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GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

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

HS: Welcome visitors and church family. We love being with you; thank you for being here. You know last Sunday night, a woman named Marie came, and she had fifteen years of severe arthritic pain in her knees and her lower back. She came with a cane; she had a hard time coming in. We prayed and that night she was instantly healed. She is healed and rejoicing now. Yes, she walked out of there just the same as you or me without a cane. Now I'm telling you how can this be? How can this be if Jesus is not alive? And He loves you.

BS: Amen. Encouraging word. Lord, we thank you so much that your Holy Spirit is here with us. And we pray, Father that you would help us today to understand the many things you've called us to be and to do. Lord, we pray that you'd help us renovate our lives so we can do what you're calling us into, Father. We thank you and we love you. It's in Jesus name we pray, Amen.

HS: Amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Romans 5,1-5 - Hannah

In preparation for the message Romans 5, one through five. Therefore, since we have been justified through faith - just as if I'd never done it, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings. Now this word suffering in the Greek is thlipsis, which means pressure or compression. This does not mean sickness. God does not want you sick. He does not want you to have cancer, He does not want you to have mental disorder. This means life's pressure, compression, being persecuted for your faith. Because we know that suffering, or this pressure or compression produces perseverance. Perseverance, character and character hope. And hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. Amen.

INTERVIEW – Guillaume Bignon (GB) with Bobby Schuller (BS)

Guillaume Bignon is an author who was born and raised in France. Guillaume had it all — success in the business world, a gifted musician, and an exceptional athlete. He grew up an atheist until an encounter with a beautiful woman would cause him to question everything. His new book, Confessions of a French Atheist: How God Hijacked My Quest to Disprove the Christian Faith, takes you on Guillaume's journey from growing up an atheist to wholeheartedly following the Lord's plan for his life.

BS: Guillaume, welcome. Nice to meet you.

GB: Thank you.

BS: For those who don't know you, tell us about your story.

GB: Yes, I'm French, as my accent probably betrays. I am a software engineering manager and I'm also now a Christian philosopher, but I grew up in France as an atheist, and grew up a little bit with a background of Catholicism, but it wasn't really a very strong life conviction. As I was old enough to tell my parents I didn't believe any of this, I simply lived my life as an atheist, and I was trying to seek my own happiness in various avenues: volleyball and my studies of science and engineering, in music as well; I was playing in a band. And also at my age and in France for atheist in this environment, I was also seeking happiness through women. And so through all of these various avenues, I was trying to find my own happiness and hoping that religion wouldn't make a comeback any time soon.

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BS: You grew up just an atheist and sounded like as you got older that you sort of crystalized, maybe you had some catholic leanings, as you said. Our experience for Hannah and I was when we went to France and she has, her mother is from France, actually Martine, and we've gone back and she has family there, and our experience is that many of the French view themselves as academics and for them that means you're not religious. I don't know if that was right, but like we even had a lady we were talking to in a café, and she said 'what do you do for a living?' And I said 'oh we're pastors in a ministry' and she literally laughed at us. She goes 'oh ho ho ho, and you believe all those things?' I don't know, did you get a lot of that growing up or did that have an effect on your life?

GB: This was the freaky thought of the culture that I would have been in, then in my own experience, I mean growing up, I developed some degree of scientific arrogance, that if you were reasonable, if you were scientific, then you couldn't possibly believe that God exists, so that was a very strong barrier to overcome in the story of how God had to break down all of my barriers to make me a Christian in the end.

BS: And you have a PHD, as you said, you're a software engineer, you studied math, physics and engineering science, so you're a smart guy. I know you're not going to say that, but you clearly.. you're an intellectual person. And you met this girl, and she was a Christian and you were an atheist, and you both wanted to win the other over to your side. Is that right?

