

Hour of Power Deutschland  
Steinerne Furt 78  
86167 Augsburg

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

E-Mail: [info@hourofpower.de](mailto:info@hourofpower.de)  
[www.hourofpower.de](http://www.hourofpower.de)

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

IBAN:  
DE43600501010002894829

BIC:  
SOLADEST600

Büro Schweiz:

Hour of Power Schweiz  
Seestr. 11  
8594 Güttingen  
Tel.: 071 690 07 81  
[info@hourofpower-schweiz.ch](mailto:info@hourofpower-schweiz.ch)  
[www.hourofpower-schweiz.ch](http://www.hourofpower-schweiz.ch)

Spendenkonto:

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

Hour of Power - 24.04.2022

## WELCOME – Bobby & Hannah Schuller

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

HS: And welcome church family and welcome visitors. Thank you for worshipping with us. You know, God is the only one who can see the big picture of your life. The only persons exist. You can trust Him even during the coronavirus because He is on your side, and you are so loved by Him.

BS: We're so, so excited to have Pastor Bayless Conley as our guest speaker today and he'll be preaching for us later. Well let's begin this service with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you so much for everything you've given us, everything you're doing for us. We thank you, Lord, that when we're suffering, when we're going through hard times, when we're facing challenges, we're not alone. Lord, just because we can't hear you doesn't mean you're not speaking. We pray, Father, that you give us ears to hear, give us eyes to see. Help us, Lord, to listen to your Holy Spirit, to be full of the spirit, and Lord to be more like Jesus in everything we do. It's in His name we pray, amen.

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

## SCRIPTURE – 1. Corinthians 1,26-29 – Chad Blake

In preparation for Pastor Bayless' message, hear these words from the apostle Paul found in 1 Corinthians chapter 1: For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. This is the word of our Lord.

## INTERVIEW – Trina McNeilly (TM) and Chad Blake (CB)

Trina McNeilly is an author, blogger, and speaker who finds beauty and inspiration through design and home projects. Her passion, however, is to bring people to Jesus, and how we can find our home in Him. Her new book, *Unclutter Your Soul: Overcome What Overwhelms You*, is a practical approach to how we can cleanse our soul and mind, and make room for the Lord and the good things that He has planned for our lives.

CB: Trina, hi, thank you for joining us today.

TM: Hi, good morning. It's such an honor to be here.

CB: Well, we are honored to have you here. So for those who may not be familiar with your story or your journey, could you share a little bit about who you are in your faith journey?

TM: Yes, yes, so I am a mom of four, a writer and a podcaster, and my faith journey is, I grew up in the church and Sunday school, in youth group. I loved the Lord. And in my young adult life, life looked pretty Pinterest perfect from the social strains, but then it kind of turned upside down when things in my family of origin kind of went awry, and it broke me, and so I was faced with emotional pain, as so many other people are; depression, anxiety, and so I've been on a journey these past five years finding beauty in brokenness and learning to unclutter my soul, and experience peace and joy even in the midst of hard things.

CB: Awesome. You have a new book out, actually using that phrase, Unclutter Your Soul. So what is soul clutter? What do you mean by that, and what inspired you to write about it?

TM: Yes, so as my first book was coming out, I found myself in the midst of kind of dealing with what I call soul clutter, and it's kind of the soundtrack of your soul; the stories that you tell yourself. It can be emotional pain, stress, anxiety, depression, addiction. It can manifest in different ways, but really, it's kind of just that soundtrack and the thoughts that are continually kind of taking up space in the inner life.

CB: You use that phrase Pinterest perfect, which I love that phrase, but how much do you think social media and just the way the world has become what it is, and maybe even what these last eighteen months/two years have done. Do you think that's also contributing to this feeling of cluttering your soul?

TM: Yes, absolutely. I think for a lot of people, they already were experiencing soul clutter, they just maybe weren't aware and as we've experienced lockdowns and isolation from people, we just haven't had the normal tools that we use to distract ourselves, and so we're kind of having to face a lot of things that are going on on the inside, and social media does play into that because we constantly have these screens before us, and we see everyone's highlight reels, or a perception of how we think other people's lives are going and we compare it to our worst moments, to our pain and to the difficult times. So it definitely has an effect on our inner life.

