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GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

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

HS: And welcome guests and welcome church family. We are so happy that you're here. Did you know when you worship with your voice out loud and uplifted hands, you are acting your faith. So this morning let's worship God with living faith. Thank you for being here. We love you.

BS: Amen, let's begin with a word of prayer. Father, we come here in Jesus' name and we thank you, Lord, for all that you're doing in our lives. Many of us come burdened with guilt and fear and struggles. Thank you, Lord that you accomplished all that needs to be done on the cross. We're grateful for you and we love you. It's in Jesus' name we pray, all God's people said, amen.

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

SCRIPTURE – Genesis 9:12-16 - Hannah

I want to invite you to open your Bibles to Genesis 9:12. And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

Well no matter who you are, stand with us. We're going to say this together. Hold your hands like this as a way of receiving from the Lord, let's say this together: I'm not what I do. I'm not what I have. I'm not what people say about me. I am the beloved of God. It's who I am. No one can take it from me. I don't have to worry, I don't have to hurry, I can trust my friend Jesus and share His love with my neighbor. Thanks you can be seated.

MESSAGE/PRAYER – Bobby Schuller "Unstoppable Dreamer: Rising Above Ridicule to Success"

Okay, today we're going to talk about dreamers. Anybody here been called a dreamer before? It's interesting when you're called a dreamer, it can be either negative or positive. Some people say "dreamer." And other people say "dreamer, you're a dreamer." And I've noticed and been around a lot of dreamers, a lot of builders, a lot of doers, a lot of people that want to do great things for God, and I've noticed that there's two types of dreamers in this world. The first is the type of dreamer that just talks a lot, works a little bit and then quits, and then there's a second kind of dreamer, and those are the ones who don't stop. Today we're going to talk about how to become this kind of a person, what I'm calling an unstoppable dreamer. We're going to talk about how to be an unstoppable dreamer and rise above the ridicule to success. So let's begin here. Think in your own mind what is a dream that God has put on your heart? Maybe your dream is to plant a church. Maybe your dream is to go on the mission field. Maybe your dream is to write a book or to create a film or a work of art or some kind of political reform to improve our city or country. Maybe your dream is to have a family. Many people have had that dream and it just hasn't worked out for them.

Unstoppable Dreamer: Rising Above Ridicule to Success

I just heard an amazing story by a young man named Matt Potter. Matt told this story, he said about 30 some years ago, a young, pregnant woman was going through a crisis, and she was on her way to the abortion clinic, and while she was going, she stopped by a church and went inside and talked to the pastor and said 'I'm thinking aborting my baby, but I don't know.' And this pastor was brand new to the church, he was young and didn't know how to handle the situation to try and convince the woman to keep her baby.

And he calls his mentor. Mentor answers the phone, and he says.. his mentor was another pastor here in California, and he said 'I have this woman and she wants to abort this baby,' and the other pastor said, 'you know what's amazing is we have this family that's been involved in our church for a long time, they've been trying for years to have children. They've just heard from the doctor that they'll never be able to have children.'

And these two pastors got together, the woman delivered that baby, and this other family adopted the baby. And Matt said 'that baby was me.' Now what was really cool about this is Matt then grew up in a family of athletes, and he's adopted. He said he was a nerd on computers all the time, and built these wonderful internet companies, apps and things like that, and exited his business for whatever, millions of dollars. He didn't say how much, but he said it was enough he wouldn't have to work ever again, and I think for this guy, that's a lot of money. That's a lot of money for me, too.

And as he was there sort of in sort of early retirement, he started to kind of like degenerate, and realized that this wasn't good for him, and he cried out to God. Committed Christian, loves the Lord, and started this thing called Pray.com which a lot of you use, it's an app, and you can get all sorts of sermons, and you can have people pray for you.

Now think about that: that one dream for someone to have a family and that other woman's obedience to take some time and think and pray about her decision, led to Matt being born. And his achievement of his dream to build these great companies lead to another dream, which was to create this wonderful app to connect people and pray and support people. What a wonderful story.