GB: Yes there is some of that. I mean we met in very improbable consequences, so I tell the story in my book, Confessions of a French Atheist. There are travels and betrayals and improbable meetings. So we met in very strange circumstances, and then I found out that she was a professing Christian, which I thought was intellectual suicide, but I really wanted this to work, and so I figured I'm going to try to simply explain why this is nonsense, and we'll be happy together when religion is left behind. And this is the situation I found myself in to try to look into the claims of Christianity, and started to pick up the New Testament and read about Jesus, and I was really surprised at what I saw there. I thought the character of Jesus was very enticing, He was very gripping. I thought I would be annoyed by the things that I thought I remembered were boring from my childhood, and I discovered that the person of Jesus was really a gripping character. I was fascinated and for another set of improbable circumstances, met an American pastor, started various conversations around the claims of Christianity, the intellectual respectability of believing in Christ, and through that season, made my various intellectual barriers just crumble. And I was really challenged by the person of Jesus in the New Testament.

BS: I love that story. You know it's funny, when you were talking about this, I was thinking about Lee Strobel and his similar story. For people who don't know, Lee Strobel was a journalist for the Chicago Tribune and set out to disprove Christianity, and in the process became a Christian himself. And then I saw that he wrote the forward of your book. So your stories are quite similar, aren't they?

GB: Yes there are many things in common. I mean I think one piece that I discovered myself was that you could actually be a believer and not lose your mind, and so that was one of the discoveries that is part of my story, and I think that Lee also struggled with that context in his job as a journalist. So the discovery that there are sensible ways of believing that God exists was very central to our conversion story.

BS: So in trying to convince your girlfriend that there's no God and there's no Christianity, you come to faith. Was there a tipping point? Was there one moment where you finally, the light bulb went off and you said I believe in this. What was that moment or did it even happen?

GB: Yes a little bit like that. I mean the intellectual process went on with answering some of my objections I had, and I discussed some of those in the book to explain how my thinking shifted on those issues, and then I started to appreciate the New Testament as a reliable historical record of what happened to Jesus, and I realized that one couldn't know what happened, right? He wasn't just blind faith or the blind belief that we could actually trust a reliable account of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus. Intellectually speaking, my mind was starting to open, and then it met with a very strong existential experience, which is that at the time I also had committed some really immoral things, and in my process of investigating Christianity, what happened is that God reactivated my conscience, and I was crippled with guilt for what I had done, and I couldn't undo this, and I realized this is terrible. And in that pain of the guilt, the gospel that I had been reading about finally made sense, and I realized this is not just an intellectually viable option, its actually meeting my existential need, which was forgiveness.

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I ended up confessing to God and the relevant people, and I experienced the forgiveness of God, but that emotional existential experience had to meet the also intellectual challenge and the intellectual process. So both of those coming together, I embraced the gospel and my life has never been the same.

BS: I love it. This is such a fascinating story. It's called Confessions of a French Atheist by Guillaume Bignon. Guillaume, what encouragement do you hope people get when they read your book?

GB: There are a couple of things. One is that the fun story of how God works in lives of people that you wouldn't necessarily expect to be converted, so it's an encouragement that it's God who saves, and then even when we think it's unlikely, He can pull it off. A little bit of intellectual encouragement, as well, because there is material on how to defend your faith. I thought some of the reasons that were important to me, I explain them. And then more importantly, there's simply the power of the gospel. The fact that I encountered this good news that we're saved by grace through faith in Christ, not because of our own righteousness, and that this message that we Christians take to be somewhat simple, is actually extremely powerful and can change lives.

BS: It's a great time to pick up a new book. I would recommend, Confessions of a French Atheist. Guillaume, thank you so much! We appreciate you.

GB: Thank you so much for having me.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Welcome, we're glad you're here. And one thing we do every week is we say this creed to remind ourselves of the gospel. Would you stand with me? Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord. Let's say this together: I'm not what I do. I'm not what I have. I'm not what people say about me. I am the beloved of God. It's who I am. No one can take it from me. I don't have to worry, I don't have to hurry, I can trust my friend Jesus and share His love with my neighbor. Amen!

