

HOUR OF POWER OF 10.05.2009

PROGRAM OPENING/TRUMPET FANFARE/V.O.

VO: Today on the Hour of Power: Rich Stearns grew up in broken home with an alcoholic father, but rose to become the CEO of Lennox fine china. That's when God called him to become the president of World Vision.

RICH: And I said gee, that's a tough one, because you're looking for someone that's part CEO, part Mother Teresa and part Indiana Jones. And I said I don't know anybody like that.

VO: Also today, incredible soloist Elliott Jackson.

ELLIOTT: You'll be a witness for my Lord. My soul is a witness for my Lord.

VO: Then, are you ready to live the incredible life God has planned for you? Today, Dr. Juan Carlos Ortiz hands you the key to unlocking God's promises for you.

JCO: This is why when we read this book, we should read not just because of the letter of the book, but the promises that Jesus gives in it. And what is a promise? Promise is something you have to believe. This is why Paul says the righteous person shall live by faith!

VO: Join us today for the best hour on television, the Hour of Power from the Crystal Cathedral.

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/INVOCATION - RHS

RHS: Good morning! Thank you for coming together to thank God for what He did for you yesterday. And many of you haven't thought about it. We live from day to day and the day comes and goes. We don't stop to review what miracles happened even today and they're happening in this hour. Thank you for being here to thank the Lord.

Well, turn around, shake hands with somebody and tell them God loves them and so do I.

So this is the day that God has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Oh God we live in a world of miracles every time we breathe, every time we open our lips, every time we see through the eye or hear through the ear is a miracle. We're still here; You've kept us alive. You have a reason and You brought us here this morning so that we can be inspired and renewed and reaffirmed in what a wonderful life we have because God made us and You called us and we said yes. Hallelujah. Amen.

HYMN - "Medley – All Creatures/Alleluia"

All creatures of our God and King lift up your voice and with us sing, Alleluia, Alleluia! The burning sun with golden beam, the silver moon with softer gleam, O praise Him, O praise Him, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless, and worship Him in humbleness, O praise Him, Alleluia! Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, three in one, O praise Him, O praise Him, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Lord I praise You, Lord I praise You, Lord I praise You, Lord I praise You. Lord I praise You, Lord I praise You, Lord I praise You, Lord I praise You.

SCRIPTURE – Psalm 63:1-5, 7 - JCO

JCO: What I'm going to read today I make it mine and you also can make it yours. These are the words of David that is representing the whole of mankind, humankind, womankind.

Oh God, You are my God. I earnestly search for You! My soul thirst for You. My whole body longs for You in this parched and weary land where there is no water. I have seen You in Your sanctuary and gazed up on Your power and glory. Your unfailing love is better than life itself. How I praise You. I will praise You as long as I live, lifting up my hands to You in prayer. You satisfied me more than the richest feast. I praise You with songs of joy. Because You are my helper, I sing for joy in the shadows of Your wings.

This is God's word and our words today.
Don, what are we going to hear today?

INTRODUCTION TO ANTHEM – DON NEUEN

DON: Our anthem today was composed by Pavel Chesnokov, and we would like to sing it in Russian. It is the most beautiful expression of faith that salvation truly was created through the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We hope in this season of lent that you will find deep meaning in it as we sing.

ANTHEM - "Salvation is Created" (Sung in Russian)
(SUNG IN RUSSIAN – ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

Salvation is created. Salvation is created. Salvation is created in the midst of earth, O God of earth, O God. Alleluiya, alleluiya. Alleluiya, alleluiya. Alleluiya, alleluiya. Alleluiya, alleluiya, alleluiya.

