joy-filled, I've had better vision for the future for this church and for life, and I've recognized the value of gratitude. And I just want to say thank you. Because I want to say that I am thankful for you, I'm thankful for everyone that's a part of this church, that's watching on television. I'm so thankful for every member, every volunteer. Thank you for the choir, and thank you all of you guys who do parking and the greet squad and the ushers and the cameramen, and everyone, and all the pastors and volunteers that make this place a wonderful place. And I can tell you that even now as I'm saying thank you, joy is bubbling up in my heart because when you thank people and when you speak your gratitude out loud, it builds and drums up joy inside of you.

Today, we're going to talk about putting into practice a life of gratitude. Not having an attitude of gratitude, but having a practice of gratitude. Actually doing stuff in which you're thanking people, and feeling thankful in the life you live. I think there is no better way to be a joyful person than to be grateful. And if you think about it, you've never known a very grateful person who is not also a very happy person, right?

So gratitude and joy are almost synonymous. You want a happier life? Slow down and be grateful for the many joys and good things that are in your life, and you are. You are a grateful person.

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You are the type of person who is now opening your heart to the many gifts that God has already given you. Nietzsche said that the human being is someone who can get used to anything. I think that sometimes we've gotten used to the many wonderful things in our life. It's time to get unused to the good things in our life, to slow down, and to say God, thank you. Thank you for the tremendous gifts that you've given me. I'm so grateful for that.

You are moving from a mindset of scarcity to a mindset of sufficiency. And let's begin there. Many of us have this nagging feeling of scarcity. Not enough. How many of you, when you go to bed and you're setting your alarm clock, you do the sleep math? Okay. I'm getting up at 7:00, its 11:36; I'm getting seven hours and 24 minutes of sleep. That's almost 8, it's not quite 8, but it's almost. Right? And this was a great thought that came from Lynn Twist. Our first thought when we wake up in the morning is I didn't get enough sleep. So the first thought that we begin the day with is I didn't get enough sleep, and that almost always goes into a bigger statement: I don't have enough time. And this touches on an even bigger thing that I don't have enough money, I don't have enough time, I don't have enough power, I don't have enough recognition, I don't have enough good weather. I don't have enough.

And so it's almost like every day when we begin with I don't have enough sleep, we're already losing. We're already beginning our day from a mindset of insufficiency. Of always being behind, of never catching up to where we think we should be. And so what works into our day is a mindset of insufficiency, of lack, of having something, of having blessings but not quite enough. And I want to say to you but you have enough, you are enough, and that God is building in your mind right now, he is moving you from a place, a mindset of insufficiency to a place of sufficiency; a place of scarcity to a place of fullness, joy, and especially gratitude.

It's amazing how many people, even though they have so much in their lives, walk every day with a feeling of scarcity. I don't have enough of God. I don't have enough of my friends anymore. I don't have enough of this.

I will never forget. I was in Swaziland. Some of you were there with us a while ago, 2005, and we were there as a church to plant gardens in Africa to help fight the hunger issue. We went into Swaziland to plant gardens, which was a way in which Swazi's could basically do little mini farms and we were planting this food.

And I remember when we were there, one of our first days there were three little boys who were orphans, and all three of them were really skinny, and they had the belly, you know, because they were starving. And we gave them our lunch and we spent the day with them. But I remember seeing that these boys as horrible and hard as their lives looked, they were so joyful. They were happy. They were playing soccer with a rock. I mean like they were making toys out of stuff. These were kids that were very obviously joyful. And I remembered those kids in my mind for weeks and it was weeks later I flew home and I was invited to a party with a friend of my grandparents. And I sat down with this man who I've known for years who's a billionaire with a "B" and is a wonderful man. He's brilliant, he's generous, he's done amazing things in the world, he's kind, he's warm, and I actually wanted to sit down with him and kind of learn something from him.

So we're sitting at this couch, but it was the first time I had seen - this man is sad. He had a sad spirit behind his eyes even though he had done so much good and was such a good person. And I was talking to him and he said 'you know, Bobby, I never really made it in business.' Now keep in mind, this guy came from nothing. He had nothing, and I think at the time was worth four point something billion dollars. Four billion dollars is four thousand million dollars, okay? It's a lot of money. And he says 'you know, Bobby,' and he was being honest, 'I never really made it in business. It's like I just never made it.' And he was like, 'but my sons, my sons will make it.' And it was just this brief sentence but I remember looking at him. He kind of looked afar off, sad, now an old man in the twilight of his life. We're sitting in a palace, in one of the most amazing houses I've ever seen, and he's got so many friends and people who love him, and all I saw was a wealthy man who had done so much for so many people, lived such an amazing life, that felt scarce. Insufficient. He didn't do enough. He didn't quite get where he wanted to be.