MESSAGE – Bobby Schuller "Build Your House. God Lives There"

Last week we were talking about the value of this building here. This is the temple. It's a picture I'll show a lot of. And it was central to Jewish faith. Actually, next week, the next three weeks, Hannah and I are going to be bringing sermons to you from Israel in the house. So next Sunday if you're here you're going to hear the music, and then you'll see us on the screen, and you'll go back to music. We've never done it before, we're going to try it. Pray for us. But we hope you're here. This place was God's address. Sort of tongue and cheek said, 777 Jerusalem way. You could know I go to this building here and God's there. I can take my kids by the hand if we're in a pickle, go down to Jerusalem and point at that box and say God lives in that space. Isn't that amazing? And what we see on Pentecost is that God leaves that place and fills us and this was His intent all along. That we would become, as Peter says, living stones in the temple of God. Or as Paul says that we ourselves are temples of the Holy Spirit and the value of the spirit within. What happens is after you become a believer and you become a temple of the Lord, if you lose the spirit, in a way, you lose what brings you life. And that building without the Holy Spirit is not a temple anymore, it's a tomb. And maybe you've been in the faith a while or something, and you're starting to feel dead inside. Last week we talked about the importance of drinking of the river of life; of being full of the spirit now. Today I want to talk about the important call that God gives us as living temples or the house of the Lord, to renovate the house, and most of all, to take responsibility for where we are now and where we're going. Responsibility is not something that's very popular. Everybody likes to blame everybody else, and we'll get down to that in just a minute. C.S. Lewis had this wonderful quote about coming to faith in the Lord. He said when you come and become a Christian, God begins to do a work in you. And he said imagine that you're a living house and the Lord comes into your life and He begins doing some work that makes sense. First He fix a leaky ceiling, He does a little work with the plumbing. These were all bad and all things that needed repair and so you're fine with that. But then He starts tearing down a wall, and adding a new floor, and putting up a wing here, and a tower over there, and He starts to lay courtyards and it all hurts so abominably, and you think what are you doing? And you find out that even though your intent was that He would make a nice little cottage, His plan is to turn you into a palace for He intends to live there. He intends to live there. The idea is that when we live in God's kingdom and He literally, in His spirit, lives within us, He does a good work in us that demands that we don't become a quaint little cottage, but that we actually become a palace for the Lord. And that work takes a lot of work. It takes effort and it is by God's grace alone, but grace is not against effort. It's against earning. We don't earn the grace; we don't deserve it.