CB: And it's so easy to look at someone else's social media profile and say I want that life and just have no idea what is going on behind that picture, or how many pictures it took to get that one to post. I think about all the time just how distracting phones are. What a blessing they are for breaking down on the side of a road or something like that, but I am more likely to leave my wallet at home than I am my I-phone, that's how attached it is to me. And recently, having little ones at home, saw a photo collection that a photographer did that was so convicting where it was 'this is what your child sees,' and it was all these poses of just looking at an empty hand. They took the I-phone out and so I love that you're writing about uncluttering your soul and breaking free of the distractions. So can you share with us a little bit like what is the biblical approach like how we live this freer and more spacious life?

TM: Yes, so I mean the first and most important thing we can do is invite the Holy Spirit to lead us. And when we're believers, He indwells in us, and so I like to look through the metaphor of a home because I love home and design, but also because we are a living home. Christ comes to live in us and says for us to make our home in Him as He makes His home in us. So just knowing that we're not alone as we're trying to go through and sort through difficult things like soul clutter.

But the process for me is really a simple one, which I break down in great detail in the book, but it starts with observing so to observe what's going on on the inside, to take a good hard look just as you would when you want to practically declutter a home, you have to see what's there. And then to own it, to take ownership of your junk. That doesn't mean that you own it, and you want to keep it forever, but just owning it and saying I own this and sometimes it takes confession before the Lord, sometimes it's a responsibility, but you just own it and meaning you're going to do something about it. And then next is to overcome, and I love that one because it seems sometimes insurmountable, but we already are overcomers because that's what Christ calls us. So it's who we are, but it's something that we do and it's a continual process, and it's just really participating and being led by the spirit, keeping in step with Him.

CB: Amen, amen on that. I love the idea of you approaching this from the lens of designing a home and just thinking about how designing a home is so important to how we feel and how we enter the room and how we carry ourselves and taking that history of your skills in that and applying that to the spiritual life. I'm sure it's going to be such a riveting read. So right now, in this room, we have people that are listening to us talk, we have people online that are watching, we have millions of people around the world that will hear this interview.

## But God

What encouragement do you have today for someone who might be saying oh man, that's me? Like I have a cluttered soul or is really just feeling deeply what you are saying and connecting with it. What encouragement do you have for them today?

TM: Well, I would just say, because it can be overwhelming when you start to take a look at all of this, but I would just say to give yourself grace, and compassion as you would to a friend, and to not be in a hurry. These things take time. I know that when you think of decluttering a home, there is a real trend to just get everything all out at once and get rid of it and move on, but it doesn't work that way with our inner life. It takes time and there's nothing wrong with that. And talking again about comparison and looking at how other people do things, and we've got that view constantly with social media, but you're on your own journey and God's creating a custom plan for you, like a custom closet. And so just give yourself time and compassion and the Holy Spirit will lead you. Just trust His process and direction.

CB: So good. So good to remember that it's the Lord's timing. We have a phrase that we say.. our declaration that we say each and every week here that says I don't have to hurry. And man, that can really just be so convicting; the Lord's timing. We serve a God whose timing is perfect.

Well Trina, we are so excited for your book that is coming out. It'll be available everywhere on February 15th. It's called Unclutter Your Soul. Thank you so much for sharing your story with us and remember that God loves you and so do we.

TM: Thank you. God bless.

### DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord. We're going to say this creed together as we always do. Say it with me: 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.

### INTRO TO BAYLESS CONLEY – Bobby Schuller

Well, I'm just so excited to have back in the house today, Pastor Bayless Conley. If you've watched Hour of Power at all, you have seen him. He's already preached for us twice this year, and we're just so grateful for all he's done for us and all the ways he continues to bless us and so many other churches. He also hosts the television program Answers with Bayless Conley. Would you please welcome my dear friend, Pastor Bayless Conley.

