

HOUR OF POWER OF 17.01.2010

PROGRAM OPENING/TRUMPET FANFARE/V.O.

VO: Today on the Hour of Power: Dr. Sheila Schuller Coleman welcomes entertainer John Tesh to talk about his new book, his incredibly popular daily radio program and parenting a teenage daughter.

JT: When my daughter, if she has a problem with the way I'm parenting, I'll say: "Yo, yo Prima, I'm your dad and if you don't like my parenting that's too bad," you know. And so she's just.. it drives her crazy.

VO: Then John shares a tribute to lasting love and marriage.

JT: (SINGING) Won't you give me forever to show all of the love I have here for you.

VO: Then tap into the miracle working power of God through prayer in the conclusion of our Answered Prayer series with international author and speaker Bill Butterworth.

BB: What's your fear today? I find it so significant that the fear in this story raises its ugly head at three a.m. What wakes you up in the middle of the night?

VO: If you need a lift today, you've tuned to the right program. 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

SSC: Welcome to Crystal Cathedral. Are you afraid today? Are you afraid of losing your job or not finding a job? Are you afraid of losing your home? Are you afraid of losing a spouse? Are you afraid of losing your life? Well then God wants you to hear today that you can have victory over your fears because He, our Heavenly Father is just a prayer away. Please turn around to someone, shake their hands and say God is just a prayer away.

Yes this is the day the Lord has made and we will rejoice and be glad in it. Lord You are only a prayer away. We don't need an invitation to meet with You, the king of kings, the God of the universe. You wait patiently for us to turn our eyes to You, to open our ears to hear Your words, to hear Your love for us. So we come to You this morning, oh Lord, to hear, to see, to feel Your power, Your love, Your forgiveness. Thank You, Lord for being there all the time; just a breath, a prayer away. Amen.

HYMN - "Medley – Great is Your Faithfulness/Cares Chorus"

Great is Your faithfulness O God my Father. There is no shadow of turning with You. You never change, Your compassion, it fails not; As You have been You forever will be. Great is Your faithfulness, great is Your faithfulness morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed Your hand has provided. Great is Your faithfulness, Lord unto me.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth; Your own dear presence to cheer and to guide. Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow; blessings are mine with ten thousand beside. Great is Your faithfulness, great is Your faithfulness morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed Your hand has provided. Great is Your faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

BETH: Our God is faithful. If you've come today carrying burdens that have kept you awake all night, leave them in His hands; Our God, who's never changed, and whose compassion never fails. Sing with us.

I cast all my cares upon You. I lay all of my burdens down at Your feet and anytime that I don't know what to do I will cast all my cares upon You.

I cast all my cares upon You. I lay all of my burdens down at Your feet and anytime that I don't know what to do I will cast all my cares upon You. And anytime that I don't know what to do I will cast all my cares upon You. On You.

SCRIPTURE – Matthew 6 & 7 - SSC

SSC: You may be seated. As we conclude our message series on prayer today, let us hear how Jesus taught us to pray. You've heard my father teach a little bit about prayer, and me, and today Bill Butterworth, but let's hear what Jesus teaches us how to pray, as recorded in the book of Matthew from chapters 6 and 7. And these are the words of Christ.

Your father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one for Yours, Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on for your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. So ask, and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you for everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds. And to him who knocks, it will be opened.

These are the words of our Savior Jesus.

ANTHEM - "The Lord's Prayer"

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. Amen.

SSC THANK YOU TO CHOIR & ORCHESTRA

SSC: Thank you choir and orchestra.

INTERVIEW – JOHN TESH

SSC: SHEILA SCHULLER COLEMAN JT: JOHN TESH

SSC: Well today we have an amazing guest. It's not his first time here. It's my first time interviewing him. And his name is John Tesh. Welcome John Tesh.

John has a new book and I'm going to just read about John. John Tesh is a gifted and successful musician, world traveler, prolific composer and past television sports commentator for the Olympic games on NBC. He is the former co-host of Entertainment Tonight, currently produces and hosts Music and Intelligence for Your Life, heard by millions, right?

JT: Yes ma'am

SSC: Each day on over 350 radio stations in the United States and now he has this book, Intelligence for Your Life: Powerful Lessons for Personal Growth. John, what don't you do?