INTERVIEW – RICH STEARNS

RHS: ROBERT H. SCHULLER RS : RICH STEARNS

RHS: My guest this morning is a wonderful person. He was a very successful corporate chief. He was chairman of the board, one of the companies if I can mention, is Lennox, he was a very strong churchman, Christian, when he got a call out of the blue to come into Christian work and he wasn't ready for it at all. And it was to become the chairman of the board of World Vision and I'm an early fan of World Vision. It was founded by Bob Pierce and when I was starting this church, Bob Pierce was starting to look for people that were hurting and that would be his focus. Fabulous ministry.

When Richard finally surrendered his huge income from the corporate world down to a very small salary, and he's been there since, the first year he was with them, World Vision had donations of about \$358 million dollars a year. And after the first year, it reached one billion annually. He doesn't know I'm going to say this but I don't know of anybody that joined a head of a Christian enterprise

where he raised so much money so quickly and still does. So on the basis of that, I'm going to ask him to resign as president of World Vision and become a member of my staff. But come on up here. I'm honored and thrilled to have you. Wow - tell us your story. It was a real God calling.

RS: Well first of all, I've got to correct one fact. I'm not that good, Dr. Schuller. We didn't go from 300 million to one billion in one year. It took a few years to do that but..

RHS: Well I've got to give you a few years.

RS: ..give me a few years, but God was gracious. But my story is a story of God working in the life of one man and as you said, I was a corporate CEO. I was living the American dream. And for a kid that grew up poor, I grew up in a broken family with an alcoholic father and parents that never went to high school. And through God's grace, I was able to attend two Ivy League colleges and begin climbing the corporate ladder to the point where I became CEO of Lennox china and crystal. The ladies here know Lennox; thank you for your support.

And there I was in 1998, master of all I surveyed, sitting in my big corporate office, really grateful to God for what He had done in my life and the phone rang. And on the other end of that phone, was an executive recruiter and he said "Rich, World Vision is looking for a new president" and we were donors to World Vision, my wife and I, and I said "Well that's a great organization." I said, "How can I help you?" and he described the job and asked if I knew anybody that would fit that description. And I said "Gee that's a tough one because you're looking for someone that's part CEO, part Mother Teresa and part Indiana Jones." And I said "I don't know anybody like that." And then he at the end of the call he said "Well what about you? Would you be willing to consider this job?" And my first reaction was you've got to be crazy. I'm selling luxury goods to the wealthy. What do I know about the poorest of the poor? But we also know the Lord has a sense of humor about who He calls into different jobs and as you said, on that phone call, I kept trying to say no, I wasn't interested, I wasn't qualified, and he finally asked me that question: "Are you willing to be open to God's will for your life?"

RHS: Great.

RS: That's a tough question.

RHS: It is.

RS: And ultimately with some great reluctance and kicking and screaming, I was not a great courageous Christian leader, but I ultimately said I can only obey Christ and if I talk the talk and I had talked the talk all my life, this was an opportunity to walk the walk.

RHS: Wow.

RS: So I joined World Vision in 1998.

RHS: Wow. That's ten years ago, eleven.

RS: Just about ten/eleven years ago.

RHS: Wow. Well what was it like when you took it over and what was the greatest challenge you faced?

RS: Well World Vision is a great organization. We are a Christian humanitarian organization; we operate in 100 countries with some 40,000 staff now. It's the largest humanitarian organization in the world and it's Christian; it's dedicated to Christ. We do emergency relief, we respond to hurricanes and earthquakes and tsunamis and war and refugee situations, but we also work in communities over the long term, caring for the poorest of the poor, trying to help lift communities out of poverty in the name of Christ. And it's a phenomenal

ministry; we have an opportunity to demonstrate the gospel not just talk about the gospel but demonstrate it through our love and our concern for the people we serve. So it was a great ministry to join and it's just a privilege to serve in the name of the Lord in the work that we do around the world.

RHS: You have a new book out, A Hole in the Gospel. I spent yesterday reading it. Very gripping. Very authentic. Very believable and we, this is it. Tell people what.. what does that mean, A Hole in the Gospel?