And that is ultimately to just say that when dreams are fulfilled, when they're achieved, when they're done in God's care, they lead to other dreams and other dreamers, and that's a really good thing. So what I want to say this morning is that is the key is to sort of get on a roll and continue to take risks for God and watch how that builds your faith up in what God calls you to do.

I want to talk this morning about the things that I've observed in the achievement of the things that I've done and the things that my friends have done, and there are six things that I really think stand out from the Bible that show us our six ways that unstoppable dreamers rise above.

The first and probably most important one we want to talk about today is unstoppable dreamers rise above ridicule. Now this is very hard to do, especially for Christians. We read today the story of Noah. Hannah read that, and I have in my mind the story of Noah from the old Hanna-Barbera cartoons, I don't know if anybody remembers those, but they painted this image of old Noah out there building the ark to save the animals and save his family. He got this vision that God was going to flood the earth, and so he wanted to save creation. And here he is building the ark, and what happens, all the people around him, they mock him, and cajole him. And of course for me as a ten-year-old in Sunday school, I think oh they're so foolish. But think about what they're watching. They're watching a man in the desert, not near any ocean, build a humungous boat.

And think about how long it probably took him to build the ark. We know the size of the ark, the Bible us. It doesn't tell us how long, but some construction workers and people in that field have guessed, and they said if it was just Noah and his sons, it would have taken them 55 years. If they had the tools and the team and had servants and guys helping them, the maximum quickest they could build it would be five years.

So think about something like a five to 55-year-long project, building some humongous boat in the middle of the desert, a thousand miles from the sea. That looks like a crazy person; like an absolute nutcase. And we know that the world was so evil back then, right? I mean it was just filled with the worst kind of people, and so imagine the kind of ridicule, mockery, not a little bit, but constantly. That was until it starts raining. Some drops start falling, and it keeps raining and it keeps raining.

Now when I think about this story, I think about the faithfulness of Noah to continue to do what God called him to do, even though people mocked and ridiculed and made fun of him. This is what Jesus tells us to do. What He says is "blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." Why does He say blessed are you?

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Because that's what happens to people who make a difference. If you want to make a difference in the world, you have to be resilient, and resistant to ridicule and mockery. It will come. Noah remains faithful. His faithfulness to God's word saved him, his family, and the creatures of the earth. Never forget this. It's his faithfulness to God's word, rather than man's word. That's what saved his family. He was like a rock, stone cold to mockery. He had the vision God put on his heart, and I just want to say to you to become unstoppable you have to let go of people pleasing. You just do. Sometimes that's your family, your extended family. Sometimes that's your competitors. Sometimes we want our competitors to see how great we are. Sometimes it's your friends. Sometimes it's the public.

But here's what Jesus says: "everyone who acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven." That's a scary passage, isn't it? Most of us, when we read that, we only read one side of the ledger. If I don't acknowledge Christ in my life, He won't acknowledge me. He'll disown me. And by the way, that's true.

But there's another side. Look at the positive side of that ledger. If I acknowledge God, if I acknowledge Jesus in my life, what – He'll acknowledge me. That's a promise. Think about that. That means that if I acknowledge Christ in my life, despite if people ridicule me, what does God say? He goes there's my guy. There's my gal. She is faithful to me. I know if I give her a dream, if I give her a word, if I give her a challenge, she'll obey. She'll do it. She'll go for it.

Just live a life that pleases God. Be kind to people, don't be rude to people, but don't please people and don't let them push you around. Be pushed around by God, amen? Be led by God.

Top regrets of dying people. This is a study that's been done multiple times. Sometimes it's the number one regret. Sometimes it's the top ten. But overwhelmingly, the most common regret that dying people have is this: I spent too much of my life pleasing people. Just doing what my parents wanted me to do. Doing what this person wanted me to do, my boss wanted me to do, this person, instead of doing what I was supposed to do. So rise above ridicule and mockery. Don't be a people pleaser.