### MESSAGE – Bayless Conley "But God"

Thank you, and it is a privilege to be back with you again. And I just wanted to acknowledge the musicians. They dedicate their gifts to God, and we are so thankful for what they do. Can we give them a hand, even though they've left the stage? So wonderful. I'm going to tell you what my goal is. I want to get your hopes up. Whether you're sitting in the auditorium here, watching online or watching on television anywhere around the world, my goal is to get your hopes up. Reason for that, we have such a big God, such a powerful God, such a compassionate God, we should get our hope up. Besides that, Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for." Without hope, faith has nothing to give substance to and without faith, it's impossible to please God. We're going to look at a few different stories, or portions of stories in the scriptures in the next few minutes, and I'm going to look at a phrase that we find in each one of those that is absolutely powerful, and I want to begin in Acts chapter 7, reading a couple of verses about Joseph. Acts 7 in verse 9 says, "In the patriarchs becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt, but God was with him and delivered him out of all of his troubles and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house."

## But God

Joseph's brothers were envious, they threw him into a pit. Imagine he's just a young teenage boy, he's got to be terrified. When they pull him up, he's thinking okay, this was some sort of a grand joke, but then they literally sell him to some slave traders that were passing by. No doubt his hands were bound, he may have been whipped, yelled at in a language he didn't understand. He's taken into the land of Egypt, put on the auction block again and sold to a man named Potiphar. He doesn't understand the language, he doesn't know the culture, he's been betrayed by his very own family, by those he trusted most. He's separated from everything that he understands, everything that he knows, everything that he loves. Ends up in Potiphar's house and we know the story. Potiphar's wife tries to seduce him. When Joseph will not comply, she lies and said the young Hebrew boy tried to rape me. Her husband, enraged, throws Joseph in prison where he spends several years. He interpreted the butler's and the baker's dream, but when the butler promised to remember him to Pharaoh, he forgot, and Joseph stays in that prison. He has nothing but a hard way to go. He's been thrown into circumstances beyond his control, but then we come to these two beautiful words "but God." His brothers sold him, they betrayed him, but God was with him. Those two words can change everything. Those two words "but God" can turn impossibilities into possibilities, and they made all the difference in the world for Joseph. But God was with him. The odds were against him, but God. There's no way his dream could come to pass, but God. God delivered him out of all of his troubles and gave him favor and wisdom and took him from the bottom and put him on the top. Even when you come to the very last chapter of Genesis, their father Jacob has died and all the brothers think all right, now that daddy's out of the way, Joseph is going to hurt us because of all the evil we did to him. And they come to him, and Joseph said look, don't be afraid. You meant it against me for evil, but God, but God, but God meant it for good, to bring it about as it is this day to save many people alive. And what the devil and his crowd mean for evil, God can turn into good. And perhaps as you sit here today, or wherever you might be, you find yourself maybe betrayed by those you trusted most, perhaps you've been thrown into circumstances beyond your control. Maybe your personal world has been turned upside down and things would look hopeless if not for those two words – but God. You take God out of the equation and things do become hopeless, but when you factor Him in, all things are possible. Twenty-three years ago, I was preaching this very sermon, and a man walked in the church, alcohol on his breath, he was drunk. He came in, listened to the message and thought maybe there's help for me. Gave his heart and his soul to Jesus. He actually was in the last stages of alcoholism, had ruined his liver, couldn't work because of an injury to his back, and his wife had kicked him out because he'd been unfaithful. She said I'm just done; I can't do this anymore. His whole life is falling apart. But he got saved. He gave his life to the Lord. One of the pastors prayed for him and God healed his back. He was delivered from alcoholism. I spent some time with him in his house just a few days ago. He and his wife are back together and have been for many years. He's been sober for 23 years. The house was filled with joy, filled with laughter, filled with friends, and God has given him an amazing life. But he was on his way to just being one more divorce statistic, a young bitter man that was going to an early grave, except for two words – but God. And I want to tell you there's a "but God" waiting for you, as well. If we back up in time just a little bit to Joseph's father Jacob, Jacob had a "but God" experience in his life, as well. He's gone to work for his uncle Laban. Laban is a crooked businessman. He tries to swindle Jacob, and Jacob is married, Rachel and Leah, the two daughters, and finally God comes to him and says Jacob, I want you to go back to the land of your fathers. I've seen all that Laban has done to you. And we read in Genesis 31, beginning in verse 4, it says "So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock, and said to them I see your father's countenance, that it is not favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. And you know with all of my might I've served your father, yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God, but God did not allow him to hurt me." Swindled, cheated, treated unfairly, but God.