RS: Well the title, as you say, is The Hole in Our Gospel, and partially this is a book that allowed me to speak about the ten years of experiences I've had at World Vision and how I came from the corporate world. And I've had an opportunity; unlike most people to see the world in a way that a billionaire couldn't see the world. I've traveled to 45/50 countries around the world, I've been up the Macon River on a wooden boat, I've crossed the Rift Valley of Ethiopia in a land cruiser, I've been to Machu Picchu in Peru and I've visited poor villages in the Andes Mountains, so I have seen things that most people never get a chance to see. And during those ten years, Dr. Schuller, I developed a growing feeling and passion that the American church has embraced a shallow gospel, a partial gospel and that there's something missing from our understanding of the gospel. And I talk about that in the book and what is the hole in our gospel? The hole in our gospel is that we've embraced a gospel that involves our personal salvation and the forgiveness of our sins. The word gospel means good news and that is surely good news that we've embraced that gospel. But the gospel was meant to be so much more than that. It was meant to be binding up the broken hearted, caring for the poor and downtrodden, taking the kingdom of God around the world and demonstrating His love to the world. It was never meant to be just a private transaction between you and me and God, it was meant to be a public expression of our following of Christ that would change the world.

RHS: The Hole in the Gospel; how do we fill the hole?

RS: Well I've seen the hole being filled. You know, I've had the privilege of seeing the hungry fed and the lame walk, I've seen wells drilled and cisterns built, I've seen girls freed from sexual slavery, I've seen brothels shut down, I've seen amazing miracles that have been done because good and faithful people have made contributions to organizations like World Vision or Samaritan's Purse or Compassion. There are many fine organizations but it is possible to change the world but you see Christ, in His plan, chose us to change the world. One way to say it is what is God's plan for poverty? What is God's plan for injustice? We are plan A. He chose us to go out in His name and deal with these things and He doesn't have a plan B. We are plan A; God doesn't have a plan B. So it's up to us to fill that hole in our gospel and to be the hands and feet of Christ to a hurting world.

RHS: And Bob Pierce, when he founded World Vision, was divinely guided because we need that kind of an institution who can take our gifts and put them where they're most needed, right?

RS: Amen. Right.

RHS: And you wouldn't find a benevolent organization that operates with more of every dollar going to the cause. I know your financial operation. I knew Bob very, very well.

RS: Yes.

RHS: He and I prayed about it when the time when he was starting it.

RS: Yes.

RHS: And he prayed for this church, so you're doing great and I want to thank you very, very, much.

RS: Thank you Dr. Schuller.

RHS: The book is endorsed by Lucy Swindoll, Madelyn Albright, and Robert Schuller.

RS: And Robert Schuller.

RHS: It's in the bookstores.

RS: I'm honored.

RHS: Thank you.

RS: Thank you, thank you very much, sir.

RHS: Thank you very much.

RHS INTRODUCES/PRAYS FOR ELLIOTT JACKSON

RHS: Now it's my joy to welcome a familiar face to many of you. Many of you know Elliott Jackson. He's been a faithful member of the Crystal Cathedral Choir for many years. Elliott.. I like your new suit.

EJ: Thank you, Dr. Schuller.

RHS: You are terrific. What a friend. I understand you're singing a song this morning that's very significant to you and your family these days. You've been with the choir five years, I understand.

EJ: That's correct.

RHS: And you're going somewhere. Tell us about that.

EJ: Thank you, Dr Schuller. I've been invited as a missionary to go to Japan. This will actually be my third visit as a missionary however, this will be an extended visit as a missionary.

RHS: What does extended mean?

EJ: Well we'll be there at least one year. They're asking that we stay five years but we'll take it one year at a time.

RHS: Wow. And we want to all pray for you so may we do that now?

EJ: Thank you.

RHS: Dear Lord, we send him, You called him, they receive him. And his beautiful Christian faith will truly empower people who see him, look at him and listen to him because he is a true Christian. Amen. Sing for us.

