

## HOUR OF POWER OF 30.05.2010

### PROGRAM OPENING/TRUMPET FANFARE/V.O.

VO: Today on the Hour of Power: Producer Martha Williamson brought Touched by An Angel to television and today will share with you tips on bringing God into your marriage.

MW: The sheriff in the local city there had chased a fugitive off the freeway, right up into the canyon and they dead ended right at our wedding tent. So he jumped out, he had guns, we had cops..

VO: Also today, incredible solo artist Britt Nicole.

BN: Your faith is all it takes and you can walk on the water, too.

VO: Then in today's special message, Jim Penner asks a powerful question: would you recognize a miracle in your life if you were standing right in the middle of it. The answer will change your life.

JP: I can guarantee your miracle begins today. The question is, would you recognize a miracle if you were standing right in the middle of it.

VO: If you need a lift today, you've turned to the right program. Join us today for the best hour on television, the Hour of Power from the Crystal Cathedral.

### HYMN - "Joyful, Joyful.."

Amen! Amen! Amen!

### GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION

SSC: Welcome to Crystal Cathedral. My name is Sheila Schuller Coleman. My father Dr. Robert Schuller is not here today and of course we miss him, but that's okay because God is here and that's just as important if not more important. Amen? Okay and so we want to show dad that we can still do Crystal Cathedral worship even though he's not here with us physically but he's here with us in spirit. So if you are feeling powerless, if you need a champion, if you need a fresh burst of encouragement then today you are in the right place because the God is here, God wants you to know do not fear; I am at your right hand and I will not let go of you. So turn around, shake hands with somebody and say to them God loves you and so do I.

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Lord, we stand here before You Your children and we say Abba Father we need You. We are not ashamed and not afraid to say help. We reach a helping hand up asking for help and You reach a strong rescuing hand down to redeem us and to lift us up. Thank You Lord that You are here. Thank You that You have us, You have Your arms around us so we need not fear. May we feel Your presence today, may we feel Your encouragement and know, and know beyond a shadow of a doubt that You have our back. Thank You, Lord, Amen.

### HYMN - "Medley – All Creatures of our God & King/God of Wonders"

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.

BETH: You know the Psalms tell us that if we don't praise Him, the rocks will cry out. I invite you this morning to raise your praise to our champion, to God. Sing with us.

God of wonders, beyond our galaxy You are holy, holy. The universe declares Your majesty You are holy, holy.

God of wonders, beyond our galaxy You are holy, holy. The universe declares Your majesty You are holy, holy. Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth. Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth. Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth.

SCRIPTURE – Psalm 24 - SSC

SSC: You may be seated. Hear these words from Psalm 24 that speak of God's power and strength.

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it for He founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. Lift up your heads, oh ye gates. Be you lifted up you ancient doors that the King of Glory may come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord is strong and mighty; The Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, oh you gates. Lift them up you ancient doors that the King of Glory may come in. Who is He this King of Glory? He is the Lord Almighty; He is the King of Glory.

This is the word of God.

ANTHEM/GUEST CHOIR – FULLERTON COLLEGE CONCERT CHOIR - "Psalm 104"

Bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord oh my soul! Bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord oh my soul!

He established the Earth upon its foundations. At the sound of His voice the mountains were made. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, He sendeth the springs into the valleys, He sendeth the springs into the valleys between the mountains, they give drink to ev'ry beast of the field. He waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the Earth is satisfied, the Earth is satisfied, the Earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy hand.

Oh Lord how many are Thy works, how many are Thy works in all the Earth, in all the Earth, all the Earth. In wisdom hast Thou made them, in wisdom hast Thou made them all, in wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord oh my soul. Bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord oh my soul!

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will, I will sing praise while I have my being. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will, I will sing praise while I have my being.

Bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, bless thou the Lord, oh my soul!

ANTHEM/GUEST CHOIR – FULLERTON COLLEGE CONCERT CHOIR - "Praise His Holy Name"

Sing till the power of the Lord come down. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name. Sing till the power of the Lord come down. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now I'm found; was blind, but now I see. Jesus, Jesus, how I love Thee. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name.