## But God

Now you might be in a similar situation today, wherever you're listening to this. Maybe you've been treated unfairly at work, passed over for promotions. Maybe you're overworked and underpaid. Maybe you trusted someone who misled you in a business deal and you lost a lot of money and things would look bleak if not for two words – but God. Jacob said, “but God did not allow him to hurt me.” And God prospered Jacob, despite the fact that Laban tried to cheat him. And yet in this story, there's a couple important things that we should consider. Number one is Jacob stayed in it for the long haul. God brought him to a place of blessing through a process that went on for several years. We all love it when one of the sudden-ly's of God happens, and we read through the scriptures and sometimes it says, “suddenly the Lord did this or that” and we love it. But most of the time, God works through a process, and we have to be willing to stay in there and let the process take place. I had a friend in college that was sort of like the rest of us. He was a struggling college student. He didn't have much money. Was finding it hard to pay his tuition. And he was actually a little worse off than some of the rest of us. And one day, he told me a story. He said Bayless, you know my life could have been very different. I said what do you mean? He said well my grandfather actually entered into a business with another man. They started a little baking business making bread. But my grandfather was an impatient man and things didn't happen as quickly as he wanted them to. And so he went to his partner, said I want out. I want to sell you my half of the business, and the partner was just filled with vision and dreams, and said are you sure? I'm certain this thing is going to take off. And he said my grandfather said no, I want out. And so he got out of the business. Well, his business partners name was Langendorf. Yes, some of you know that name. I remember when Langendorf bread trucks went up and down just about every street in the U.S. bringing bread to people's homes. In the 1940's, they were the sixth largest corporation in the United States, and that's right up there with the auto industry, steel and oil. Langendorf was the sixth largest corporation. They had twenty plants across the U.S. that had these enormous machines that made seven hundred loaves of bread a minute. They literally made billions of loaves of bread. My friend's grandfather just couldn't handle the process. And my point in that if you're trusting God, be willing to trust Him over the long haul. Let Him do the process. And the other thing that we find connected with this “but God” experience of Jacob, and its actually in the same chapter in Genesis 31 as God's talking to him, God says to him, “I'm the God of Bethel where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now I want you to get out of this land and go back to the land of your family.” God specifically references the vow that Jacob had made to him. And if you read it, you just back up a couple chapters, Genesis 28, Jacob has left the land of his family, his only possession is a stick. He has a staff, nothing else. Not another thing to his name. And he anoints a pillar, and he makes a vow, he says, “God if you'll be with me, I will give you one tenth of everything that you give me.” He vowed to be a tither; to honor God with the first part of his income. In Proverbs, it says, “Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your increase, so your barns will be filled with plenty.” And with Jacob, he didn't just do that when things started looking up, he did it in the hard times when it seemed like God wasn't doing much at all. He honored God and showed that God was first in his life by giving God his first and his best, and that was directly tied to his “but God” experience. I loved Victor up here, shared about tithing. It's so important. It's the only place in scripture where God actually invites us to put Him to the test. No other place. God says put me to the test and see if I won't open the windows of heaven and pour out such a blessing you can't even contain it. Bring the first part of your income into my house. There's a gentleman I know, he's part native American, and he used to spend part of his time, he was a preacher, going to different Indian reservations and speaking in the native churches there. And he said, and this was many, many years ago. He said generally the reservations were rife with poverty, the churches weren't any different, no one had a car. If they did, it was held together with baling wire and duct tape. And he said I went in just a depressing atmosphere, and the churches were so poor, and it was depressing to be there.