SOLO – ELLIOTT JACKSON – “Witness”

Oh Lord what manner of Man is this? All nations in Him are blessed. All things are done by His will. He spoke to the sea and the sea stood still. Now ain't that a witness for my Lord. Ain't that a witness for my Lord. Ain't that a witness for my Lord. My soul is a witness for my Lord.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees. His name was Nicodemus and he didn't believe. The same came to Christ by night; wanted to be taught out of human sight. Now you'll be a witness for my Lord, you'll be a witness for my Lord, you'll be a witness for my Lord. My soul is a witness for my Lord.

You read about Samson from his birth. Strongest man that ever lived on earth. Way back yonder in the ancient times, he killed ten thousand of the Philistines. Then Old Samson went wandering about. Samson's strength was never found out. Until his wife sat upon his knee and said "Tell me where your strength lies, if you please."

Now you'll be a witness for my Lord, you'll be a witness for my Lord, you'll be a witness for my Lord. My soul is a witness for my Lord. For my Lord! For my Lord! Witness for my Lord!

RHS “Thank you so much”

RHS: Thank you so much. What great music we have in this church.

RHS INTRODUCES JUAN CARLOS ORTIZ

RHS: Today I’m joined by a dear friend and pastor emeritus of the Crystal Cathedral, Dr. Juan Carlos Ortiz. Dr. Juan Carlos Ortiz has been in ministry for over 50 years. He was born in Buenos Aires, was ordained as a minister in the Christian Assemblies of Argentina. He founded six churches, including our own Hispanic ministry here at the Crystal Cathedral. Dr. Ortiz is a pastor in the Reformed Church of America and has graciously accepted the call to be interim senior pastor in this local congregation here at the Crystal Cathedral.

I first heard him speak 35 years ago to Billy Graham evangelism congress in Lozano Switzerland and he preached a great sermon and said all Christians are potatoes. Some are fried potatoes, not too good. And some are boiled potatoes, not the best. What we all should be mashed potatoes. We work together. Well, Juan Carlos and his wife Martha have been married for 47 years; they have four children, six grandchildren so welcome Juan Carlos Ortiz.

JCO: Thank you. Thank you, thank you Dr. Schuller.

MESSAGE/PRAYER – JUAN CARLOS ORTIZ

"The Key to Improve Our Behavior"

JCO: All of us would like to be perfect citizens hopefully. And all of us would like to be perfect children of God. But if I would ask how many are perfect citizens and perfectly good, nobody is raise their hand because this is easier to say than to do it.

But if we don’t count with the help of God Himself we will never be able to improve our lives and there are many people who have very bad lives. That are very wicked in life and they sometimes think “I would like to be better but I can’t.” It’s like some of those who want to quit a habit like drugs or pornography or smoking or drinking and they can’t. Some of us, because we were born in this race that has a tendency to be rebellious just like our parents Adam and Eve. It’s difficult for us without help to accomplish the dreams that we want to accomplish but there is help. There is help and this help in theology is called grace.

Grace, grace is to receive something and expect it. Grace is to receive something that we never thought about and grace is something that most people do not believe it exists. They said there’s no something like a free lunch. But my friends grace is a free lunch and dinner and life. Grace is much more than you can think and expect. Grace is exemplified and fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ that gave Himself for us.

We have an agnostic friend he tells us always oh I admire you. We are so great, you are so good, you are so this, so that, that we get embarrassed, you know?

I never begin because this is such a wonderful relationship that it’s very difficult even to express because some people don’t believe it. This is what agnostic neighbor is watching, he says how can.. you are different, do you know what that psychologist implied and told us? You are not normal. What is normal? We’ll fight? Oh!

Do you know we had living with us a guest in our home from Argentina? And we didn’t know them. They were believers over there and we got a letter that their child had been born with a horrible defect that only there was one person in the Children’s Hospital of San Francisco that could fix that problem. So these people

tried to bring their child here. To make a long story short, we invited them to come to our home. And we live in those days close to San Francisco. So they lived with us one year because it took many operations to that child. Otherwise he would die.