Sing till the power of the Lord come down. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name. Sing till the power of the Lord come down. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name.

Must Jesus bear the cross alone and all the world go free. No, there's a cross for ev'ryone and there's a cross for me. Jesus, Jesus, how I love Thee. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name.

Sing till the power of the Lord come down. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name. Sing till the power of the Lord come down. Shout Hallelujah! Praise His holy name.

Praise His name, praise His holy name, praise His name, oh, oh praise His holy name. Praise His name, praise His holy name, praise His name, oh, oh praise His holy name. Praise His name, praise His holy name, praise His name, oh, oh praise His holy name. Praise His name, praise His holy name, praise His name, oh, oh praise His holy name. Praise Him!

#### SSC THANK YOU TO FULLERTON COLLEGE CONCERT CHOIR

SSC: Thank you John Tebay, director of our Fullerton College choir. I'm so encouraged to hear wonderful, excellent music like that coming from our young people, so the future is in good hands. Never doubt it.

#### INTERVIEW – MARTHA WILLIAMSON

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SSC: SHEILA SCHULLER COLEMAN      MW: MARTHA WILLIAMSON

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SSC: Well one of the perks of being in this position is you get to meet some beautiful, wonderful people and I couldn't wait till this morning when I had the opportunity to meet Martha Williamson. Along with you I was a tremendous fan of that television show, Touched by An Angel. Any of you see that? Any of you see Touched by An Angel? Yeah! Well Martha Williamson is the executive producer and the lead writer for that show so please welcome with me Martha Williamson. Martha.

MW: Hello everybody.

SSC: As a Martha Stewart fan, you're the other Martha, I have to just say.

MW: Well she cooks a lot better then I do, that's for sure.

SSC: And me, too. I'm a Martha Stewart wannabe and that's about as far as I get. But you also have not only Touched by An Angel but what are you doing currently? To touch people and give them..

MW: Oh that's right. Do you all remember on Touched by An Angel at the very end when the angel would sort of light up and she would say "God loves you" and she would reveal to somebody what God wanted them to know. Well we got so

many requests, people still wanted to feel that way and even though we couldn't do the show any more, we could always, you know, share God's love. So we're doing something called [atouchofencouragement.com](http://atouchofencouragement.com). It's on the internet [Marthawilliamson.com](http://Marthawilliamson.com) or [atouchofencouragement.com](http://atouchofencouragement.com) and twice a week, I don't have a very good Irish accent but I do know how to say God loves you and so we share little videos and encouraging thoughts and meditations and inspirational moments like that.

SSC: Yeah I watched it and it's so good, it's wonderful. It's on [beliefnet.com](http://beliefnet.com) and you can just search for Martha Williamson and it pops right up and it's really wonderful.

MW: Well again it's that wonderful opportunity to just keep that message going and we actually even get to say things on the internet that we weren't able to say on network television, too. So we go just that step further.

SSC: Yes talk about that. Twenty-five years in Hollywood and to be successful in Hollywood is amazing in and of itself.

MW: It's not an easy industry. It is a very difficult industry. It's very demanding and not the least of which is sometimes you're asked to really comprise, make some big comprises in character decisions that one might make. So being a Christian you can imagine how much more difficult it is. But I found that the folks who were Christians who wanted to rush into Hollywood and make Christian television were having trouble and finding resistance, predictably. But if you start trusting the Lord and having Him work with you and just try to be the best writer that you can be or the best producer or just do your best work and then when the opportunity comes then you can bring your Christian perspective to it which is exactly what happened when CBS said we want you to do an angel show. And I said oh am I ready.

SSC: And what a gift Touched by An Angel has been and people need to know you can still find it on some stations and the DVD's, I think I saw them for sale somewhere.