All right, the second thing that unstoppable dreamers do, a character quality I've seen, they rise above pettiness. This is the, by the way, this one for Bobby Schuller. That's my name, by the way. I'm Bobby. I struggle with this one so much. It's amazing how strong, intelligent people can just become so petty. We become petty with people we love. We become petty with the people we work with. We become petty with our siblings. How many of you, when you were a kid, you had a brother or a little sister or something, and you sit in the back of your parents' car, and this line was drawn on the cushion. This is my side, that's your side, and then one of the two is always going to be like look, look, look, look, like kind of push, push, go over with the finger. Mom! We think that's petty, and we think that's silly, and we think to ourselves well we're glad we don't do that kind of a thing anymore. But of course we do. We still do it.

We make mountains out of molehills, as they say. We major in the minors. Dumb, dumb, dumb. I'm talking to me, by the way. This is dumb. We do this out of a desire for respect, or maybe a fear that if we let them get away with a little, they'll take a mile. Or maybe we do it because we're grumpy, because maybe we haven't eaten anything lately and we just need a burger. But for whatever reason, we make a huge deal out of nothing, and we burn these bridges that we wish we hadn't burned. Don't do it. It's only a big deal if you make it a big deal.

Don't make a big deal out of the toilet seat. Don't make a big deal out of hair in the comb or the toothbrush thing or the this or the that. It's a big deal if you make it a big deal. Don't make it a big deal if somebody cuts you off on the freeway. Just let them go. Aren't we Christians? What are we doing? Don't make a big deal out of a bad text. Have you ever gotten a bad text, it kind of has like an edge to it, and you're not sure if they're trying to offend you, or if they're mad. Just let it. Just let it go, all right my friend? It's only a big deal if you make it a big deal.

Here's the point: if you're doing great things for God, you don't have time or energy for molehills. Can I get an amen? You just don't have time or energy. You've got better things to worry about, better things to do. People are more important than those other things.

If you really want to affect a team, a person, a spouse, a kid, a friend, every study shows, and I think the Bible reinforces, that positive reinforcement works better. Yes, we have conflict, yes we have to challenge people, yes we have to do these things, but I'm just telling you positive reinforcement works better with your kids, with your team, with your enemies. We're people of grace, right? We're not here to judge. We're people of grace.

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And so what I've seen is that when you see good behavior, and you reinforce good behavior, you create massive and quick positive change in people's lives. Have an eagle-eye for the behavior you want.

Here's what most of us do. We have an eagle-eye for the things that annoy us. We have an eagle-eye for the whatever – the trash not being taken out. We have an eagle-eye for the guy that's riding too close to us in the back. We have an eagle-eye for that little comment that someone shouldn't have said that we're not sure what they mean by that. Let that stuff go and have an eagle-eye for the good stuff, and when you see it, acknowledge it, praise it, and reinforce it.

Funny story I heard that totally proves this point. Heard this guy talking about how he used to have a girlfriend, his ex-girlfriend would always bother him about shaving. He would only shave maybe twice a week or so. He hated shaving. And she would always bug him. She would say won't you shave? You look like a bum when you don't shave. And when you kiss me, it doesn't feel very good. I don't like it when you don't shave. Anyway, they broke up. Not because of that, it was something else, I guess.

But later on, he was dating another girl, and one day he shaved and she said to him, wow, I think it's so sexy when you shave. How many know he started shaving more. How many husbands and boyfriends here like that word "sexy." We know it works, right? He said when I heard that, I thought I'd shave three times a day for that. We all know it's true.

We call this positive reinforcement. It's the thing that creates the behavior. And so what you got to do is you got to find it in your team, find it in your kids, find it in your friends, find it in your spouse, acknowledge the good and you'll reinforce the good and the bad will just kind of go away.