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It's a free gift, but it does require, this discipleship requires effort. That we respond from a place of God's joy and love, but we also recognize that sometimes that hard work hurts a little bit. It hurts a little bit. I remember a time when I was under immense pressure. Ever had a time in your life where it feels like if it rains it pours, where you went from being a little bored to having just a ton of responsibility and weren't sure if you could handle it all? I remember this happened to me. We were planting a church, Tree of Life, which is actually a part of this congregation, it was woven into it. And it was at an American Legion bar, which was fun, and it was a lot of young people, but we decided when we started this church, Hannah and I, that as an act of faith the first year, we were going to give away all of our tithes and offerings and not take a salary. And so we paid people's rent and bought groceries and just gave it away to the poor or whoever. And we had a board that oversaw it and we just gave all the money away. We did watch that God blessed us for that. But because of that, I had odd and end jobs aside from leading and planting a church, which is already a lot of work. I mentioned a while ago I used to do weddings and funerals for tips. And I did web design, which I have no business doing and I did not do a very good job on those. And I did random work in people's homes, and this type of thing. And we just pieced together a living. At the same time, we had just gotten a mortgage to buy our first house, which back then they didn't really care, they just kind of gave mortgages to anybody. You remember those days. Not a good thing but we had this mortgage. And then we had a kid, Haven, our first child, and God blessed her with cholic. Now if you don't know what cholic is, that means that the baby only sleeps when you're awake and vice versa. So she had cholic and so we weren't getting a lot of sleep. I was in seminary full time as a graduate student. I attended Fuller Theological Seminary, which is 144 graduate hours. It's similar to a law degree in the rigorous nature of the program. You have to learn two languages, Greek and Hebrew, which I did. And I remember that one of the courses I had was at seven in the morning, or 7:30 in the morning in Pasadena. And so from here.. or I lived in Orange at the time, it was a horrible, just bumper to bumper drive from here to my class early, early in the morning and I hadn't gotten any sleep anyway. I remember one morning, I woken up and I'd checked my emails and had a cup of coffee and I was just trying to wake up, and there was this email from an elder in my church. And the email was a diatribe about something really petty. Now to say this person was an elder, I was twenty-seven at the time and he was younger than I was so we were all kids. But he was upset about some little thing, it was something really petty, but it was two paragraphs, and I remember just kind of reading it and rolling my eyes. But then as I got in the car, it started to nag at me and I began to spin my wheels with everything else, not just that, but the pressures of a new kid, a mortgage, planting a church, all the jobs I was doing, and graduate school, and it just started to feel like my body, like everything was just folding in on itself and I couldn't handle it any more. And when I got to my Greek class, which is not fun; we were parsing, which is the worst thing about learning a language, and so we're parsing these words, and I'm bored out of my mind, thinking about this other stuff, and I just begin to have this bizarre emotional collapse. Now I'm not a very weepy person; I don't cry a lot, especially didn't back then, and it's not something I'm proud of, but it's just who I am, and I just began to have this meltdown. And so I sort of scurried out of the class as I could feel myself choking up, and I went into the stairway and just began to bawl; just crying and it felt great. It felt really good. Normally when I'm in a situation like that where if I'm feeling a lot of stress or hardship, I go to my best friend. I go to Hannah, and I call her and talk to her and I'm with her. But this time I really, because it felt like pastoral, it felt like a leadership thing, I went to my grandpa, who was my mentor at the time, who I know had been through a lot harder things than what I was going through. I called my grandma's house; I called my grandparents' house, my grandma answered the phone, hello. I said, hey grandma, it's Bobby. How are you? And she said fine. I was like hey, is grandpa around? I'd like to come talk to him. She said, you know he's pretty busy today, but he's around on Tuesday. Why don't you come by on Tuesday. And then I said do you think I could talk to him today? And I started to crack a little bit on the phone. And then there was a long pause. She was like trying to figure out what to say next. And she says I'm sorry Bobby, was that a laugh or a cry? And I said it was a cry. She said come on over right now. I think I've told this story before, but I went over there and both of them, really I sat with my grandpa in his library, which is so beautiful. Picture a long hallway full of old dusty books from all over the world, but also stained glass, and a big fireplace, and like a little stone statue of two dogs. And ornamental things that he'd gotten, one from Pope John Paul, and something from Ronald Reagan, and a letter from Bill Clinton, and a sword from the grand Mufti of Syria that was given to him when he preached to twenty thousand people in Damascus.