MW: That's right, the DVD's are.. or you can get them on [atouchofencouragement.com](http://atouchofencouragement.com) as well, but the DVD's are out, we have Hallmark is showing the show in repeats. The most exciting thing to me, Sheila, is that all these children who didn't see Touched by An Angel before, they were just a little too young are now discovering it. And to turn on the TV and once again just hear those words "God loves you" can bring so many people that one step towards making a decision for the Lord.

SSC: Well no question are you talented and a talented writer. I loved reading your book which we're going to talk about in a minute. Tell us because you were really successful professionally with Touched by An Angel but in your heart of hearts you felt incomplete? Would that be fair to say?

MW: Well I did want to be married and I waited a long time. My career actually happened first and I got so busy that I wasn't out there really able to look for a husband and of course that's when God laughs because you say well I guess You didn't want me to get married and then two years later I'm married. But He brought a wonderful man into my life. I met him through the show, named John Anderson and we were planning our wedding and I started looking for those books. As soon as you get the ring and the guy says will you marry me and you want to run out. You want two things: you want that wedding dress and then you want to find the book that tells you how to plan your wedding. And I found those checklists, the ones about how to write the invitations and go send out the.. find the minister, find the place, pick out your flowers. But I couldn't find the book that said how to prepare your heart. How to get ready for this wedding because so

many people, you know, I saw somebody the other day who said that she was hosting a wedding in her home for a young a woman and this young girl said “well just remember this is really a party where there’s a wedding.”

SSC: Wow.

MW: She saw it as her prom that she never got to go to. It was a big party and there was just going to be a wedding there. And I think that the tragedy now is that people forget that this is a sacred ceremony where a miracle takes place. You know the Lord is putting two people and making them one.

SSC: And as you said, two people with a past become one with a future.

MW: Oh did I write that? I forgot about that part.

SSC: You did, you did. I loved it.

MW: I love that, two people with a past become one with a future and God is in that future. He’s already there and the privilege of walking down that aisle and meeting the man that God has chosen for you and having Him create something wonderful there is too good to pass up. If you spend all your time figuring out what your entrée is going to be at the reception you’re missing the best part.

SSC: Well and of course, yes, absolutely, and you could plan everything to the nth degree, have a perfect wedding planner if you want to, and then everything..

MW: Goes wrong.

SSC: ..yeah because your wedding went picture perfect didn’t it?

MW: Oh right. We had it on paper picture perfect. You know when two television producers get married they have it all planned right there. We had a big script and then everything went wrong. It rained like cats and dogs. It rained so hard that it washed the bridge out to our little honeymoon cottage, it rained so hard that there was a waterfall coming down on the altar the morning of the wedding, all the gifts that I had gotten for all the bridesmaids had accidentally been given to another wedding.

SSC: Wow.

MW: And..

SSC: And don’t forget the fugitive.

MW: ..and then there was the fugitive. We had the sheriff in the local city there had chased a fugitive off the freeway right up into the canyon and they dead ended right at our wedding tent. So he jumped out, he had guns, we had cops and dogs and helicopters. Everything went wrong at our wedding except that we had invited God. See that’s the name of the book, Inviting God to Your Wedding, we had invited God to our wedding long ago so we just stopped and started praying for this poor fellow because he was clearly having a worse day even then I was. And our hearts were in the right place. We knew it was the right thing to do and everybody has a wedding story but we had quite a few so we thought we got to write a book about this.

SSC: It’s wonderful and before we go any further it’s called, Inviting God to Your Wedding and you can get it at your local bookstore and probably Amazon also.

MW: Sure Amazon.

SSC: And the subtitle is And Keeping God in Your Marriage because you’ve been married now how long?

MW: Twelve glorious years.

SSC: And do you have children?

MW: Yes we have two darling little girls, wonderful children and it has been one of those wonderful journeys that you realize that some folks get married and some folks don’t get married but in one form or another the Lord is finding a way to bring you closer to Him and if you have the blessing of a good marriage that God has brought together and created. You know if the Lord built that house, then

you have something strong to stand on and in the tough days He'll hold you together and in the glorious days you can rejoice together and He's always using that to bring you closer to Him.