The last discipline we can do to just not become petty people and to be people of grace with the people we live with, this is leadership 101, by the way. As much as possible, give credit, and as much as possible, take the blame or the responsibility. If you're in a team but you're the leader of the team and it messes up somehow, and it's a little bit your fault but not all your fault, make it all your fault as much as you can. If your team has some great achievement and it's wonderful and you're really a big part of that but your team is also a big part of that, just give them all the praise, and you'll continue to support a team that enjoys working with someone like you.

It's amazing how much you can accomplish if you don't care who gets the credit. That's what Harry Truman said, and it is absolutely true. You'll get a lot more done. You'll achieve a lot more if you don't care who gets the credit.

All right, the third thing I've noticed with unstoppable dreamers called by God to do great things, they rise above the peers. Rise above peers. Comparison is just a mega trap. Beware. Beware comparing yourself to other people. We compare our work to others, how hard we work or don't work. We compare our positions, we compare our clothing, we compare whatever, our weight, our waistline. We compare our finances.

And here's what happens when you compare: either you compare up, and you get like really discouraged, or you compare down and you get really prideful and egotistical. Both are not good, right? Both are a trap.

Here's who you can compare yourself to. There is one person in this world you can compare yourself to, and that person is you. Compare yourself to you. I heard somebody say Jesus, and though I love the sentiment, I'm glad I'm not comparing myself to Jesus. That would be.. I'm not going to reach that. Compare yourself to you.

This is what it means to be a disciple. A disciple means someone who's in training, someone who's learning, someone who's changing is the key of Jesus ministry was making disciples. That's even what the great commission is, is go in the world and make what? Disciples, right? So if we're going to be a disciple, we want to compare our lives today to where we were yesterday, meaning last year, last month, last week.

The name of the game is personal progress. Just be the best you can be. Do your best and forget the rest. This is the gospel of grace, right? Give it your all. Leave nothing on the field, as they used to say back in the sports days. Just do everything with excellence to the best of your ability. How you do anything is how you do everything.

So when you love people, love with all you got. When you build, build with all you got. When you write, write with all you got. And when you rest, rest with all you've got. When we Sabbath, have a good meal with a friend. Don't spend the whole time on your phone. Take a walk.

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Poor Joseph was given a dream, and remember all he had to go through, going to jail, becoming a slave, betrayed by his brothers, was a very, very long time. And it wasn't just 20 or whatever years it was, it was 20 hard years. Moses was called at the age of 80 from the burning bush. Did you know that? He was 80-years-old, and he would be 120, so it was 40 years before they ever reach the Promised Land. And even David, after he was anointed king, had to spend all that time in the wilderness waiting for God's plan to come to pass in his life.

What is it about the wilderness? There is something about that space, isn't it, about that sort of wildernesses of life. Even Jesus goes into wilderness for 40 days before He enters into His ministry. There's something about that space.

Sometimes when we think we're waiting on God, He's waiting on us to change. Sometimes He's waiting on us to change. Sometimes He wants to do a new thing in us. Sometimes the wait is not for God, it's for you. For you to get a new heart. For you to get a new skill. For you to get a new strength. For you to get a new character. For you to get a new team. Sometimes these things have to be in place before it all comes to pass.

Seeds take time to grow. My brother told me this funny story. He used to be really big into surfing, and he went somewhere to south America, I forget which country, and he met this older American guy, middle aged, older American guy, who surfed every day, long hair. When this guy was like 18, he went down to this country, and he bought a plot of land and he planted teak trees. Now teak trees take 20 to 25 years to grow, but it creates some of the most expensive wood in the world. Very, very expensive. And so for all that time, until he was about 38, he was surfing constantly and just taking care of the trees. And when they came to their full fruition, a lumber yard came, cut the trees down and gave him over a million dollars. Whoa! That's pretty good for just surfing for 20 years. And guess what he did with the million dollars? Guess what he did? He bought a little more land, and planted some more teak trees. Why not do it again. It worked once, let's try it again. And surfed for another 20 years, and here he is 58, surfing every day, eating tacos; 20/25 years comes by, he calls that same lumber yard, he says sir, I have some trees for you, and they say we'll be right there. They cut them all down, and they gave him a check for three million dollars. And guess what he did with that money? I believe he planted some more teak trees. The man's figured it out. He's figured it out.