## But God

He said but I went on one reservation, went to the church and things were different. He said I noticed there were new trucks parked outside and not all new cars, but nice cars outside. And I went inside and there was an air of joy and momentum in the church. He said it was so unusual as I contrasted it in my mind with every other reservation church I'd been to. He said and there was just a bit of prosperity there and blessing from heaven. He said it was so obvious. Said after I preached, I asked the pastor, said pastor, now I've been to a lot of reservations and seen the churches and they're generally depressed and poor, but something's different here. The very atmosphere is different. Can you tell me why? And without hesitation, the pastor said I can tell you exactly why. He said when I came ten years ago, this was just like every other reservation church. It was depressed, only two people owned cars, and basically, they were wrecks going somewhere to happen. That they barely even ran. He said and I began to teach the people to honor God with the first part of whatever He gave them. I told them that it was important to do that; show God that He's first in your life. Put Him to the test. He said and many of the people had nothing. They would walk on the gravel road on the way to church and they didn't have money, so they would find the shiniest stone that they could on that gravel road, and they would bring it into the service and when the offering bucket was passed, they'd put that stone in the offering bucket. He said some Sunday morning's, the whole offering consisted of a bucket full of rocks. He said but slowly, slowly over the next few years, things began to change. God began to open up doors, God began to open up employment and he said today what you see is the result of the people putting God first with their giving. I don't think we can overemphasize the importance of that principle. It was tied to Jacob's "but God" and I believe that if you're willing to stay in over the long haul, and to honor God with what you have, whether it's with little or with much, at the end, you'll be able to stand and say with Jacob, I was mistreated, I was misled, I didn't have all the favor others had, but God did not allow them to hurt me. And then we come to yet another interesting story in the New Testament, the book of Philippians, Paul's writing to this church in Philippi that he loved so much, and in verse 25 of Philippians 2, he writes "Yet I considered it necessary to send you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; since he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick almost unto death, but God. He was sick almost unto death, but God had mercy on him, and not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." You may be ill today; you may have a loved one that is ill and maybe medical science has done all that they can do for them. And maybe your situation is like the woman who we read about in Mark chapter 5. She'd suffered many things from many physicians, and had spent everything she had, but she was nothing better but rather she grew worse. But she came in that crowd, and she grabbed the hem of Jesus' garment. It would have been bad for her; she had been bleeding for 12 years, but God. And I just want to tell you, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Jesus is still a healer today. He's still the Savior today. A lady in our church named Lilly, fabulous woman. Her husband, Carl, just the sweetest man you ever want to meet. Lilly had problems with her eyes. She'd actually had fourteen surgeries on her eyes. One was almost completely blind, the other one wasn't far behind it. Her doctor said Lilly, there's nothing more that we can do for you, and it's only going to get worse from this point. You'll eventually lose your sight completely. I'm sorry, but there's nothing else. We can't do any more corrective surgeries. There's nothing we can do. And back in those days in our church when the message was done, we would open up the altar from the front and people would come and they would kneel in the altar. Some people would be praying about family issues, about their marriage. People would be seeking guidance. Some people came seeking God for healing, and they would kneel up there sometimes ten minutes, sometimes a half an hour just talking with God. And Lilly would come up often. And she would kneel and most of the time she would come up and seek God about her eyes because she didn't want to lose her eyesight.