SSC: Yes so if any of you know somebody who is getting married, this is a great book. And even if you've been married for fifty years or sixty years like my parents are going to be this June, the message of the book is keeping God in your marriage and it is just such a wonderful for me. You know my husband and I have been married for thirty-one years and I loved reading it. Just reminded me of why we're married. We're married to be one spirit and one soul united to serve the Lord and what a wonderful, wonderful privilege that is. And so I want to thank you. It's a wonderful book, Martha.

MW: Thank you so much. It was a joy to write and it was joy to share with you. Thank you all very much.

SSC: Do you have anything else that we look forward to like Touched by An Angel or something else?

MW: Well please keep us in your prayers. We're working on a new television series. We hope that the Lord will bring it all the way to fruition and bring it on the air. We're working on a film based on that wonderful song by Randy Travis who was actually a great guest here called Three Wooden Crosses and then of course I do my little videos twice a week and I have a lot of fun doing those.

SSC: Wonderful, Lord Jesus..

MW: Oh, thank you.

SSC: ..thank You for Martha. Thank You that You have gifted her and she said yes. And she says yes everyday and she opens her heart and her mind and her soul to You and says Lord use me. I am just a tool but the master craftsman, the master writer, the master producer He works through Martha. Thank You Lord. Open doors for her because oh how we need her. Thank You Lord, Amen.

MW: Thank you so much.

SSC: Thank you Martha, God bless you.

MW: Thank you.

#### SSC INTRODUCES BRITT NICOLE

SSC: And now we have Britt Nicole singing from her CD, The Lost Get Found. Please welcome Britt Nicole.

#### BRITT NICOLE INTRODUCES SONG

BN: Thank you so much. It's such an honor to be here today. I am originally from North Carolina and I gave my heart and my life to God when I was seventeen years old and God has used me to write songs and to share my message with the world and so it's just such an opportunity to be here with you.

I just want to share quickly the story behind the song that I'm going to sing for you today. It's called Walk on the Water and it was inspired by my mom. She always had a dream to open up a girls' home. And I would always encourage her and say mom if you will step out, if you will get out of the boat God will be there to meet you and He will supply every need. What's been really cool is a couple of years ago my mom decided to open up our home and so we've had young girls live there who are homeless, who are addicted to drugs and who need to know God's love in a real way. And we've seen so many lives transformed by my mom saying okay it's time to step out. It's time to be used by God.

And some of you here today have a calling on your life and we just want to encourage you to not be afraid to get out of the boat because God has something

special for you and He wants to use you to transform others' lives. And this song simply says that if we have faith we can walk on the water.

SOLO – BRITT NICOLE – “Walk on the Water” You look around and staring back at you another wave of doubt. Will it pull you under, you wonder, what if I'm overtaken, what if I never make it, what if no one's there, will you hear my prayer. When you take that first step into the unknown God won't let you go.

So what are you waiting for, what do you have to lose, your insecurities they try to hold to you. But you know you're made for more so don't be afraid to move your faith is all it takes and you can walk on the water, too.

So get out and let your fear fall to the ground. No time to waste, don't wait. And don't you turn around, and miss out on everything that you were made for. Oh I know you're not sure. So you play it safe, you try to run away. But when you take that first step into the unknown, how many of you know that God will never let you go.

So what are you waiting for? What do you have to lose? Your insecurities they try to hold to you. But you know you're made for more so don't be afraid to move your faith is all it takes and you can walk on the water, too. Step out even when it's storming, step out even when you're broken, step out even when your heart is telling you, is telling you to give up. Step out when your hope is stolen, you can't see where you're going. You don't have to be afraid, so what are you waiting, what are you waiting for?

So what are you waiting for? What do you have to lose? Your insecurities, they try to hold to you. But you know you're made for more so don't be afraid to move. Our faith is all it takes and we can walk on the water, walk on the water, too. Do you believe that today? Oh you can walk, walk on the water, too.

