

HOUR OF POWER OF 25.05.2008

PROGRAM OPENING/TRUMPET FANFARE/V.O.

VO: Today on the Hour of Power: the incredible story of Monique Strydom who was held captive in the Philippines by Al-Qaeda terrorists.

MONIQUE: As we were running, we could hear zwing, zwing and you could see bullets because were cutting through the leaves, so as far as we could run, we could see the leaves falling in front of us. And that's one of my testimonies is that none of us were wounded.

VO: Then, she's had an incredible 16 number one Christian hit songs. Meet Grammy nominated artist Jaci Velasquez.

JACI: When my heart cries out all I can say is Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus..

VO: Then, has fear taken over your life? Don't give up. Pastor Schuller gives you the keys to winning your battle with fear.

RAS: For St. Paul said it, "I have not given you a spirit of fear but a spirit of power, and love, and a sound mind."

VO: Join us today for the best hour on television, the Hour of Power with Robert Schuller.

HYMN - "Joyful, Joyful.."

Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flowers before You, opening to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away; Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day. Amen! Amen! Amen!

GOOD MORNING/OPENING SENTENCE/INVOCATION

RAS: Wow! And all God's people said wow! God is alive. He's here in this place. And you're here today because He has a message for you; A message that's going to uplift you and encourage you and strengthen you. A message that's going to make a positive impact in your life, and as a result of that, the lives of people you come in contact with this week. So I want to give you an opportunity right now to greet those who are standing next to you and behind you, around you. Please, reach out and say God loves you and I do, too.

Let's continue with a moment of prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You that You're a God who cares, who loves, who touches us. So may we feel Your touch this hour, oh Lord. May we feel it is as we sing the songs, as we hear the words, as we pray. For You're a God who cares, and a God who loves. And so we love You too, oh Lord, Amen.

HYMN - "Medley – God is My Strong Salvation/He Gives More Grace"

God is my strong salvation: What then have I to fear? In darkness or temptation God's light and help are near; Though fears encamp around me, firm in my faith I stand; What terror can confound me, with God at my right hand?

God is my strong assurance; My soul with courage waits; God's truth is my endurance, when faint and desolate; With might my heart He strengthens, His love my joys increase; With hope my days He lengthens; And grants to me His peace.

He gives us more grace as our burdens grow greater, He sends us more strength as our labors increase; To added afflictions He adds His mercy, to multiplied trials He multiplies peace. His love has no limit, His grace has no measure, His power has no boundary known unto us; For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He gives, and gives, and gives again.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance, when our strength has failed and the day is half done, when we reach the end of our many resources, our Father's full giving is only begun. His love has no limit, His grace has no measure, His power has no boundary known unto us; For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He gives, and gives, and gives again. He gives, and gives, and gives again.

SCRIPTURE – Psalm 46 - RHS

RHS: You may be seated. Hear these magnificent words of hope:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn. The Lord of hosts is with us; the everlasting God is our refuge. Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; our God, here with us, is our refuge.

This is the word of the Lord.

ANTHEM - "Refuge and Strength"

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear. Therefore we will not fear, we will not fear. We will not fear though the earth should change, though the earth should crumble into the sea, let the oceans roar and foam. Let the mountains tremble as the waters surge!

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear. Therefore we will not fear, we will not fear. There is a river whose streams make glad the City of God, the holy dwelling of the Most High. God is in the midst of the city. It shall not be moved. God will help when the morning dawns.

The nations are in an uproar. The kingdoms of men have fallen. God thunders, the earth melts. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear. Therefore we will not fear. God is our refuge and strength! God is our refuge and our strength!

RHS THANK YOU TO DON & CHOIR

RHS: Thank you Donald Neuen, thank you choir. You're the best.

RHS INTRODUCES JACI VELASQUEZ

RHS: Well, now it's my pleasure to welcome back to the Crystal Cathedral, singer and songwriter Jaci Velasquez. She was first here some years ago and she was only 16. Jaci, things have changed a little since then.

JV: Yes, I have a five month old. I don't sleep. That went out the window. Yes, yes I got married to a man by the name of Nicolas Gonzales, who's

the lead singer for a band called Salvador. And we had a little boy, he's five months old and he's just a perfect little bundle of joy.

RHS: Fantastic. Well what are you going to sing for us today?

JV: Well I'm going to sing a song called "Nothing but Sky." It's about leaving the past behind and looking towards the future and seeing that there's nothing but sky that lies ahead.