If you've got a horizon of 20 years, even if you're lazy, you can get a lot done. You see what impatience does to us? The inability to just wait and wait and let the thing do the thing. Wait. Let the thing do the thing.

All right, last point, maybe the most important point about unstoppable dreamers, people like you. Unstoppable dreamers rise above themselves. They rise above the ego. Rise above yourself. Just serve people. Love people. Touch as many hearts as you can touch. This world we live in has been touched by evil already. It's already been touched by evil. Every single person you've ever known at one time was a child. And when they were a child, they experienced things that nobody else experienced, and not all those were good things. Many of the former children in this room were hit by their parents, or abused, or abandoned. Some of the children in this room were starving when they were kids. Some of the children in this room were bullied when they were kids. Some of those children were bullied by people in religious circles at churches. No wonder they don't like church. Some of the people in this church were called all sorts of names that weren't even true. Some of the people in this church experienced their siblings die or their parents die at a young age, or never knew their parents. All of us have experienced something. Let's not pile on. Let's not add onto that. Let's not make it worse. Let's not judge. Let's not point fingers. Let's not accuse the brethren. That's the devil's title, by the way – the accuser of the brethren. Let's not participate in that game, amen? Let's serve.

Jesus washed the feet of His students, and when He did it, He dressed as a slave. When Jesus was crucified, there was no loin cloth. He was crucified naked, fully naked, and while He was there, and bleeding and suffering, He was also ashamed. People mocked Him, and all of this stuff, and He did it for us. He did it that we could be at peace with God and have a home in heaven and be forgiven of our sin. How much more can we just let it go and forgive people as He's forgiven us? Can I get an amen?

Just love people. You want more love in your life? There's two ways to experience love. The first is when someone chooses to love you. A mother, a friend, a father, a stranger. But we can't experience it all the time. But here's the second way you can experience love. You can just choose to love someone else.

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Isn't it strange when we choose to love someone else how we in some weird way feel loved? It's very strange. I've even loved enemies, loved people that were rude and cruel, and I just find that when I truly love them, I somehow feel loved. That's the Holy Spirit.

That's the idea that I can feel love whenever I want to by just simply loving other people, and that's the great gift of being a disciple of Jesus is that when we obey Him, it's for our benefit. It's because it blesses us; it helps us. When we touch somebody else's heart, our heart is touched by God, amen? I'm grateful what God's going to do in your life.

Final thing I want to say, if you've never been touched by the love of God, won't you be at peace with God today? Some of you, you've lost your faith. Some of you, you have a nice view of God. But Jesus Christ laid His life down on the cross for you and for me that we could be saved. If you believe that Christ laid His life down on the cross for you and was raised from the dead, believe in it today, and He'll save you. He'll transform your life. All you have to do is invite Him in your heart and to commit your life to Him.

When I became a Christian, I didn't actually pray a prayer like go down to an altar call, I just literally in my seat, quietly to myself said Jesus come into my heart, and that was all the Lord needed to transform my life. That's all He needs from you. And I want to encourage you, today's a great day to be at peace with God. Invite Christ into your heart. If you do that, text me the word HOPE to the number on the screen. We're not going to hit you up for anything, we just want to pray for you. We might send you a text saying we're praying for you.

Let's pray: Thank you, Lord that you've called every single person in this room to make a difference in the world. You asked us to do greater things than you did. And so fearfully and respectfully we receive that commission to go into all the world, to make disciples, to do all that we can do to touch as many lives as we can touch. Lord, I pray for your healing power over everyone here who lost a dream. Maybe it died on the vine. Would you bring it back to life in them? And would you begin to show us how big our lives can be in your kingdom, how many lives we can touch, the places we can go, the experiences we can have, the friends we can have. Lord, we love you and we thank you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, all God's people said, amen.

Would you stand with me?

BENEDICTION – Bobby Schuller

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