#### SSC THANK YOU TO BRITT NICOLE

SSC: Awesome, awesome thank you Britt, thank you for sharing that message. You know we all share messages in different ways and there are different messages and that's a powerful message shared from the heart and it really encouraged us today. Thank you so much. God bless you in your ministry.

#### INTRODUCTION TO GUEST PASTOR - SSC

SSC: Well today, I've asked Jim Penner to come up. Sometimes I feel like preaching in this pulpit is stepping out on water. And I am so pleased to introduce to you Jim Penner. We've been praying and saying Lord, show us who You want to give Your message, to share this pulpit. With whom do You want us to share this pulpit? If you come on Wednesday nights and you learn about developing a conversational relationship with God, I do have a conversational relationship with God and God said Sheila, Jim Penner. Do not overlook Jim Penner. And Jim's just a little too humble to tell you what a tremendous man of God he is, tremendous faith. It has been honed in the fire but please welcome, it's with love and respect and admiration I introduce to you my beloved brother-in-law, Jim Penner.

#### MESSAGE/PRAYER – JIM PENNER

"Your Miracle Begins Today!"

JP: Well good morning and as Bishop Ulmer would say good morning everyone else. I don't want you to leave church today without really soaking in that song you just heard. The words were absolutely overwhelmingly powerful and I'll just

read you a couple of lines: even when it's storming, even when you're broken, even when your heart is telling you to give up, when your hope is stolen you don't have to be afraid. So what are you waiting for? Your faith is all it takes and you can walk on water. And I told Britt earlier this congregation loves to say "and all God's people said wow." All God's people said WOW! Now you know what wow stands for: Walk on Water. So every time you say wow remember that you're walking on water in faith.

And you know I'm convinced, absolutely convinced that somebody here walked in today and you don't feel like you can walk on water. You've been having too many difficulties and I'll tell you right now that this is a message that you need to hear. The message I'm about to give you is a message you absolutely need to hear because somebody in here came discouraged, somebody came with a financial burden, you came with a health burden, you came with an emotional burden or a relationship burden. Somebody here, practically if we raised our hands, a lot of us would say we came here with a burden today. Then this is a message you need to hear because somebody came here with doubt, overwhelming the seeds of faith. And if you came in that way, I have good news for you because the God we serve is a God who loves you. He is a God who cares for you. He is a God who sent His son to die for you. He has called you His beloved. He has called you worthy. Soak that in. we don't serve a God of destruction, we serve a God of provision. We serve a God of healing. We don't serve a weak God, we serve a strong God, an awesome God and He is the great I Am who made the heavens and the earth and then He made you. He made the heavens and the earth and then He made you. We serve a God of love.

So I don't want you to leave this place filled with doubt, I want you to leave this place today filled with faith; Filled with possibility thinking faith that you can change your circumstances. A miracle working faith, a mountain moving faith as Jesus called it. If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed you can say to your mountain move and it will what? What will it do? (AUDIENCE: MOVE) One more time.. (AUDIENCE: MOVE) and nothing will be impossible to you. Take that bible verse with you. So I think right now you need to give God an applause for how awesome He is for your life and how much He loves you. Thank you. We're just getting warmed up. Get your seat belts on; we're just getting warmed up.

I also want to take just a minute because we never do this, but since they gave me a microphone they asked for it. Here it comes. We never talk about how.. I want to thank you for putting your church service on TV. It's not an easy thing to put your church service on TV. To sit there you know you may be seen in a hymn, you may be seen in a reaction shot. It's not an easy thing to put a church service on television. And the mistake that we've made is we never share the fruit of what that does. Because of your courage of opening your church up to the world, there's negatives to that, too. Every time something happens it hits the press, right? We never talk about the positives.

So I'm going to take just two minutes and I'm going to talk about the positive things that you do, the fruit because you put this church service on TV. Because we get letters. From Sacramento: "thank you for being there so many times for me. I was desperate and your words of encouragement helped me to hang on." That's from Jacqueline in Sacramento. "We enjoy the Hour of Power program so much. Bless Dr. Schuller for his strength and wisdom to have this program," that's Laura from New York. "I have been a faithful worshipper since the beginning. You have been my encouragement through divorce, through raising

two successful daughters and now three grandchildren.” I love this; “I’m growing old and better with you.” That’s from Mary and she sent it via e-mail.