So how can you have those kids who have nothing and are dying, and yet they feel alive, joyful and sufficient. And the answer is gratitude. Gratitude. Gratitude is a posture in the body in which I have a completely open heart to recognize the many wonderful gifts that are in my life. And it's a discipline to say that even though I'm ambitious, I'm hungry, I have dreams, I have goals, where I am now is where God has me and he has given me just so much and I am just so thankful. Thank you, God for what I have. And God is moving you, even now, from being in a place of scarcity and a mindset of scarcity, to being in a spirit of sufficiency where you can say with joy I am enough,

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I have enough, God has given me everything I need, and I can enjoy today with joy and you will! God is springing up in you a well of gratitude and joy and life.

God is building and making you into the kind of person that people joke about because you're so optimistic. God is building into you and making you the kind of person that is the example when people talk about that guy or that girl that is just so happy to be alive. The world needs people like that, by the way. The world needs people like you. People who are grateful and joyful, and not entitled or angry or blaming others, but are just thankful for all the wonderful things God has given them.

There's a guy like this in my life, by the way. It's actually my wife's cousin, Davie Morris. Davie is the most awesome guy. Davie... once my brother-in-law called him on the phone, and he answered the phone and he was like 'hey Nate,' and he was like 'hey Davie, how are you?' And he's like 'fine! I'm in a tree! I climbed a tree and I'm sitting on a branch now!' And this is like such a perfect story because this guy, Davie, is the most joyful, grateful, life-giving, life-loving person I've ever known. And I already know what most of you thought. When I told that story, there was a handful of you who went, oh you mean he's an idiot. He's dumb.

And this is the first problem I want to address that we have too often linked gratitude and positivity with being Pollyanna or not intellectual. And can I just say that this guy Davie, by the way, is brilliant. He got married and his wife said you need to make more money, and so he said well what's something that makes money. I know, computer engineering. He went to the library and taught himself how to be a computer engineer and programmer and landed a really well paying job just like that. So he's a very smart guy. And there is no link between realism and intellectualism, okay? I want to tell all of you that it is good to be positive. It is good to be hopeful. And it is good to be filled with gratitude every day, and it is also very smart.

The scripture reading for today is 1st Thessalonians, and my wife read today, and she was terrific, of course, but I'm going to read it again. And I want to read it slowly. Now when Paul's writing to this church, this is a persecuted church. They are a religious minority, they are slandered, they are beaten, they receive no justice, many of them are Romans, and Romans had certain rights, but those rights were being thrown away because they were Christian. And he said: "Make sure nobody pays back wrong for wrong." This is such a message our world needs today, by the way. "But always strive to do what is good for each and for everyone else. Rejoice always." Everybody say always. So when do you rejoice? Always. "Pray continually. Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

If there was ever a reason that people got to feel betrayed and angry and not pray and say God where are you, and do all of these things that many of us do today, it would be this church, and they didn't. In fact Paul is actually speaking out of his own experience. He's the guy that when he's beaten and thrown into prison just begins to sing and rejoice and live with joy in spite of the terrible circumstances he is facing. He is joyful, like you. He is thankful, like you. And he is hopeful, like you. And the world needs hopeful, positive, joy-filled people like you because trust me, we've got plenty of critics and they're not helping anyone.

I also want to just point out that this is what worship is. Worship is the regular rhythm that in spite of our circumstances and our grieving, we still decide to say to God thank you. Nearly every worship song we sing is basically saying thank you for something. For the cross, for life, for our friendships, for our family, for our church, for the many good things that God is giving us.

And you know what's amazing about gratitude? When I hear non-religious people say thank you, or like atheists, they say practice gratitude saying thank you; be thankful for the things that you've given. C.S. Lewis said this: he said there's never a worse time in the life of an atheist when they feel grateful but they don't know to whom they feel grateful. And see that's the thing is that when you feel grateful for life, for what you've been given, there is this thing in you that knows that that emotion is right and good. And it points your heart towards God even if you don't believe in God. I think that's what I'm saying is that there's something about gratitude, about being grateful that reinforces faith, that diminishes doubt, that springs up a well of joy and life in us, and even for those who doubt in their faith and their walk, when they practice gratitude, the thing that is connected between them and God becomes stronger. When we say we're grateful, I always ask well who you grateful to? And like if you really press somebody, they're going to say, if they don't believe in God, the universe, or something. So living a life of gratitude is one of the best things you could do for your job, one of the best things you can do for your relationships, and one of the best things you can do to finish life and say wow, that was a good life, and you will.