JT: Well if you look at my.. Bill Butterworth and I were just talking about this, about you know managing time and if you look at my bio, it looks like I have horrible ADD, which I do..

SSC: Do you?

JT: ..yes, and my wife sent me to a therapist years ago and they tried the treatment and it didn't work so I'm just result of failed therapy and I just continue to do whatever I think is interesting and when you see that bio, I love taking risks and that's a lot of what that book is about is taking risks and having it supported by God.

SSC: But you have a teenage daughter..

JT: I do have a teenage daughter, pray for me. Yes. And the funny thing is, is that when I say 'hey I've got a teenage daughter,' there's always some guy who says 'I've got five.' I'm like oh! It's like well you say I've got back pain. I just broke both of my ankles. It's like the Olympic thing, you know. Oh yes?

SSC: Yes?

JT: Yes, I have a teenage daughter and her name is Prima, and she has decided that she's going to be a dancer, a ballerina and..

SSC: A prima ballerina.

JT: ..yes, and we named her after Connie's dad, who's Primo, so it was just an accident that she became a ballerina. But what I decided to do was not sort of shrink back from the world of what teens are going through now, and sort of go in that direction, so I've become hip hop dad.

SSC: Yes.

JT: And so when my daughter, if she has a problem with the way I'm parenting, I'll say, I'll go, "Yo, yo Prima, I'm your dad and if you don't like my parenting, that's too bad." You know and just.. it drives her crazy. Which is really what it's about, isn't it? Driving your kids crazy? Yes, I mean it's a ministry.

SSC: Well I think turnabout is fair play because the teenage kids drive me crazy.

JT: Well yes, so what you have to do is you don't shrink back from that, in fact, I wrote this rap tune just for all the dads out there who have teenage girls, that we do on stage. Can I do it? I mean I don't have..

SSC: Please.

JT: ..I don't have the band but it's just basically, and like I said, it's a tribute to all the dads out there. Do you do any beat boxing at all?

SSC: Who me?

JT: Maybe not. Imagine Sheila beat boxing right now.

SSC: No. How do you do it again?

JT: I'm terribly sorry, welcome to Sea World.

SSC: Okay, let me try it.

JT: That's great, that's fantastic.

SSC: No that's pretty bad.

JT: Sounds like the Olympic swimming trials. “Yo my name is John and I’ve got a teenager and she’s at that age when boys want to date her and though I realize this will eventually occur, I picked up a few things so I can protect her. Like mace and pepper spray and night vision goggles, a lie detector and two guys from Chicago. I’ve been driven to this by the thought of her dating. Next step: enhanced interrogating. What am I going to do when her date comes to my door, driving a Mustang with four on the floor? Oh hey come on in, nice to meet you Frasier. Hold on a second, I’ve got to get my taser. So here’s a shout out to all the dads in the world, we got to do our best to save our teenage girls. Guard their hearts, they are the well spring of life, and if that don’t work, you call your wife.”

SSC: That’s okay, John, because you’re trying to protect your daughter from boys. I have four sons, four teenage sons, but my boys are good boys.

JT: Sure they are.

SSC: They better be. They better be.

JT: They’re just not coming to my house.

SSC: And I don’t write raps.

JT: I’m sure they’re great boys.

SSC: They’re great boys.

JT: Keep them over at your house.

SSC: I don’t write rap songs about my boys, but they write rap songs about me.

JT: Oh they do?

SSC: They do.

JT: Oh that’s cool.

SSC: No its not.

JT: Yo, yo mom, you’re way, way cool and even though you’re Schuller, you’re no fool.

SSC: No, no, no..

JT: The ad lib thing can get us in a lot of trouble.

SSC: ..do not give them any more ideas, John. They give me a hard enough time as it is.

JT: I’d like to see your dad rapping, actually.

SSC: You would?

JT: Yes.

SSC: It might be interesting. So what inspired you to do the radio program and the book, Intelligence for Life?

JT: You know the book came from the radio program. Aren’t you so sorry that you’re interviewing me right now?

SSC: No, this is fun.

JT: The book came from the radio program, the radio program came from my wife Connie. You know my wife Connie Sellecca, she’s an actress, a businesswomen..

SSC: Beautiful woman.