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And you look at this library, which was baller in and of itself, but you think man, this person has done and seen a lot. He was an impressive guy. I was sitting there talking to him, and finally I was feeling much better, and I think we had gone on, he'd been very comforting, and then he kind of switched, because as I was winding it down, I said sometimes I just wish it was easier. He was someone that never let you get away with saying anything. And he sat back and he crossed his arms, then he leaned forward and he looked at me and he said, don't wish it was easier, wish you were better. Now that might sound like tough talk, but for a young man, it was exactly what I needed. Don't wish it was easier, wish you could step up to it and bear it. There are times we need to dial back. There are times we need to go on retreat. There are times we need to remove things from our lives, but parenting is not one of them. Paying your mortgage is not one of them. Pastoring a church is not one of them. And when we take these responsibilities, they in and of themselves are trouble, but they're also a gift. And we find that if we can bare those burdens in the brief seasons that we bare them, and isn't parenting a brief season? I've been told so. We look back and we recognize that because we endured those challenges, we became stronger, better and more hopeful because of it. Don't wish life was easier, wish you were better. Become the kind of person you want God to make you into. Renovate the house. As C.S. Lewis would have said, let the Lord renovate your house. Renovate the house. Decide today that you will be a different person by making the right choices you need to make and by holding on through the storm. Renovate your house. Hey, renovating is a popular thing now adays in TV and pop culture and the business world. People love renovating their homes. There are two people that renovate their houses, right? There are some people who find a house that used to be beautiful and they think I'm going to renovate this house and I'm going to live there the rest of my life, and it's going to be wonderful. And then you have house flippers who say I'm going to renovate this house and it'll look nice on the outside, but boy I wouldn't live there. Renovate your house as a homeowner. Renovating a house is fun. There's a popular game right now called HomeScapes. Haven and I play it all the time. You probably have it on your phone. Thirteen million people played this game yesterday and every day. It's a fun game where you solve a puzzle, and if you solve a puzzle, you get a star, and then a certain amount of stars mean you get to renovate the house, and it's a story about a guy named Austin who renovates his parent's house and boy is it fun. Wouldn't it be interesting if renovating a house was actually that fun? Trust me it's not. I remember a few thoughts on that. I remember when we pastored this church, we did a lot of social work, and one of the things we used to do to help the city is sometimes the police department would call us because they would find a pack rat. I remember the first house we went to, this couple, the lady had had a heart attack and they weren't able to get in and help her and get her out because there was too much stuff in the way. It was a huge fire hazard. Our church went in and we cleaned out the house and renovated the whole thing, and it was, I'm not judging, but it was pretty gross. There were piles of mail and newspapers that had all coagulated into a solid form over time, and inside that coagulated mail and newspaper were ants and roaches. Under the sink we found snakes, we found an owl and a beehive in the upstairs room, which they couldn't access anymore because it had all been blocked off. And our church went in and we renovated. We cleaned the whole thing out and we renovated the house, put in new things, painted, and when it was done, it looked and was a beautiful house. And I thought wow, what a gift this was. Can I tell you something? We went back a week later just to check on the person because they had started coming to the church, and visited their home, and they have since passed away so I can say this, but it was just as bad a year later as it was when we fixed it. There's a lesson in there, isn't there? Isn't there a lesson? All the hard work you do to help someone else, we have to take responsibility for our own home. No one is coming to renovate your home. No one is coming to change your decisions. No one is coming to take a first step towards your dream. No one is coming to do that for you. You have to do it yourself. But there is someone who will go with you, and His name is Jesus Christ, and He will do the hard work of renovating your house, but you have to take responsibility for your life. When you decide hand in hand with the Holy Spirit that your home will be renovated, that you will have a new heart, that you will be a different kind of person ready for whatever dreams God puts in your life, don't do it for the approval of other people. This is a serious and important lesson that Jesus teaches over and over in the Gospels. I noticed when I was.. my parents are still real estate appraisers; I was a real estate appraiser briefly, which is someone that goes and finds out the value of a home for banks so that they can fund a loan. And I remember when I would look at these homes and I also worked for a real estate investment company; we'd look at these different houses, and after they were done, for an appraisal or something like that, some houses were really well done.

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And then others you would be like this is a flip. And you'd know it was a flip because it looks great on the outside, but when you take a closer look, it's a joke. You think what is going on here. There's a guy who has a TikTok video, he's an inspector and he showed an example of this, check this out. (VIDEO ROLL-IN)

MAN: You guys see anything strange going on with this kitchen? Let me flip this camera around and show you. All right, so first we've got the oven here, right? No fan above. No microwave above. Not required but it is pretty standard. Then they have the microwave here. Kind of a weird place for it. It does have a fan, but I'm not exactly sure what it's going to vent. It's not very secure. Yes, that's not supposed to happen. Then there's this big opening here. I'm not really sure what they're going to put there. Just a big opening, empty space. Then we've got.. first we've got this sink like right in the middle of nowhere. It's almost like there was other places that they could have put it, but its right here. They've mostly covered this vent here, this HVAC vent. They put that over there which is mostly blocking the air from coming out, but there it is. Okay? Then we've got the dishwasher. That's kind of nice but it doesn't work and I wouldn't expect it to because this is a flip. And they put this new countertop here right in front of the windows. Kind of weird. Kind of a pain to get in there and open it, but whatever. It's all good. This is just a standard flip here in Richmond.

(END OF VIDEO ROLL-IN)