So when they were six months in our home, we were coming from the hospital and the man and the woman, they were the couple there, they said to us “could you stop the car for a moment? We have something serious to tell you.” So we got out of the freeway and we went to a parking place. Said, “What you want to say?” He said, “My wife and I are very worried because it is six months we live with your house with you and we never saw you fighting. And we know you are not fighting because we are in your house. And you are afraid that we are going to tell others of Pastor Ortiz and Martha fight. Listen: fight, we will not tell anybody because you have helped us so much that we want you be normal!” Martha smiled and said “no, we don’t fight because we don’t fight and we don’t fight, not because we are good, because we have decided to forgive each other every time.” And it’s true. Martha is not perfect. Don’t tell her that I said that. And I’m not perfect! You can say that, she will believe it.

Listen we are an average couple, we are like every body. We have the same temptations, the same trials and the same circumstances but we have one thing that maybe makes us a little different and what we have is that we have somebody who is helping us to be at least a little bit better than the rest. Because you know, my friends, if you have Christ and your neighbor doesn’t there has to be some difference or not. I am one that believes if you have God in your life. If you have Jesus Christ and all He needs if you are filled with the Holy Spirit there has to be a difference between you and the rest of the fellow worker. The rest of the schoolmates, the rest of your neighbors, the rest of your business companions there has to be some difference.

So it is impossible actually to be that perfect, perfect citizen, that perfect neighbor, the perfect husband, the perfect father, the perfect child of God unless we have faith in somebody stronger and greater than us and that is willing to help us. It’s impossible without faith.

So my message today says if you choose because this is the situation. There is freedom of choice. God made us free; we can do whatever we want. Now some people said that God shouldn’t have given us free choice. That He should have been done and make good people and we all would be good people. No He wants if we do something He wants to have free people that love Him because they love Him. Listen other wise we will be robots, we love you, we love you, we love you. You know it’s like if you want somebody to tell you I love you and you make a cassette and you put it I love you and this is yourself. Free choice is very important so we have to choose to love God, to choose to please God, too. We have to put something from ourselves, but you know even if we choose sometimes it’s very, very difficult to accomplish our desires of that kind of perfection or at least to be willing to be a little bit better.

And anyway Jesus is also our example. When Jesus came to earth He came to be the example, the type of person that God wants you and me to be: to be like Jesus. He’s the paradigm, He’s the standard. Actually the scripture says that God predestined humankind to be in the image of Christ, that Christ would be the first born among many brethren. Oh my goodness. But attention Jesus is not only the example and the paradigm, Jesus is the enabler for those who want to be like Him. He promised. He promised. “I will give you a new heart and I will put My own spirit in you. And I will help you from inside to be like Me to do My will.” I will help you. He will not force you but He will help you if you decide to be like Him.

He will not force that will. You will not become an automat but yes, if you say yes to God, Jesus, yes fill me come into my life. He will come. So He is the example and the enabler.

The scripture that I have for today says, it's from Peter chapter 2 that says: "All things pertaining to life and godliness have been granted unto us by the knowledge of Him who called us to His glory and excellence. And by Him we have been given His precious and magnificent promises that by them you may become like Him." Look at this: all things pertaining to life and godliness means all things pertaining to this life and godliness means all the things that pertain to the spiritual life.

What is life? Life is to be good neighbors good citizens, save water, recycle, don't put garbage in the drain that goes to the sea, etcetera. Love your wife, your children, be an example, the best father, the best mother but not only that but also godliness. God expects us to have good morals, good ethics, He expects us to worship Him, to obey Him, to serve Him. You want a perfect citizen and you want a perfect believer? That's what is our goal to be like Jesus?