RHS: The words are very significant. So many words, and so many songs today really don't begin to have the depth they should have but you have it, so sing for us!

JV: I'll do it. Thank you so much!

RHS: You're welcome.

SOLO - JACI VELASQUEZ – "Nothing But Sky"

I'm here with all the scars and the tears. I've survived. It takes time to find forgiveness, get on with my life. I've gone through the heartache, learned from the pain, walked through the broken and all that remains is a heart that's wide open, ready and willing to fly; now there's nothing but sky, there's nothing but sky.

It's clear, what doesn't kill you makes you strong. I'm here, right where I should be, in Your tender arms. I've gone through the heartache, learned from the pain, walked through the broken, and all that remains is a heart that's wide open, ready and willing to fly; now there's nothing but sky, there's nothing but sky. There's nothing but blue sky around me, nothing but sky.

Nothing but this moment now, flying high above the clouds. It's all I need - You here with me. I've gone through the heartache, learned from the pain, walked through the broken and all that remains is a heart that's wide open, ready and willing to fly; now there's nothing but sky, there's anything but sky. There's nothing but blue sky around me, nothing but, nothing but sky. There's no sign of rain. Ain't no clouds in my way. No there's nothing but blue sky around me, nothing but, nothing but, nothing but sky, yeah.

INTERVIEW – MONIQUE STRYDOM

RHS: ROBERT H. SCHULLER MS: MONIQUE STRYDOM

RHS: I have a guest today who comes all the way from South Africa. She'll inspire everybody as you hear how she persevered through the most dire circumstances. Monique Strydom was captured by the Al-Qaeda terrorists in the Philippines. She will tell us about it, about the memory of the sound of the bullets whizzing by, and how amazing that she is alive. She's here to share her faith in Christ, how it sustained her. Monique Strydom, thank you for coming. What were you doing there? You're from South Africa, but you came to the Philippines: why?

MS: Well we actually went to Malaysia..

RHS: Oh, I see.

MS: ..on a diving holiday and we didn't know the Philippines was so close to Malaysia and we didn't know that they had such radical people there. And we were on a diving holiday; it was Easter Sunday, the 23rd. That night we decided not to dive because it was Easter Sunday, and while some of the other people were diving, 18 heavily armed men walked into the dive resort and took us and took us to the Philippines to an island called Jolo, which is the stronghold of

the Abu Sayyaf, they're an Al-Qaeda group, and they held us hostage for four months. And it was a challenging four months. We arrived there with the clothes we were wearing. We had no shoes, we had nothing else. We barely got food, we barely got water, we had to live in the jungle and it's a jungle like the Amazon. We had nothing to sleep under; we had to sleep in the wild open, so we know all the wild life in the Philippines; all the snakes and the scorpions and the spiders. And we were there and we lived for four months not knowing if we were going to survive or get killed.

RHS: Wow. You were with your husband.

MS: That's right.

RHS: No children with you.

MS: No children.

RHS: Well, what did you eat for four months?

MS: They gave us the first week one plate of rice, once a day that we had to share between 21 people. And that's what we lived on. Eventually what happened was that, it was one of the miracles we talk about, they managed to get people to us, they managed to bring food and goods in and that kept us alive. They kept us alive so that they could negotiate with us. They weren't interested in us looking healthy and fit and in a good state.

RHS: Did you ever get sick?

MS: Some got bitten by scorpions. We, of course, got the tropical illnesses and the upset tummies, but I think in a situation like that it's important – we were quite threatened by the Philippine military and they were chasing us and they were trying to rescue us, so we had to run. We ran for a very long time, that we had to escape them. So it was important to stay healthy because if you weren't healthy, you were going to die. If you can't run, you're going to get killed.

RHS: Now the Philippines, their military were after you?

MS: There was a..

RHS: Why?

MS: ..yes..

RHS: I think we're a little confused here.

MS: Yeah this is a big threat to the Philippine government and it was a threat they've never been able to control. I think they only did it after American came in and helped them after they kidnapped American's and after 9/11, they were instructed to rescue the hostages. Now you must realize we were in a jungle, in an unknown territory. It's so dense; it's really like the Amazon. So to do a successful rescue operation was totally impossible. So all that they did is they came in with guns blazing, mortars and it was either get us out or kill us. But it was to diffuse the situation that was the instruction. So to us, they were a much greater threat than at that stage the people who kidnapped us.

RHS: And you did hear bullets?