JT: ..and right now full time mom and great wife and my side of the bed is what my side of the bed would like as an ADD guy. I’ve got like, you know, little pieces of wire and broken I-pods and little keyboards and stuff, so she was complaining about that one day, and of course I had the cross complain because that’s our job..

SSC: That’s right.

JT: ..so I looked at her side of the bed and it was all like you know magazines, giant stacks of magazine, everything from Guidepost to Reader’s

Digest to Prevention and Oprah Magazine and all the sticky notes in there, things like you know I'll get to this, I'll read it. I said you're never going to get to that stuff and she's like yes I am and suddenly the light bulb went off and I said let's do a show for that person, who wants to be better at everything, who wants all this great information but doesn't have time for it..

SSC: Yes.

JT: ..and we'll call it Intelligence for Your Life. And we started with one station and it's grown into more than 300 now, and it's not a Christian show, but it is a secular and Christian show hosted by a Christian guy. So we're on five Christian stations, but we're also mostly on secular stations, and it's an opportunity and the mission is to be salt and light and encourage people to live purposeful lives.

SSC: Well I really liked your chapter on stress.

JT: Yes.

SSC: Because you not only give them different techniques for managing stress, but also how to reduce stress..

JT: Right.

SSC: ..and one of the techniques was saying no.

JT: Right.

SSC: Just say no. In fact let me, can I read..

JT: Sure, please.

SSC: ..an excerpt from your book? "Don't just say let me think about it. Instead, say right now, that's impossible and shake your head from side to side as you say it."

JT: It works.

SSC: Well but it doesn't work for me.

JT: Oh, well you have large humans at your house, what are you going to do?

SSC: No my dad taught me I'm supposed to cut the word impossible..

JT: Oh okay he's possibility thinking!

SSC: Yes!

JT: Okay never mind that.

SSC: So I just want to know.. okay but it's true, reducing stress, which I'm not very good at doing, and I don't think you are either.

JT: No, no I'm not good at stress. But the point you make, it's a great point and that is that we just.. and we do this to our kids too, we over schedule ourselves and we're afraid of saying..

SSC: What did you do with that page?

JT: ..its in my pocket.

SSC: I want to read it.

JT: And so we're so afraid of saying no, that we say yes to everything and we get ourselves in so much trouble and so you won't have any chance to have any possibility thinking if you're so stressed from saying yes all the time. See how I just tied all that back in there?

SSC: That's good. That's a great reframe.

JT: It was great. Don't forget to pick up Dr. Schuller's book, its right there in the possibility thinking..

SSC: Move Ahead with Possibility Thinking. But you also spend some really good quality time in here about protecting yourself, putting barriers between e-mails and Blackberry's. And I actually read an article lately that says some of us are spending more time on e-mail than we are with our spouses.

JT: Yes, yes, for sure.

SSC: So speak to that a little bit.

JT: Yes well you know there's actually now an internet addiction rehab center that opened in Seattle which gives you some idea of how bad this is. The big thing is to make rules not only for yourself but for your employees and for your family. I mean it looks like a lock up at our house when our daughter Prima..

SSC: Wait a minute. My Blackberry is going off.

JT: Oh your Blackberry is ringing? Wow.

SSC: Yes.. oh.. I didn't push.. Hello? Oh it's for you John.

JT: Oh. Hello? Oh it was Dr. Schuller.

SSC: Making sure..

JT: He said three words: Knock it off, is what he says in the name of the Lord.

SSC: Let me turn this off a minute.

JT: Anyway, what we do at our house is that when our daughter comes home, it's like a lock up where she turns in her phone and she turns in her computer. If she needs to, you know, look up something, she goes to the.. and its another one of the tips we give. She goes to the computer that's in the family area because you should never, we've interviewed hundreds of experts, you should never let your kid have a computer in their room by themselves or have a TV in there. Many, many studies show it, that's just the wrong way to go.

SSC: That's right. That's very, very true. You know what impressed me the most about your book, seriously now, is I've watched you from a distance with dad interviewing you, and you've been so gracious with your time with people, but what I noticed was as I read the book, that your walk with the Lord has really, really deepened and matured over the years. Can you speak a little bit to how that happened and..