So I am a father, I have children. You know my children are free. If they would do what I want, they will be all pastors, but that's not the case. I wanted one to be a physician, a doctor, and he said I want to be a musician. He became a musician. I expected the other one to be a pastor and he said no I want to be a businessperson. Well he is a businessperson. You know this is the positive of free choice because this is why we have so many specialties, trades and things. We have engineers, we have garbage collectors, we have everything you know? Thanks to that artist; otherwise we would be all the same.

But also there's a negative side of freedom. Is that we can choose to be and to do evil. And we have today some children that get into drugs, get into the wrong crowd. Children that become big and they become cheaters, business people that they, you know, how our country is today, is part of that corruption in business, in politics, in all those things because there is a choice. That's the freedom.

So this is the good news and this is why we church exist and this is why preachers are is to call people; those who are willing to be better there is a way. Jesus Christ has promised to enable us. He said I will give you a new heart, I will take from you that heart of stone, dry, cold, hard and replace it with a tender heart. And I will put My spirit in you and I will help you to do My will. That is grace. Grace, salvation, grace is to be able by the mercy of God, grace is to be able by the divine intervention of Jesus Christ in our life the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit working together to make the person that you want to be and that God wants you to be. That is the grace of God. And there is a method to accomplish that. The method is not that you have to do an effort no.

I think that Adam and Eve made an effort. But you know Adam and Eve for me are the example of the whole of mankind, the whole of humankind, womankind too. The example is that they were weak as we are weak. You know the weakness of Adam is much, much weaker than ours. Because you know he was in the Garden of Eden there were thousands and in the world millions of trees they could eat from. Only one they were for only one! There were no other woman there to tempt him, there were no other men to tempt her, there was no drugs, no alcohol, no television, no nothing. Only the fruit of one tree and they failed. Imagine Adam and Eve in San Francisco or Anaheim or Garden Grove. They were weak. And you know we have the same situation, the same situation. You know I don't think that God was too upset because they ate of the fruit of the tree. I believe that the problem of Adam and Eve was more not the fruit but their attitude after they

ate the fruit. Because for parents the disobedience of a child is not a problem. Parents always have the capacity to forgive.

Now how many times your children disobeyed you? Can you count them? And what did you do? How many times did you forgive them? All. Even if they fall in jail you go to visit them. You put a lawyer to see if you can put him out. Why? Because you love them. You know God loves us. It was no problem for God to disciplining of Adam and Eve, it was what they did after. Instead of saying "Father, Father, Father we failed and we are sorry, you know, forgive us, if You give another chance we'll try not touch that tree anymore." What do you think God would have done? What would you do? You know it happens to us with my wife.

I travel a lot so poor Martha she had to be doing so many things and still disciplining of the children that's too much. So what she said to them was when Daddy comes.. I was the bad guy. When daddy comes. Now sometimes they came to the door and said, "Dad, Mommy's going to tell you something I did and she is right. I was wrong I did this." I never, never punish my children when they recognize their fault. And even the Bible was very clear, that if we confess our sins we are going to be forgiven. Always! But Adam and Eve, no! They said well "I'm not guilty, it's the woman You gave me." And she said, "I'm not guilty, it's Satan. You allowed Satan to be in the garden that's Your fault." That's what they meant. Excuses, excuses instead of facing the music and repenting and asking for help and forgiveness.

Now God is the same today and we are like Adam and Eve today. We need somebody that loves us. Please, He helps us and second if we slide down and fall He will say come on, get up, I forgive you, let's continue the perfecting work. So this is grace not only that God will help you but every time that you fail He will forgive you not because you deserve it. Sometimes I wonder do our children deserve all we do for them? In one sense no, if we look at their works or their behavior but because they are my children, the word deserved doesn't exist. The word deserve doesn't apply to our children. We have them because we love them, whatever.