MS: Yeah, we were in, can I maybe talk about it?

RHS: Sure.

MS: We had one, and that was a life changing experience to me. It was one morning, it was my sister's birthday incidentally, and we woke up very early in the morning and there was a smell hanging in the camp and I realized it was the smell of fear. And I realized something was going to happen and the leaders were all gone and the rebels had packed their bags and they were sitting with their guns and we could see they were terrified. And at about 11:00 that morning, the military walked straight into our camp and what they did is they put..

RHS: The Philippine military.

MS: ..the Philippine military, they put a cordon around the camp and they closed in and they didn't quite know where we were and when they saw us, they started shooting.

RHS: Why would the Philippines try to kill you?

MS: Well they had to diffuse the situation. So they had to either get us out, or get rid of us. That's our theory. And they just started shooting and of course the rebels were not going to sit and negotiate, so the rebels started shooting back. And we were running with bullets and people don't believe me when I say to them you hear bullets because as we were running, we could hear zwing, zwing and you could see bullets because bullets were cutting through the leaves so as far as we could run, we could see the leaves falling in front of us. And that's one of my testimonies is that none of us were wounded. The man who was running next to us got wounded, but to me it just felt like this whole bubble came around us. And none of those bullets could penetrate because God was there and God was protecting us. And what then happened was they pushed the military out of the camp and then the military said well we know where they are so now we get rid of them.

And they started shelling us with mortars and I think that was one of my most terrifying experiences was we heard it when they launched the mortar behind us and my husband grabbed my hand, he knew what it was, and we tried to run away from this mortar. And you can't run away from a mortar. We heard it coming and it was whistling and it just grew louder and louder, and louder and the next moment it was here. And he grabbed me and he threw me down and he fell on top of me and then the first mortar exploded. And the fear, I cannot describe. You know your heart is beating so loud, you don't know if it's the mortars exploding or if it's your heart and I just remember down then, I remember saying to him, I don't want to die today. And he's saying to me Monique, you have to make peace. We might die today.

You know and it's to get to that point where you sit there and you lie down there and you think no man can save me. No man. It's only a God who can save me here. And I looked up and I looked into the eyes of these little rebel boys who were fighting for a very fanatical religion and I saw absolute terror in their eyes, and I realized they were going to die without knowing that they're doing the right thing. And I was going to die knowing that I believe in my God and I believe Jesus died for me and I believe that and that's what's going to save me. And that's what gives you the peace and that's how you conquer fear.

RHS: Wow. Wow. Tell me, what did you do day after day after day, daylight, daylight, daylight for all these months? Did you talk, did you read, did you have anything to read?

MS: Yes, and that's another miracle. I'm writing a book on the miracles now is when these channels opened up to us, people send really strange things to us and one of the most amazing things we got and it's truly a miracle. In the middle of this extreme Islamic camp, we managed to get a Bible and they didn't know it was missionaries who sent the Bible and they couldn't read English so they gave the Bible to us and they thought it was a book. So there we got God's word and..

RHS: Oh..

MS: ..we held onto that. It was absolutely incredible. And then we got; that's why I'm here today, also one of the reasons, we got a book and it was a little book that was put into a box by a South African government person and it was called The Be Happy Attitude book, and I'm sure you know that book. And we got this little book and I read through this book, I read through it often and

truly amazing things and it worked so well where we were, and it was like things we could really practice. And then one day, right at the end of our captivity and it was a bad, bad time for us. The negotiations had stopped and they were threatening to come in and kill us again, and we were really struggling and I sat in my hammock one day and I just picked up your book and I opened it in the back and there was a line on one page and it just said, "May our beautiful God at each sunset of your day, in your life, He will give you an unexpected joy, a surprise." And I looked at it and it didn't mean anything to me. And as I was sitting, I looked up and the sun was going down, and the next moment, a rebel walked in with letters from our family. And this is after not hearing anything from them for two weeks. He walked in with these letters, these words of hope, and what you wrote, God made true. As the sun was setting, as He promised, we got that joy, that surprise from Him and that new hope He gave to us.

RHS: Thank you.

MS: I brought a copy of our book. It's not nearly as inspirational as your book and I'm sure you're not in captivity so we'd like to give that to you and hope that's going to mean something to you.

RHS: Shooting The Moon. Is this the book..

MS: Shooting the Moon.

RHS: ..of yours?

MS: This is our first book. I'm writing a book on the miracles now.