JT: Well I hate to give my wife all the credit for everything, but I grew up, I was born into the Methodist church and I'm sure there are a lot of people who have been born into the church. We just do what your parents tell you to do. So I spent 18 years, both my parents worked at the church, I have two uncles who are Baptist preachers, and so I spent all my time in the church and then in summertime I was at church camp. Nothing wrong with that, but when I went to college I was just repeating everything they told me to. I didn't have a relationship with Christ. I was repeating what they told me to memorize.

And so through all those years, I really drifted away from God and 18 years ago, when I met my wife, she grabbed my hand and after we'd been going out for about two months, she said "hey John, you really like me, right?" And I said "yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah." She said "well you might like my church then." And I said "well you know I've completed that program, probably not," and she said "well just try it out" and she brought me to a church, a Messianic congregation where they taught the scriptures and it was fun. It was like there were great illustrations that the pastor used, and I understood that the Lord's Prayer actually meant something, you know, and so it was that kind of one on one, really, because it's such a small church, teaching that brought me back and was literally born again. Through my wife, really, through my wife who led me to the Lord.

SSC: Well praise God for what He's doing in and through you today, John. And now you're going to sing a song today? You want to talk a little bit about that?

JT: Yes this is a song called Give me Forever, which a couple of my friends and I wrote and it is a song that is a tribute to husbands and wives and those who are thinking about becoming husbands and wives and it's a dedication to my wife.

SSC: Wonderful. Will you sing it for us now?

JT: Love to.

SSC: Great. Thank you. And while John is getting ready and set, I just want to remind you that you can get his book online with all the pages in it. So thank you, John.

SOLO – JOHN TESH – “Give Me Forever (I Do)” Looking out, I see and I know just how much you're a part of me. I see you and I together in life so there's nothing I wouldn't do to make you my wife. Won't you give me forever to show all of the love I have here for you. And if you give me my reason for living, to love you, to love you, I do.

With this ring I'm bound and I promise that I'll never let you down to family and friends and the Lord up above. I swear I'll be true to you and give you my love. Won't you give me forever to show all of the love I have here for you. And if you give me my reason for living to love you, to love you, I do.

JOHN: (SPEAKING) Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name of the God who gives me forever and ever to love and to cherish the woman who takes my hand, on a day that I give her my heart and speak these vows. And on this day, on the day that we gather together with family and friends and our God up above when I give you forever and I say from this day on its all of the love I have here for you.

Won't you give me forever to show all of the love I have here for you. And if you give me my reason for living to love you, to love you, I do. To love you, love you, I do. To love you, to love you, I do.

SSC THANK YOU TO JOHN TESH

SSC: Thank you John. Thank you so much, John.

JT: Thanks Sheila.

SSC: Good to have you back.

JT: Thank you.

SSC: And I'll never forget when John was here once with a school function and he spent so much time one on one with our teenagers, encouraging them to follow their God given dreams. He's a very generous man with his time. God bless you.

INTRODUCTION TO BILL BUTTERWORTH - SSC

SSC: Well today is our final message in our series on prayer and we couldn't have chosen anybody better than Bill Butterworth to complete it, and boy are you in for a treat. I heard from so many people after the last service, they said “tell Bill thank you I needed his message today” but before I bring Bill up I'd like to introduce to you his beautiful, lovely wife Kathy. Kathy, will you stand? Bill has an extraordinary way of blending humor, story telling and wisdom and he is a much sought after speaker for a colleges, universities, churches and great big huge organizations like Microsoft, American Express and even the NFL, National Football league. And he's here today in the Crystal Cathedral. Please welcome Bill Butterworth.

MESSAGE/PRAYER – BILL BUTTERWORTH

"Victory Over our Fears"

BB: Well the Lord answers prayer. As a very selfish teenager growing up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, I had a very simple prayer as a teenager: Dear God, please make me rich. And God did answer that prayer. Not by making me rich, but by making my best friend rich. It's nice to have a rich best friend when you're a teenager. By today's standards, he might not have been all that wealthy, but I'll tell you folks in 1968, when Teddy turned 16, his dad took him to the Pennsylvania Dept. of Motor Vehicles to get his drivers license and immediately to the Pontiac dealership to get a brand new 1968 Pontiac GTO convertible. That was untold wealth to a guy like me. Teddy drove his dad home and then went out and picked up his best friends. That would be me and another friend Bobby. I guess I was Billy back then. We had kind of a Teddy, Billy, Bobby thing going back then.