Our world is too negative and I am sick of it. And I know it's ironic that I'm being negative about the negativity of the world but it is getting old. I think news and politics are training us to be negative.

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And what happens, and this is something Shawn Anchor pointed out. What happens is many of us have this thing he jokingly calls medical school syndrome. So he talked about his brother-in-law, and this is a real thing. His brother-in-law, who was in medical school, and he called him and he said 'Shawn, I've got leprosy.' He said 'what do you mean?' He's like 'I've got leprosy, I've got all the things, all the signs that show from leprosy and this is terrible because just last week I got over menopause.' He's a man. And so like medical students always think they're sick because they're always studying all the symptoms that make you sick.

And many of us are struggling from that. All we're doing is reading and ingesting all this negative stuff and it's changing the way we view our lives, and the world, and you don't need that in your life. Look there's always going to be bad stuff. There's always going to be work that has to be done, so do your work, but enjoy your life. Can we just say enjoy your life? Okay. Yes. You don't have to wait until after November to enjoy your life. You can enjoy it today.

There was this thing on Twitter and this whole negativity thing is getting so over the top. There was this thing on Twitter, I took a picture of it, actually, and this one just drove me nuts. I wanted to throw my phone across the room. And the meme was, and it was promoted by Twitter, "when did America break your heart?" And then what happened is everybody started tweeting about how America has let them down. I'm just thinking you entitled ninnies. I'm like you need to travel! But I'm like why do we have to sit around and form a discipline about complaining and being negative about all the things that we don't like about our country. There's always going to be stuff you don't like about the country but there are always so many great things about California, and America, and whatever country you're from. There are wonderful things about where you live. And we need to sit around and say when did America bless you? When did America help you? When did America open doors for you? And that's a good thing!

So we're all worried about this sort of spirit of expectation and entitlement that is being sort of woven into us, and you have rights, absolutely. You have things that you deserve but let's not live our lives from a spirit of entitlement. Let's be surprised by life. You know some of the most joyful things that you're going to experience in life are the big surprises that you get. I've actually never had a surprise party. I've always wanted one. But I've always been a part of them. It's so much work. And I'm usually the guy that messes it up, like I didn't get the info right. But there's something about like a big fun surprise that's so joyful. And many of us, it's like we're such planners, we want to make sure everything is in order to feel safe, but what we're really doing is saying I don't want any surprise in my life because bad surprises are just as bad as good surprises are good. And I say just take them both. Let's live life, shall we? Let's be brave, let's be whole-hearted and vulnerable in the way that we live. So be surprised by life.

And I just want to say this: just let go of your expectations. I know a lot of pastor's talk about having expectations. I actually think it's a bad thing. I think when you expect something then when you actually get it you're like okay, I got it. But when you don't expect something and you get it, you're thrilled! Or vice versa. If you expect something and you don't get it, you're all angry and upset. You know, I can tell you that one thing you can expect is that God has good in store for you, but what it is you don't know, and I can tell you it's bigger and better than you thought it would be. That's the one thing I can tell you.

So just let it go and be patient and enjoy your day today. Let go of expectations you have for people, let go of the expectations you have for your spouse and your friends. Just be surprised when good things happen and let it go. Okay?

So I have some ideas for you, okay? These are things that have worked for me. All right, you ready? First of all, we want to put gratitude into practice. It's more than having a mindset, it's actually doing stuff that makes us feel grateful. I had a friend in high school who was totally into rock and roll. And his room was slathered in posters of Led Zeppelin, Metallica. He always wanted to be in a band and he finally got an electric guitar and an amp and had it set up in his room and he got a pedal but he never played. And so he looked like he was in a band, he had a guitar, he was into music, but he never actually rocked. And he had the mindset of rock but he never did it. He never did anything. And you can have the mindset of gratitude, and that's good, but let's start practicing it. Let's be grateful people. Let's start telling people that we're thankful for them. Let's start telling God.

So the first thing we want to do is we want to begin by walking with a slower posture. So we want to slow down because when you speed up, you don't experience stuff, good or bad, right? So in our desire to not experience the bad in life, we speed up so that we can get through stressful situations, and I'm just saying slow down. Open your heart to the sufficiency of the Father's world in which you live right now. Become a tourist in your own town.