RHS: Oh, and that'll come out at the end of the year?

MS: The end of the year it'll be out.

RHS: Wow. So I hope you can come back. We'd like to tell..

MS: For sure.

RHS: ..everybody to read it. So, how is your life permanently changed because of all of that?

MS: You know, you realize what is really important in life. I had a very successful business, I was really very much focused on me, myself, I, and one day in the jungle and it was also the time it was going really bad and we didn't know if we were going home. I was very down and I woke up that morning and this thought just came to me and I believe it was God speaking to me, and He said to me 'you will be released and you will go home and you will change the lives of other people.' And I thought I'll take on the challenge and I sat down for three hours and I said I'm going to go back home, I'm going to close my business, I'm going to start a charity and I'm going to help the people in my country. And I sat for about three hours and after that three hours, I said to my husband I know now why I had to be here. And now I can be released. And at two o'clock that afternoon, the negotiators walked in and they said you're going home. And I was released. And I got to South Africa, I closed down my business and for the last eight years, we've been doing charity work, we've been doing missionary work, we've helped people not only in South Africa but all over the world. And we've been so blessed. We've seen so many miracles. I've got a big candle in my office and I burn it every time I see a miracle and it burns every day.

RHS: You do really?

MS: Yes.

RHS: Oh, God loves you, so do I.

MS: Thank you very much and thanks for having..

RHS: Thank you.

MS: ..me. Blessings, many blessings.

RHS: Thank you.

MS: Thanks.

RHS: Thank you.

PREP FOR OFFERING/INTRO TO JACI - RAS

RAS: And now Jaci's going to sing a really beautiful piece for us, it's entitled "Jesus, the Way," and while she does that, we're going to collect our offerings and immediately following that, we're going to have a prayer.

SOLO - JACI VELASQUEZ – "Jesus (The Way)"

Sweet Jesus, oh, often I am taken by the world. It sneaks up on me, but eventually you draw me back to formless clay into a masterpiece. Oh in spite of me, You see beauty. And Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Your mercy's new every day, when my heart cries out, all I can say is, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. You direct the path that seems astray, assuring us that we will find the way. Help us, please find the way.

Often I am shaken by Your love. Oh it releases me from the bondage of my sin. And through the cross, adopted by Your grace, You never turn Your face. Please don't turn Your face. And Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Your mercy's new every day, when my heart cries out, all I can say is, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. You direct the path that seems astray, assuring us that we will find You, Jesus. My Jesus. Your mercy's new every day. When my heart cries out, all I can say is, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. You direct the path that seems astray, assuring us that we will find a way. Help us find the way, You are the way.

PRAYER FOR OFFERING - RAS

RAS: Jesus, Jesus, Jesus there is power in that name. And it is because of that name that we are here today. And through that name, we have received the strength and the ability to be able to give these gifts. And so oh Lord, use these gifts. Use them to reach out and to touch the hearts of people around the world, in our community and here in this place. May Your name be proclaimed to the uttermost corners of the globe, for it is in His name that we find our hope, our love and our joy. Thank You Jesus, Amen.

MESSAGE/PRAYER - ROBERT A. SCHULLER

"Claim Your Possibilities: Part 2"

RAS: Fear is an interesting emotion. You know it paralyzes people. You've heard of the deer in the headlights. It paralyzes and causes death. People sink because of fear. I think of Moses in the wilderness. He was there for 20 years and you would have thought that after 20 years of being in the wilderness, being led by fire by night and cloud by day, that having seen God part the Red Sea, that having seen God feed the Israelites every day and we're talking over a million people by sending food from the sky, manna from heaven. Conquering the greatest army the world has ever seen, the Egyptian army, you would have thought after 20 years of physically hearing the voice of God, they would have had enough faith to conquer his fear after 20 years of this, to enter the Promised Land when God told him to. But instead, fear gripped his heart and he listened to the eight negative thinkers that came back and said we can't do this, instead of listening to the two who said they could and most importantly, the voice of God who told them to do it. So they spent another 20 years in the wilderness.

Jesus called to Peter and Peter was on a boat and He said, "Come to Me." And Peter got on the water and walked to Jesus. And not until fear gripped his

heart, did he start to sink and then Jesus reached out and pulled him out of the water and pulled him into the boat.

Fear paralyzes, it destroys, it tears us down, it tears us apart and yet we realize that fear is overcome by the grace and the abundance of the will of God. That God does not give us a spirit of fear. But the Bible says He gives us a spirit of love, and a spirit of power, and a spirit of self-control.