## But God

And she told me this story, she said I was coming up, and pastor, the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said Lilly, you're already healed. She said okay, Lord. Well, the next morning, Lilly and her husband Carl are on their front porch, their morning ritual enjoying a cup of coffee, and suddenly Lilly realized that she could see the shingles on the roof of the house across the street. She looked in the pine tree in their yard and she said pastor, I could see all the pine needles. She said I looked in Carl's face and I could see his eyes. They were beautiful. I said Carl, your eyes! They're beautiful! He said you can see my eyes? She said I can! And they had a little praise service there on the front porch. The next day, Lilly went back to her eye doctor. He checked her out completely. He said Lilly, both of your eyes are perfect. He said you've been telling me about your church. I want to tell you something, Lilly. This is a miracle of God, and you must go tell your pastor. And so she came to church that next Sunday and told me, she shared with the church and the whole church rejoiced together with her. But God. But God. I'd like to share another with you in the next few minutes and it's the verses that Chad read when he was up on the platform a few minutes ago. It's from 1st Corinthians chapter 1, verse 26. Listen to it and listen for those words. "For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty, and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." You may be the last and the least, not expected by anyone to do anything significant in your life or with your life. Maybe you were not given the opportunities that others were given. Perhaps you didn't have the education that someone else had. Maybe you didn't have the resources made available to you that others had. Your future might not look bright except for two words – but God. God loves choosing the person that everyone counts out to raise them up and do something great through them. That way He gets all the credit. You know I got saved in a street mission more than 45 years ago. I had some pretty major league problems with substance abuse and alcoholism. And I was the only one that came forward when the invitation was given, and I gave my life to Jesus, and I started going to a little church in town. And the truth is is not many people would even speak to me, most of them were afraid of me. I looked so different than they did. I had long hair, I used to weave feathers into my hair, I had a long beard. And most people in the church avoided me. But there were a couple people that were kind to me, and kind of took me under their wing, were trying to help me. And one of the leading Christians in town went to them and said listen, that guy Bayless that you're spending time with, don't bother. He's a lost cause. He'll never amount to anything. I'm telling you, you're spinning your wheels. If you want to sow into someone's life, find someone else besides that guy. He's a loser. But you know what, I'm glad God didn't look at me that way. God looked down and said boy, that boys got some problems. I can do something with him, cause if anything happens with his life, everybody's going to know it wasn't him. But God. God wants to do something through your life as well, my friend. Let me share just a final one with you. This is from Ephesians, chapter 2. Says "You he made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, just as others. But God, but God who is rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved." Dead in trespasses and sins. But God. I'll tell you a little story as I close. I have a friend named Howard. Howard's a few years older than me, and you really would need to know Howard to understand the impact of this story. Howard says the funniest things you've ever heard, but he never smiles when he says it.

## But God

He has this deadpan expression; it makes it ten times funnier. And so there's been a meeting, we went out to see this evangelist preach, and a bunch of us went to a Denny's restaurant after the service, many years ago. And we meet this guy in the Denny's and engage him in conversation. And this guy realizes we're a bunch of Christians. Now I'm a brand-new Christian at the time. And so he's trying to freak us out. And he starts saying 'you guys know I practice witchcraft. Yeah, I've done voodoo. I've cast spells on people.' And Howard, with his deadpan expression looks right at the guy and says 'yeah, I used to be dead.' The guy just looked stunned. Howard said yeah, I was dead in trespasses and sins. Dead to a relationship with God. Lost and undone and then Howard shared his testimony and shared the gospel with that young man in the Denny's restaurant.

And the truth is, without Christ, we are dead and lost in our sins. Friend, the gospel doesn't just make people better, it brings dead people to life. Because of sin, we've been cut off from the life of God. The scripture calls that spiritual death, but thank God, God didn't leave us there. In His great mercy, and because of His love, He sent His own son, born of a virgin who lived a sinless life and showed us what God was like, not distant, aloof and unconcerned. Not occasionally glancing at humanity through some cold clinical eye, but He was a loving father who cared, who was near. And then Jesus was taken by jealous hands, put through a mock trial, beaten without mercy and crucified. And there on that cross, God laid the penalty of our sin on His own son and Jesus willingly took our place and died for me. He died for you. It is the greatest "but God" of all. And now we can have life, now we can come into a relationship with our creator. It's what every heart cries out for. You'll never fill that empty place with anything else. You were made to walk and talk with God.

Father, I pray that your people would be bold and share you with others, and I pray those that are watching would call on the name of the Lord today, in Jesus' name, amen. Amen. God bless you.

### BENEDICTION:

Thank you so much for being with us today. I trust that you're going to have a great day. Remember, Sunday traditionally, if you can, is a day to rest. I want to encourage you to have good food today. Take a nap. Jesus loved naps. Did you know that? Don't check your email. Avoid phone calls from annoying people. It's a YOU day. You and God. Be with the people you love and keep your cellphone away. Put it on airplane mode. If they get up and go to the bathroom, just don't look at your phone, just enjoy where you're at – the smells and the sights and everything. God wants you to live, so enjoy your life today. 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.