Can I tell you that is an extreme example of the kind of thing that you think. And when we talk about renovating the house of our own lives, if it's just for everyone else, it's going to be like a flip. It'll look good on the outside, but when people really get to know you the way you know yourself: I have not done the real work that I wanted to do on me. Or even better, I have not allowed the Lord to do the real work I asked Him to do in me. This the difference between a flipped house that's renovated, and a renovated house that someone wants to live in. When you're living in the house, you don't care as much about what a buyer thinks. You care about living there, right? Let us be building the kinds of homes in our lives that we want to live in the rest of our days. In life, we must take responsibility for where we are. That doesn't mean we have to feel shame and guilt all the time. It doesn't mean we have to beat ourselves up, that's counterintuitive. But it also means we don't go around blaming other people all the time. Blame is one of the most crippling things for our country. The divide between the left and the right has probably more to do with the method of blame than it does anything else. Blaming everyone else for your problems is one of the things that will keep us caught in a rut. I remember there was a story; it's apocryphal I'm sure, but of a man who was a drunken scoundrel and he was a horrible dad and husband. And he had two twin boys and he treated them terribly and beat them up and called them all sorts of names. And as these two twins grew older, these boys, they were followed. And the first one, as he got older and became an adult and a man, became a drunken scoundrel just like his dad. Treated everyone poorly. Couldn't get anything right in his life. And when they asked him why are you a drunken scoundrel? Well he said, well my dad was a drunken scoundrel and that's why I'm a drunken scoundrel. I have all this trauma, all this horrible stuff that happened to me. That's why I am the way I am. I just can't seem to get it together. I'm just a loser like my dad. And then they asked the other twin, they went and found him and saw wow, he had a wife and kids, a really healthy family, lots of friends. Was involved in his town civically. Everybody spoke well of him and had a successful career and seemed like a really happy guy. And they said how did you turn out the way you did? And he said well, my dad was a drunkard and a scoundrel, and I didn't want to be like my dad. You see in life, if you want an excuse, my friend, you will find it. If you want a reason for where you are, you can find it. But the best reason, the best thing you can say about your life is to look in the mirror and say I'm here because of the choices I made. That's a very hard thing to say. Not in a shameful way, not in an embittered way, not in a self-pity way, but to know in an empowered way, I don't need to blame anyone else, today I'm taking responsibility for my life and I'm going to start making small decisions to live a different life tomorrow. You have the power. You have the power. We get to Romans chapter five, the scripture for the day, and Romans is a wonderful passage written by the Apostle Paul. Paul, before he was Paul, he was Saul, and he thought he was perfect before he was a believer. He was a rabbi, he followed the law perfectly, he thought he was the best thing ever, but he was super guilty. He killed people. He beat people up but he thought he was doing it for God. I like to think of Paul as someone who blamed everyone. Finally when Paul was saved by grace through the free life of God, his eyes were opened up and he saw that the gospel was about love and about the spirit and about the power of healing and restoration and renewal. Romans comes out of that, that the law brings death and the spirit brings life. And he says Romans chapter five verse one:

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“Therefore, since we’ve been justified through faith,” Hannah says this, this is great: justified means just as if I’d never done it. Justified. Just as if I’d never done it. You didn’t say it that way, but I.. whatever. That’s how you got.. just as if I’d never done it. “We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we’ve gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings.” And this word suffering, Hannah mentioned it, is an opinion that translation’s an opinion. This word really literally means pressure. Because of our pressures. And it’s a metaphor, and it can be the horrible things you go through, but lots of times it’s just a stressful life. The stressful burden of responsibility. The stressful burden of.. life is hard. It says “we know that the suffering produces” what? “Perseverance, perseverance, character,” which means you’re becoming a better stronger, better version of yourself, and “character hope.” So that character produces hope. That word “hope” is also an opinion. The word is *elpis* and this is what the dictionary says. It says that it’s hope plus expectation and absolute confidence. We’ll come back to that in just a second. “And hope does not put us to shame because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is been given to us.” Again this word, hope, *elpis*, means hope, but it also means expectation and absolute confidence. If I was going to give you a Bobby Schuller version of this, it’s just someone with a real positivity about life. That the sufferings, the pressures, the tough things that have endured causes the person to be a positive person, to be a hopeful person. To walk through life with a kind of inner strength and joy that’s evidenced to everyone. Can I tell you that some of the believers that I know who have gone through the most are some of the most positive people I know. They’ve been here before. They see it all, and they know that God can get them through what they’re going through. Let us see the responsibilities and the pressures of life as something that God will carry us through to make us more hopeful, joyful, and yes more powerful people. Let us never catch ourselves saying that isn’t fair. Let us never catch ourselves blaming others for where we are in life. Yes, other people are guilty sometimes, but so am I, right? We’ve all made mistakes. I cannot blame my wife and hope to get a better marriage. I cannot blame my parents for my health problems. I cannot blame the government or blame my boss and hope that will solve my money problems. I cannot blame my church and hope that will make me a better pastor, but people do this all the time because it comes from a place of shame. I’m embarrassed about where I am now, but I don’t want to feel more embarrassed by looking in the mirror and saying I can be a better husband today if I choose to be a better husband. I can be a healthier person if I make healthier choices. I can be a better pastor if I mentored and make the decisions that make me a better pastor. I can have a better money situation if I learn how to handle my finances better. When we take responsibility, we think it’ll be a shame experience. It’s not. It’s an empowering experience because we’re looking in the mirror and we’re saying I can do this. I can choose to do this today. My friend, I’m telling you this as a friend that in life, that although life is hard, the more we press through the hard things, the stronger and more positive we become. It’s counter intuitive. Many people, and this is the most common thing you hear is I don’t have, Bobby I don’t have time. Bro, I don’t have time. I was thinking about this the other day. If you’ve got a forty hour a week job, which is full time job. You work eight hours a day, and if you get a good amount of sleep, which most people say they don’t, you get eight hours of sleep a night, that leaves you with eight extra hours, okay? Eight extra hours on the weekdays. And on the weekends you’ve got sixteen hours and sixteen hours. What are you doing with that time? What are we doing with that time? Most of us, including yours truly, we often look like this. This is what we’re doing with that time. This is it. We’re recharging. Charging its batteries. This is my favorite meme. You’ll see it two or three more times this year. But the truth is that’s what almost everybody is doing. If you want to lead an exceptional life, just take one of those eight extra hours and dedicate it towards being the person you want to be. I’m not asking you to work all the time nonstop. But what if we dedicated just one extra hour a day to learning and becoming the person we want to be? Every problem you have is a knowledge problem. Salvation is a knowledge problem. People don’t know the gospel. Right? Money is a knowledge problem. There are millions of people paying millions of dollars to people who have the skills to earn it. And if we learn those skills, we’ve solved the problem. Cancer is a knowledge problem. There is a cure for cancer. We just don’t know what it is. But we do have knowledge on how to prevent it. So knowledge is the key that opens the door to the things in your life. But too often we will not pick up that book, or google that YouTube video, or find a mentor, or put our hand to the plow and just start doing the thing we want to do. My friend, no more. Today take responsibility for your life and renovate the house. Renovate the house.

Build Your House. God Lives There

Become the kind of person you were called to be. Become it today. Start today. And watch how God will turn your life around. Many of us like to work out. I know I like to work out, and sometimes I'll fall off the bandwagon for a year or two or three, and I will never cancel my gym membership. I'll just keep paying every month because every time I think about cancelling it, I'm like I'll go back. And then I just keep paying it, I don't go back because I don't want to take responsibility for the fact that I've stopped working out. And then when I finally do go back to the gym, the three weeks are the worst. It hurts, your bones don't.. it doesn't move right, everything feels gross, you wake up tired. And then the fourth and fifth week are like, they're okay, and then like six months in, it feels amazing. I think that's true with any kind of personal development, and it's especially true with discipleship in Jesus. When we first start, often times it's not good. It's either boring, it's difficult and we think I can't just do this the rest of my life. But the more we change, the easier it becomes. My friend, I want to encourage you. God wants to do a good work in your life. He's calling you. Renovate the house. I ask you today to respond to that, and to say yes, Lord, I'm going to take a first step to becoming the person you've called me to be. Lord, we do, we ask it in Jesus' name. We ask that you'd help us to see the next step in our lives, and to help us to be people of action. Help us, Lord, to press through the challenges and responsibilities of life, to not always withdraw so that we become the powerful, hopeful people you've called us to be. I believe in this person. I believe in everyone under the sound of my voice that we can become who you called us to be, and Lord I ask especially for that one or two person that's listening right now, that are saying, Lord, I want to be different. I pray, God that they would never be the same again. And I ask this all in Jesus' name, amen.

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

Thank you for coming today. We're so glad you are here. Way to go. You put God first in your life by starting your week at church. I think things will go better for you. Lord, I pray that the Lord. Let me start over. 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.