So we immediately started driving around Philadelphia, enjoying the fruit of a brand new Pontiac GTO convertible. Now after awhile, when you're a teenage boy, things start to click in and after awhile we realized you know there's really no difference between a hard top and a convertible if you keep the top up. So let's put the top down. So we decided to put the top down on the 1968 Pontiac GTO convertible. And by the way, this is probably a good time to let you know, Teddy turned 16 in February. In Philly. In a snow storm. So we're driving around Philadelphia with the top down in a snow storm, three teenage boys. Teddy's driving; I'm up in the passenger seat, Bobby's in the back. Soon Bobby says "you know I think I've made a discovery. I realize why they refer to this piece of glass in front of you two the wind shield. I'm freezing back here. I'm coming up front." Which we said "we'll it's not a bench seat, you're going to have to straddle the console."

"That's not a problem, I can do it." So now we have Bobby straddling the console, Teddy driving, I'm on the passenger side and we're driving down the road, in a snow storm with the top down.

It's at this point that Teddy comes up with an idea and I find it always fascinating that there are teenage boys who have nothing better to do than come up with contests for other teenage boys. He says "you know what? Bobby's right, this wind shield is really blocking all the wind. We're not really showing how tough we are." Of course by now, we are completely numb because it's so freezing. He says "I'd like to propose a contest. I suggest we all scoot forward on our seats, and lets put our chin up on the top of the windshield and I'll drive as fast as I can and we'll see who can stay up there the longest." Now when you're a 16 year old boy, you dare not say 'I don't want to do that. That sounds cold. That doesn't sound like any fun.' It's like: oh I'm all for that. Let's go for it. And isn't it amazing the person who always thinks of the contest is the person who can't compete. Because Teddy then says "you know what, I just made a discovery. If I put my chin up on the windshield, I can't reach the gas pedal so you two better have the contest. I'll just stay down here and drive."

Well Bobby and I'd been through this before and we knew that if there was going to be a legitimate winner, you had to obey the rules and so we immediately decided to establish the rules of this contest. I said to Bobby, "can you wear a hat?" It was 1968, we were all wearing these wool ski cap kind of things. Bobby said "of course you can, but I don't think you're going to be able to keep it on because the winds going to blow it right off."

I went to the glove box, even in a brand new car, glove box has man's best friend. That would of course be a roll of duct tape. So I took the duct tape and proceeded to tape the ski cap to my head, around my face. Not to be outdone, Bobby did the same thing, and we both put our chins up on the windshield. Are you with me

folks? It's a snow storm in Philadelphia, we're driving a convertible, two people are now with their chins on the top of the windshield, duct tape heads if you will, with their ski caps firmly in place. We start driving down the road and folks I never had a sensation like that in my whole life. The wind would make your eyes want to tear up but as soon as they would produce tears, they'd freeze and these little ice cube-lets would be blown back into your eyes, and I remember thinking this is the most bizarre experience I ever had. Nothing could make this more strange, to which I heard the sound. We have a law enforcement officer behind us, watching the entire event.

Teddy starts to pull over and I remember saying to him, "boy I feel sorry for you, man you're in trouble." I had no idea what the price to pay for speeding down the road with two duct tape heads, but I assumed we were going to find out. And Teddy says, "you have no idea the trouble I'm in." I said "well what does that mean?"

He said "well my driver's license says I'm supposed to be wearing glasses and as you can see, I'm not wearing my glasses. They're going to write me up for that, as well." And I remember saying to him, "boy Teddy, I wish I could help you." And he looked at me and in a split second, he ripped my glasses off and by the way the key word is ripped, because I still have duct tape on my face, he rips my glasses off and he puts them on. Now if you're not an eye glass wearer, I need to give you a little tutorial here. If you can drive a car without your eye glasses, and you take my eye glasses off, me, a person born needing glasses, I can only see about four inches in front of my face without my glasses. Teddy puts my glasses on, he can see nothing, I have my glasses off, I can see nothing, we are now at the mercy of Bobby, the seeing eye boy, who is going to help us navigate this conversation with this law enforcement officer.