The same thing is with God. Now God offers us not only to help us but also in case we fail to forgive us, to keep on perfecting us because if He forgives us and we go astray, He cannot keep on perfecting us. So it's a matter of starting a relationship with Him and maintaining ourselves close to Him. So if we fall He restores us and continues to work in us. And says this scripture that I read for you that all that we need for this life and for godliness had been granted unto us by the knowledge of Him, Jesus, who called us to His glory and excellence.

You know the word glory is reputation. The glory of God is the reputation of God and we are called to be part of that glory, part of the reputation of God. My neighbors should say that God must be good because look at this person. We are part of God's reputation. Our life, in the office, in our factory, in our neighborhood, whatever we are, we are the reputation of God so we are called to glory, to reputation and excellence not to mediocrity. Now I know that I'm not excellent but I am in the way? Wait a moment let me see what will happen. And one day even this body will be transformed and I will be seated with Christ. Wait a moment we are all in this train of perfection so I will never get off the train because that is the perfecting train that goes towards eternity. And what are these promises? These promises, like the ones I quote, "I will give you a new heart" is that Jesus in us, as Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me." The promises are like coupons, coupons.

You know since I preach here many of you are speaking with accent. You know when I arrived to America from Argentina more than thirty years ago I saw in the newspapers coupons no? Coupons. It said if you bring this coupon when you buy your pizza you will get two pizzas. Argentines, we don't believe those things because in our country all are cheaters, you know? The politicians, the entire whatever, you know the story of poor Argentina that even Eva said don't cry for me Argentina. So when I saw those coupons I said to my wife don't believe, this is a trap. Maybe you go with a coupon and they ask your address you know don't. And so we never used those coupons. Until one day I went to the pizzeria and I was in line behind another man and he bought a pizza and paid \$12.50 it was a big one. So I went behind him and I bought the same thing I said and I paid \$12.50. When the pizzas came they gave to him two pizzas and to me one pizza. So I went to complain, I said listen I paid just like him and you gave him two pizzas! Oh, he said, because he brought the coupon. Ah!!! It was true, the thing about the coupons!

And you know something? This book here is a coupon book. Oh!!! It's full of promises. This is why, when we read this book, we should read not just because of the letter of the book, but the promises that Jesus gives in it. And what is a promise? Promise is something you have to believe! This is why Paul says the righteous person shall live by faith. By faith! We don't have to make an effort. The key is faith. God wants you to believe Him like He wanted Adam and Eve to believe Him, that He was love.

"Therefore, all things pertaining to life and godliness have been granted unto us through the knowledge of Jesus Christ who called us to glory and excellence." And by these things He has given to us His precious and magnificent promises. Precious and magnificent promises that for them you may become partakers of the divine nature.

Let us pray. Wonderful Lord, I need You. I need to change. I understand that my life is not always pleasing to my family, my neighbors not even to myself or to You but I believe Your word. All things I need to please others and to please You have already been granted to me in Jesus Christ. If any person is in Christ is a new person. I believe Your promise of a new heart. I believe that Your spirit will fill my life and help me to change. Lord, I believe in You and because I believe and live in You, here I will be able to accomplish it. Amen.

HYMN - "O For a Faith that Will Not Shrink"

O, for a faith that will not shrink, though pressed by every foe; that will not tremble on the brink of any earthly woe.

Lord, give me such a faith as this, and then, whatever may come, I'll taste, even now, the hallowed bliss of an eternal home.

NEXT WEEK/BENEDICTION - JCO

JCO: Don't forget also that next week we will have John Maxwell, the author of his latest book, Put Your Dreams to the Test. He will bring a powerful message. So you won't like to miss it. And now, prepare yourselves for the benediction. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face to shine upon you, be gracious unto you, and grant you the life that you are willing to live and that He is willing you to live. In your going out and your coming in, in your lying down and in your rising up, in your labor and in your leisure, in your laughter and in your tears until you come to stand before Jesus in that day where there is no sunset, no dawning, Amen.

Go in peace and be like Jesus. Amen.