From Sioux Falls, Eugene, “Congratulations on forty years on television and the meaningful service that you had to celebrate that. I was blessed with your message and praised to the Lord of how you communicated emotional, spiritual therapy to millions.” “Dr. Schuller,” this is from an e-mail from Michael, “Dr. Schuller, thank you so much for changing my life.” From Austria, Thomas in Austria, “I’m a huge fan of Hour of Power. Sheila Coleman is a wonderful preacher and her messages are inspirational and motivational.” Helga in Germany, “We are thrilled that Sheila is part of Hour of Power and Hour of Power is the best church service on television.” From Andrew in England, “I’m writing to say how much your hard work and worship at the Crystal Cathedral is appreciated. God bless you and all that you do. Thank you.”

From Elka in Germany, “The Hour of Power is of great importance in my life. I’ve experienced tough times and continue to face challenges. Again and again I feel the power of God and see small and big miracles come through since I became a possibility thinker. People always wonder how it happens and I explain that God gives me the strength through Hour of Power.” That’s from Germany. Now I only read half of them that I brought here, but you need to give yourselves an applause now for putting this church service on television. Thank you very, very much. Now I have to say, your gifts of support make it possible and I’ll look in a camera here somewhere. I’ll look at this one and say your gift at home makes this church service possible and makes letter like that possible, so thank you for your gifts to the church. Now we can start preaching. We’re just getting started.

My question today for you is in the bulletin you saw the title and the title of the message is “Your Miracle Begins Today.” And somebody here would say that’s an audacious title. Can you guarantee that? And I can absolutely stand here this morning and say I can guarantee your miracle begins today. The question is would you recognize a miracle if you were standing right in the middle of it? If you were living in a miracle right now would you recognize it? Now somebody here would say well absolutely. If there’s a miracle it’s obvious that I’m living in a miracle. Now I’m not quite sure that’s true and I’m going to point that out by saying very early in the morning there was a pastor in a small town. There was a horrific thunder storm overnight and he got woken up far before dawn. And he had had a revelation from God and he shook his wife awake and he said, “Honey, hurry before it’s too late. We’ve got to go now!” and he grabs his wife and gets her out of bed, they get dressed, they jump in the car and pretty soon they’re on the edge of town before the sun even comes up and he’s holding up a big sign. And the big sign says “the end is near - turn around now.” That’s his sign, “the end is near - turn around now.”

Now the first car to come by is Bernie and Bernie is the local bar fly and he’s been drinking all night. And he comes by in his car and he sees that sign and he sees the pastor and he says “hey Pastor Jake leave me alone! I’m not turning around for you or your God.” Bernie races on by and around the next bend the pastor and his wife hear the screeching of tires and a loud splash and crunching of metal and the pastor’s wife turns to her husband and says “Do you think it would be better if we held up a sign that says ‘the bridge is out’ instead?” Instead of turn around now the end is near, right? Bernie missed the miracle. God gave him one. He was living right there. He could have just slowed right on down and he would have been fine. He missed the miracle.

How many of us miss miracles that are happening in our lives right now? II Corinthians 5:7 says we are to “live by faith and not by sight.” Live by faith and

not by sight and sometimes to recognize miracles we have to live by faith and not by sight. Now what does that mean? To live by faith and not by sight you have to learn the three T's of a powerful faith, the three T's of a powerful faith. And the first T is take your eyes off your circumstances. Take your eyes off your circumstances. If your eyes are fixed on your circumstances and not on God you will never, ever see the miracles unfolding around you. All you will see are your circumstances. And the case in point; I love the story from Exodus. Exodus 14:22 - the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground with a wall of water on their left and on their right, right? You can all picture that image from Cecil B. DeMille's film the Ten Commandments used to air every Easter time. We'd always see that movie on television and you would say we can look back what three, four thousand years and we can say it's obvious that was a miracle. The seas parting and the people walking through.