St. Paul was really an apostle who was called by God as he was in the process of gathering Christians to persecute them. And in the process of that he had another assistant who was named Timothy, and this verse that I wish to share with you today is Paul's writing to Timothy, encouraging his associate to hold firm in the faith and to be the person God's called him to be. And in the process, he gave us these words. St Paul writes, "I have not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, and love and a sound mind." I want to make sure you heard me. He did not give us a spirit of fear but what? Power, love and a sound mind. Now some of you heard me the second time. Let me try it one more time. I want to make sure you've got this. St. Paul told us that God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, and love and a sound mind. We're almost there; I think I'll hear you the next time. He did not give us a spirit of fear but a spirit of power, and love, and a sound mind. And now that I've got you understanding what this is all about, I want you to take these words with you wherever you go because these words are for every single one of us. God has not given us a spirit of fear. Fear paralyzes, fear sinks us, fear destroys us, we know that 85% of the ailments that people have are directly related to fear and stress. God does not give us a spirit of fear. He gives us a spirit of: power, and love and a sound mind.

And that's what we know, that's what the Bible tells us, that is what the Bible shares with us, and that's what I truly believe with my entire being. The word power in Greek in the New Testament, if you're to read the original language, the word you would read is the word *dunamis*. That's where we get the word dynamite or dynamic. It is powerful! When you think of dynamite, what do you think of? You think of earth moving, you think of extreme explosions, you think of power. Dynamic speaker is one who has tremendous power and might really move people. Dynamic. However, in this specific passage of scripture, the context does not lead to an explosive power, but an enduring power. A power which has the ability to hold on through the toughest of times. A power that has the ability in the face of fear to continue to move. A power that has the ability to come from the gut and to say in spite of all these things, no matter what happens to me, I have the power to stand firm in my faith, in my beliefs, in my convictions. It's the endurance power.

A young girl came to her grandmother, she was visiting her grandmother and when she woke up in the morning, she saw her grandmother looking at her hands. She was curious, she came over to her and she said grandma why are you looking at your hands? She said oh these hands have been with me my entire life. These hands mean a lot to me. When I was your age, these hands protected me when I would fall and save my face and save me from harm. When I was a baby these hands fed me. These hands have been with me through everything. These hands are what I fold when I pray. These hands have been used to clothe me my entire life. I've used these hands to hold your mother in my arms. And when she was a baby I would use these hands to wipe her tears and touch her face. With these hands, I displayed the love I had for your grandfather all these years, my wedding band. Let the world know how much I loved him. These hands I use to communicate. I've written notes, I've written letters, I've dialed the telephone. These hands have been everything to me. And the day will come when these

hands will be held by the hand of Jesus Christ and He'll lead me to the Father and I will meet God and I will touch Jesus' face with these hands. That's why I look at these hands. That's enduring power. "I have not given you a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, and love." Yeah, St. Paul knew what he was talking about, a spirit of love. He wrote the great love chapter: "Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love endures all things, hopes all things." There is faith, hope and love and the greatest of these is love.

An interesting thing is that the New Testament word for love is agape. You go elsewhere and you'll read the Greek literature and you read erotic love, eros, and you read a friendship love, phileo, but in the New Testament, the love is agape. It is a unique love, it is a deep love, it is a divine love. And that's the word we use here, is agape. It is the love of Christ, which surrounds, empowers, lifts, motivates and inspires us to be the people that He's called us to be. It is truly the greatest of things.

Abraham Lincoln was in South Carolina, and when he was there he saw something that kind of rocked his world. He saw human beings being auctioned off for sale. And he saw this one young girl being auctioned off, and he decided he was going to buy her. He didn't care what it cost; he's going to buy her. And he won the bid! And she came up to him and she said now what are you going to do with me with a scorn on her face. And he said I bought only one thing today: I bought your freedom. I set you free. You're free. And she's dumbfounded, she didn't know what to do and finally she looks at him and she said if I'm free, I'm going to go with you. And that's agape love. "For God so loved the world," for God so loved you and me, "that He gave His only son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life." We have the freedom then, to follow Jesus. When we have that experience, where we make that commitment to follow Jesus Christ, our fear is gone. For St. Paul said it, "I have not given a spirit of fear but a spirit of power, and love and a sound mind."