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I remember my wife and I, we went to Paris. Wow, Paris, right? Amazing. Beautiful art, incredible architecture, amazing food, and we came home and I was all bummed out because I had to come home to Southern California. And I remember, I lived in Old Town Orange at the time, and I was walking around like I walked from my house to Old Town to get a cup of coffee and two Japanese tourists stopped me and they asked if I could take their picture next to a drawing of this old like arrow hand that was pointing. And I was like oh sure, I can do that. They were like your town is so amazing. I was like oh thank you. And then I like stopped and looked at the hand, I was like I've never seen that hand before. That is kind of cool. And I remember thinking, I'm like they think Japan is boring and they like my town, and I think my town is boring, and I want to go to Japan. And I realized like what if I were to just pretend I was a tourist in my own town today. So I started doing that. I started like trying to look at it and pretending like I was on vacation. And it was amazing how I experienced my town with fresh eyes. I was like this town is awesome. And you can be a tourist in your own town. You can.

Be thankful for three things every day. This is something my wife and I do every night and it makes all the difference. They've actually proved that if you say out loud three things you were thankful for that day, for 21 days in a row, your brain chemistry changes to be a happier brain. Did you know that? And it can be something as dumb as like I'm so happy today it didn't rain. I am happy today that my car started. I'm happy today that I came home alive. Those work. Whatever you want. It will actually train your brain to look for the good things in your life rather than all the things you're upset about and complaining about.

Finally, and this is so important. Nothing will make you feel more joyful than telling somebody you're grateful for them. It's true. Pay attention to your body. Next time you go out of your way and say you know what, I'm so grateful for you because of X, Y and Z. Listen to the feeling, the emotion that you have in your own body. It's going to be akin to joy. So if you want to feel joy, tell somebody that you're grateful for them. Write an email to somebody, one of your employees or colleagues or your boss just saying I'm grateful for you. You're a terrific boss. You should write that to me. Or whatever. You write to people.

When I was on mission trips, we used to really pay attention to our words and the way that it affected our team. And one of our number one rules was don't state the obvious. So when we were in Thailand and it was like so smoggy you couldn't breathe, and it was a hundred degrees outside, and a hundred percent humidity, you weren't allowed to say it's hot. It's like we know. We know it's hot. And this was such a good rule to not state the obvious unless the obvious was that you're grateful to be in Thailand, then you could say it.

I had this rule when I used to lead young men in groups on these trips, and we had this... boys love, especially when they become friends, love to bust each other's chops. Chops is the word. And they would always tease each other and all this. And we had this rule and it was called seven up. So if one guy said something negative about another guy, it didn't matter what it was, all that guy had to do was look at him and say seven up. And seven up meant that that guy had to say seven things that he was thankful for about the guy who just insulted him. And let me tell you this was a fantastic discipline when it came to the moral of our team. And it was so fun to look at somebody who just really got you and just be like oh that's good, seven up. Oh, it was great. And the reason is because it trains you to say what you're grateful for. So if you're grateful for people, tell them.

Now I want to ask you how many of you know how to text? I actually want you to raise your hand if you know how to text. Okay put your hands down. If you don't know how to text, raise your hand. Okay, all right. That's all right. We might be able to learn. How many of you have a cell phone, raise your hand. Okay. With you, I mean. Still, okay that's pretty good. Choir, are we good? Okay. If you're watching at home, you can raise your hand, too. Pull out your cell phone right now, pull it out. Pull it out. Choir, you can pull your cell phones out but you got to put it away before Don sees before the anthem. Okay?

Now you got your cell phone? Now think who's somebody you're grateful for? Think of that person. And I want you to text them right now and tell them that you're thankful for them. Go ahead do it. Be vulnerable, come on. Don't be too cool for this. I'll have a seat. You take your time. So let's go. I don't have my phone or I would be also probably texting Don who wouldn't get it till he got home, because I'm thankful for the choir. You still doing it? That's good. Are you doing it? Or are you too cool? Some of you are too cool to do this, huh? All right. And some of you don't know how to text so that's something, too. That's all right. It's never too late to learn.

Okay how many of you did it, raise your hand? It's cool if you didn't do it, don't worry. So about ten percent of you did it. Really, raise your hand if you... or some of you are still doing it.

Gratitude in an Anxious World

Raise your hand if you're doing it or did it? Okay that's pretty good. That's about half. That's pretty good. Most of the choir did it, see? I'm always preaching to the choir. Anyway.

Think about how you felt when you sent a thankful text to a person. And I just want to reiterate that when you're thankful and when you put words into practice of gratitude, it reiterates and forms a posture of joy and openness to the goodness of the Father's world, and he has given you so much and more is coming. And so whatever it is that you're missing, and whatever it is that you're lacking, believe in your heart that you can be at peace even now because God has good things in store for you. Your best days are ahead of you. God loves you more than you love yourself. He has good things coming for you, so be at peace. Worrying won't get you there faster. Have patience and be grateful for the many wonderful gifts that God has given you, in Jesus' name, amen. All right.

BENEDICTION - BS

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.