The policeman says "I need your license and registration." I hear Teddy fumbling around. It's remarkable how your other senses are heightened when you lose one, but none the less, I hear all this and then I hear the officer say "son this is a Sears card, what are you trying to do?" And I'm thinking that's it, we're not even going to jail. We're going to straight to prison, hard time, you know. And I think the policeman at this point realizes what's going on. So he starts engaging us in conversation. He'll say "son, does your mother know you're out tonight?" And of course that would be met with dead silence, because none of us knew who he was addressing, except for Bobby the seeing eye boy. Who would finally nudge one of us, "oh, oh no officer, please, please don't tell her." So he writes us up and he says at the end, "I think I'm going to follow you guys while you drive off just to make sure everything's okay." And that was probably the most frightening part of the whole story, Teddy driving with my glasses on listening to Bobby say "a little to the left, a little to the left, a little to the right, a little to the right, we're on the speed bumps, we're on the speed bumps, little to the left, little to the left."

Now what in the world does this have to do with victory over fear and God answering prayer? You stay with me for a couple minutes and you're going to see how this works. Because throughout the annals of history, all the way back to the pages of scripture, God has been answering prayer. And even the people who lived in bible times understood that they had fears that were real, that they had to live with and they wanted victory over them. My favorite character in the New Testament is the apostle Peter. I had a professor in seminary who used to call Peter the foot shaped mouthed disciple. If there were a Greek word that could be translated "oh" that would have been uttered by Peter. He was always kind of getting himself in trouble. And there is a wonderful record of a miracle by our

Lord in Matthew, Mark and John. We know it simply as the miracle where Jesus walked on the water. But because of Peter's dialogue with the Lord, it really is a story of prayer and it really is a story of victory over fear.

I'd like to read to you the Matthew account. It has the most detail. Many of us know this story but maybe this will help review it and put you in the proper mode to listen to how the Lord answers our prayers and gives us victory over our fears. It's the paragraph that begins in verse 22.

"Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away." You may remember this takes place right after Jesus fed the 5,000. So He's essentially saying to the disciples, you better go away, because I'm going to have to disperse this crowd. They may feel like I'm going to continue to feed them for free indefinitely. So you go to the other side of the sea and I'll catch up with you later on.

"After Jesus sent the multitudes away, He went up to the mountain by Himself to pray and it was evening and He was there all alone. But now the boat was already many miles away from the land and it became battered by the waves for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night," which is about three in the morning, "in the fourth watch of the night Jesus came to them, walking upon the sea. When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were frightened, saying it's a ghost and they cried out for fear. Immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying take courage, it is I, do not be afraid. Peter answered Him and said Lord, if that's You, command me to come to You on the water, and Jesus said come. Peter got out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. But seeing the wind, Peter became afraid and he began to sink and he cried out Lord, save me! And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand, took hold of Peter and said to him oh you of little faith. Why did you doubt? And they got into the boat, the winds stopped and those who were in the boat worshipped the Lord, saying You are certainly God's Son."

Having been brought up in church, I am afraid I suffer from a malady that many of us deal with and that is when we hear about characters in the bible, we don't see them as real live people. That somehow bible people walked twelve inches off the ground and didn't have the struggles that you and I have and didn't deal with stress and didn't have anxiety and didn't have fear and didn't have pressure. But nothing could be further from the truth. When the scriptures speak about the humans in the Old Testament and the New Testament, they struggled with issues just like you and me. The focus of this text is of course Jesus and His amazing power over nature that He could walk on water. And I want to come back to that when we conclude our comments, but for just a few minutes, I want to look at Peter's response because Peter is just like you and me. He's a person who has real live human emotion. And what I see here is what I call Peter's pattern for dealing with difficulties. When you and I are faced with difficulty, with stress, with trial, with brokenness, with heartache, we need to understand that the disciples felt the same way. As a matter of fact, as the disciples were out there at three in the morning, rowing this boat, Jesus came upon them and of course having never seen anything like this before, the text says "when they saw Him, they were afraid" and they cried out for fear because they were frightened. So do you see where we begin this story? Exactly where many of us live today. We begin with the word fear.