It's interesting, the Greek word for a sound mind is something that isn't used in the New Testament, in fact, this is the only place it's used. And even though I know Greek quite well, I'm not familiar with this word. I know a derivative of it, the derivative is a sophia, which is wisdom, but this is sôphronismos which actually has a different character to it, a different understanding. That's why if you go and you read different translations you'll get very different words. You have sound mind. It might be self-control, it may be self-discipline, it may be self-mastery. But what it comes down to is the fact that the spirit that is given to us, which we translate as well as untranslatable words, but let's just translate it as sound mind is the ability for us to keep our positive thoughts alive and real in spite of the most dastardly circumstances we might find ourselves in. Our minds have the ability to realize that somehow, someway all things work together for good. And therefore, we have nothing to fear. But we have everything with which to praise God for because we have the power and the love and the sound mind that is promised to us by God. As a result of that, we cannot fail.

Washington DC airport ticket agent has offered us some examples of why our country might have some problems. Being in Washington DC, she hears all kinds of requests. For instance, she had a New Hampshire congresswoman ask for an aisle seat so that her hair wouldn't get messed up by being near the window. Think about this, this is on an airplane. Okay? She got a call from a candidate staffer who wanted to go to Cape Town and she started to explain the length of the flight and the passport information, and then she interrupted me by saying hey, I'm not trying to make you look stupid, but Cape Town is in Massachusetts.

She said without trying to make you look stupid, I calmly explained Cape Cod is in Massachusetts. Cape Town is in Africa. A senator's aide called to inquire about a trip package to Hawaii and after going over all the cost info, she asked would it be cheaper to fly to California and then take the train to Hawaii? These are true. A senior senator called and had a question about the documents he needed in order to fly to China, and after a lengthy discussion about the passports, I reminded him that he needed a visa. I don't need a visa; I've been to China many times and never have had to have one of those. I double-checked and sure enough, his stay required a visa. When I told him this, he said look I've been to China four times and every time I've been there they've always accepted my American Express. I've got 12 of them. Tell you what, I'll put them online, you can read them there, all 12 of them. That's just three. A sound mind.

We have been given a spirit of a sound mind so that we can use our abilities to think, to reason, to understand. And in the process of reasoning and understanding, it is our faith that creates the foundation upon which our emotions are created. So we face our fears with faith.

John Wimber is a mentor of mine. He actually was one of the few men who was allowed to teach at Fuller Theological Seminary without a master's degree. I think all of their professors have at least a master's now, if not a doctorate degree, and yet he had more students in his classes than all of the others put together. Hundreds of them. His class was called Signs and Wonders. He started a movement in California and across the nation called Vineyard Ministries. And he died of cancer several years ago. And his second bout with cancer was really inoperable and he knew that his days were numbered. And he went and he delivered a message in the church and one of the things he said in that message was, "I have been in a valley and I can tell you that the view is not that bad. The view is not that bad." All we have to realize is as we go through life, and as we go in through those valleys and those very, very difficult times, the view isn't that bad. We can see the beautiful vistas of the mountaintops because God has in store for us something far greater than we could ever possibly imagine in our human existence. So our minds tell us, and our hearts follow because God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and a sound mind.

Just recently, we were reminded of the 40th anniversary of the death of Martin Luther King Jr. There's no question that that man changed American history. His very last words and his very last speech, he said, "I will fear no man." I will fear no man. Why? Because God has given us the spirit of power and love and a sound mind and it is that sound mind that keeps us in the assurance of the realization of the promises and the truth of God. That neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things to come, nor things present will ever be able to prevent us from the love of Jesus Christ. And that love holds us and carries us to that day where we come face to face with Him. And we use these hands to hold His hand and to touch His face.

So we leave this place with the assurance and the conviction of God's power, God's love and God's sound mind embedded into our hearts and our souls forever. Dear God we thank You that You just continue to embrace us with Your love. That You have given us a spirit that goes beyond our human thoughts. It is a spirit that is real today. It's a spirit of power, it is a spirit of love, it is a spirit of a sound mind. So we thank You Lord, for what You're doing today, and we love You always, Amen.

HYMN - "Rise Up, O Church of God"

Rise up, O Church of God! Have done with lesser things; Give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of Kings.

Rise up, O Church of Christ! The world for you does wait to share your love and joy and faith. Rise up, rise up, be great! Rise up!

BENEDICTION - RAS

RAS: And now may the power of the Holy Spirit of God touch your minds, and your souls with His love and may that love flow through you to everyone you meet today, tomorrow and always, Amen.