What's your fear today? I find it so significant that the fear in this story raises its ugly head at three a.m. What wakes you up in the middle of the night? How am I going to pay this bill? How am I going to put myself forward in this new resume, now that I've been downsized so that I look head and shoulders

above all those who compete for the same job? How am I going to beat this medical condition that the doctor has told me I have contracted? What am I going to do? How can I heal the brokenness in my marriage? How can I reconnect with my child? How can I help my parents as they age? What am I going to do? And it wakes you up and for some of us we never fall back to sleep. What is it that wakes us up at three in the morning?

The disciples knew, Peter knew because it's characterized by fear. They were frightened, they were afraid, just like you, just like me. Fear knows no bounds. Fear affects affluent people, fear affects the poor. Fear affects those that are healthy, fear affects those that are ill. Fear knows no tense. Many of us have fear because of our past, our secrets, our baggage, our stuff. Some of us have fears about our present because we just don't know how it's all going to work out based on what's going on right now. Many of us have fears about our future. I used to be so well taken care of for the future, many say, and now it looks like I'm starting all over again. How do we have hope when we face fears?

Well it's important to realize that Peter and the disciples were up against the same problem. They saw Jesus, they thought He was a ghost, they were frightened and cried out for fear. Listen to how Jesus responds. In verse 27, Jesus says to them "take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid." Jesus replaces fear with fortitude. Fortitude. A synonym for courage. Any of us who have ever done any work with a therapist understand that this is the common prescription for facing fear. Be courageous. Have the fortitude. Don't let that fear be the bully that's still chasing you around the school yard. You can face your fears.

And yet Jesus goes further than that. Beyond just facing fear with fortitude, He adds another ingredient that is probably the most significant in the whole text. It's the word I call focus. Focus. Think about it. Jesus is out there on the water, and the disciples have seen Him. By the way, they're rowing, it's three in the morning, stroke, stroke, stroke. They see Jesus, think He's a ghost. What happens? Adrenaline kicks up; stroke, stroke, stroke, stroke, stroke, stroke, stroke, stroke. We've got a speed boat in the New Testament times. And Jesus somehow not only walks but He walks fast enough to come upon them. And He says it's Me, don't worry. Don't be afraid. And Peter answers. I love that passage in the text. Peter answers. Read this carefully sometime. Jesus didn't ask a question. It didn't need an answer. You ever had someone like that in your life? And Peter answered Lord if that's You, invite me to come out on the water with You. I love that. Reminds me of people; I know them all the time. It's like we'll be sitting around after church in the lobby, where are we going to go for lunch? And someone will say oh let's go to the XYZ Café cause that's great. And you think to yourself, I just had lunch there yesterday. And it's not that great. But everybody goes to the XYZ Café cause that's what the little self appointed leader said we should do. You think who put this person in charge?

Jesus tells twelve people it is I, don't be afraid. And Peter says well Lord I'm sure I'm speaking on behalf of the other eleven when I ask the following question. No you're not. But Peter says Lord if its You invite me to come out with You. And I can almost see in my mind's eye Peter turning around and looking at the eleven going ah, ah, ah, listen to what I just said to Jesus. That put Him in a real pickle didn't it? And Jesus, the master of the one word reply says, come. And of course now I see eleven other guys looking at Peter, going ah, ah, ah, you're as dumb as you look, Peter. You don't do that to Jesus.

So it's while Peter is getting out of the boat that I find this word focus so crucial. Put yourself in his shoes, in his sandals, in his wet suit. He's getting out of the boat and he realizes people just don't do this. We sink like a stone. But

interestingly enough, right out there in the water, there is someone who is making this work. I don't know how He's doing it, but you know what? I'm going to focus in on Him. Whatever He's doing, I'm going to do exactly the same thing. And see that's where you and I often times find ourselves with our fears. This is what brings us to prayer. Dear Lord, I need help. And Jesus' answer is essentially focus on me.

And by the way, focus is different than vision. Vision is just your normal eye sight. Let me go back to the 1968 Pontiac GTO. When I took my glasses off, or when they were ripped off me, I should more accurately say, for those of you that don't wear glasses, the room doesn't go black for me, it just goes blurry. I still have vision but the glasses are what give me focus. I find that when fear rises up in my life, I need focus, not just Jesus you're in my vision or God I have the occasion to glance at You occasionally, no, Lord You are exactly what I need to focus upon. The writer of Hebrews says "fix your eyes on Jesus." Stay focused on Him. And when Peter does that, he's all set. He stays above the water. He is walking on the water. Now in the little church I grew up in, that would be it. We got three points, they all begin with the same word: Fear, Fortitude, Focus. Let's have a little poem and we'll be dismissed, right? I think I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree. Good night, God bless you. And then we're driving home and we say but why doesn't this work?

And Peter was in the same situation. Because listen to how the story continues. In verse 30 it says "but seeing the wind, Peter became afraid." Seeing the wind, what was he doing looking at the wind? I thought the key to this whole thing was focus. Ah ha. He forgot what kept him above the water. I mean I hate to say it but there's a fourth point. It's forgetting. Anybody ever been there? We're great prayer warriors when life is tough, right? Dear God, just get me out of this. I'll do whatever You want. I'll go to a third world country, I'll live in a grass hut, I'll eat monkey meat, just get me out of this. And God delivers us, right? And where are we? Still here. We forget and look what happens when we forget. Seeing the wind, He became afraid. We have to add another point. It's fear. And if you're paying attention, you say isn't that where we started? And you're absolutely right. We're right back where we began afraid because we have lost our focus. So seeing the wind, he became afraid and he began to sink. And he cried out Lord, save me. By the way we'd call that today prayer. Lord, save me, glub, glub, glub, glub. And God stretched out His hand and took him and said oh Peter, why is your faith so weak? Why are you so faith less? Peter, you know better than this. We've been together for all these years. Have I ever let you down? And I must say personally, as my wife and I look at our lives, we say you know God has never let us down. Now I often add in my humanity, He's never let us down but have you noticed He's never necessarily been early. He just always seems to sneak right in at the finish line and cover all the bases for us. But He does cover all the bases for us.

God is never late. I love that. God is never early. If I were giving Him counsel, I'd say maybe He could work on that but He's not listening to my suggestions. He's saying no, no, no blonde boy, you listen to Me. You realize that I will take care of you and that's where the story ends, with the great testimony of faith. The disciples saw Jesus and said this is truly the Son of God. Why? Not because they simply prayed, not because they simply had faith, but it all goes back to who they were praying to and the object of their faith. I pray to Jesus, I have faith in Jesus, He has power over things that I would never have power over. Power over nature. He walked on water. Power over distance. He healed the nobleman's son when the nobleman's son was far away. Power over quantity. He

fed 5,000 people out of a little boy's lunch bag. Power over quality. You can take the nothingness of water at a wedding reception and turn it into a fine wine. The power of Jesus. That is what gives me victory over my fears and that's why He will answer my prayers when I pray to Him. My goal is to stay focused on Him. Focus on Jesus the answer to your prayers for victory over your fears.

Let's pray: Lord for my friends who listen to these words who are just over wrought with fear in their life, I pray this morning that You would just reach out to them and help them to know You care about them beyond what they could even comprehend. Give us the kind of faith that we need to stay focused on You. Help us not to just glance at You occasionally or have You in our vision, make us men and women who stay focused, absolutely glued to You. Thank You for all that You do in our lives, and that You're never early and You're never late. We love You, in Jesus' dear name, Amen.

HYMN - "Give to the Winds Your Fears"

Give to the winds your fears in hope be undismayed. God hears your sighs and counts your tears God shall lift up your head. Through waves and clouds and storms He gently clears the way. Wait for His time, so shall the night soon end in joyous day. Amen!

BENEDICTION - SSC

SSC: If you would like someone to pray for you today for help with victory over your fears or any other prayer request, we have ministering elders right up front who will be happy to pray with you. In fact many of them are prayer partners with me so you're in good, good hands. Also, I'd love to meet you at our visitor's reception right out the door, but right now accept this benediction:

Now may the Lord bless you. May you feel the security of His presence, the assurance of His power, the knowledge of His love, and grace unlimited today, tomorrow, and forever, Amen.

PROMO – UPCOMING SUNDAY'S

VO: Join us next week on the Hour of Power as Dr. Robert Schuller kicks off a brand new message series Heroic Faith, and face your tomorrows with the heroic faith that God wants to instill in your life. And be inspired by the incredible voice of Christian music superstar Rebecca St. James. Don't miss this exciting, inspiring and faith building Sunday on the Hour of Power.