Okay now forget Hollywood for a minute. Now stand there on the edge of the Red Sea and you're in that situation. Here's what you see. You see the Egyptian army bearing down on you and they want to kill every one of you because their first-born child just got killed a few days earlier because of your God. What's in front of you is a canyon of water as high as the organ, maybe as high as the Cathedral and maybe higher and you're staring at that. And your human brain is telling you I'm going to die by swords or I'm going to walk halfway across this sea and I'm going to drown because those walls of water are certainly not going to stay up for me. That's what you would say and you know I'm right because you say that every day in your life when a miracle is happening around you. There's no way those walls of water are going to stay up.

Now if that isn't a big enough example that was just one miracle in this story. Let's go back a little bit. The Egyptians were killing every Israelite, every Hebrew baby that came along because the Israelites were growing in numbers, the Egyptians were worried that they were going to be taken over because of the growth of this group so Pharaoh orders the first born child to be killed of all the Hebrews. Moses is born, his mother puts him in a reed basket and sets him out on the Nile. Do you think that felt like a miracle to Moses' mother? Picture putting your child, your baby three months old in a basket, closing the lid and letting the basket go adrift on the Nile River with every peril imaginable about to befall him. Would you picture that as a miracle? That certainly did not look like the first step in God saving an entire race. Did it? That's miracle number one. She didn't recognize it.

Moses when he grows up, grows up in the household of Pharaoh. That turned out to be a miracle, but he sees an Egyptian guard beating one of the slaves and he kills that guard and ends up having to flee for his own life. How is this the start of a miracle that's going to liberate a nation? Moses is now gone having to flee into the desert. God sends Moses back forty years later and He doesn't send him with the Marines from Camp Pendleton, He sends him back with a staff in his hand. So here's the Egyptian army all standing around and the liberator comes in the form of Moses with a robe and a staff. Doesn't exactly look like a miracle. But the miracle was walking through the gates of the city nobody recognized it. Correct? Now what happens next? Moses says to Pharaoh "let my people go." Pharaoh says in Jim Penner's version, you're nuts go away and fact is your slaves are laboring. I'm going to make them make bricks without straw. Fact is they can go in the fields and gather their own straw. Their labor got worse. Does that sound like a miracle? They send a liberator and it gets worse? The situation gets worse and not better?

Have you ever prayed for something and your situation gets worse and not better? That's happened to all of us. And fact is Moses even said in Exodus 5:22 Moses returned to the Lord and said why Lord why have You brought more trouble on this people? Is this why You sent me? Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has brought trouble on people and You have not rescued Your people at all. Isn't that what we say? Just what Moses said? We don't recognize God's plan because our eyes are on our circumstances and not on God. We are not living by faith, we are walking by sight.

Then the plagues start to come. Now the Israelites for the most part are being spared but this is what they are seeing; locusts and gnats and hail and all of these plagues that are coming and they're saying this doesn't look like a miracle. And you know looking back from today it looks like miracle but it didn't look like it back then.

And then a night of terror. A night of terror as the angel of death descends. Now God promised the Israelites that they would be spared, right? He promised them that, but you're in that home and here's what you're hearing: screaming and wailing as your neighbor next door watches their son die and you're staring at the crib at your son saying is my baby going to be spared? God promised it to me, but you're hearing the emotional cries of people right outside your door. How much faith did it take to say I trust God with His promise in the midst of that? They were living in the middle of a miracle. Think of the fear that they would have been going through and what faith it took to make it through that night.

Then a miracle happens: God releases them. Pharaoh let's them all out, six hundred thousand men plus women and children so probably a million and a half, two million people doing what? Wandering out into a desert. No water out there. No food out there. Completely having to take their eyes off their circumstances and relying on God. Then they get to the Red Sea where we started this little part of the message staring at those walls of water. They actually make it across; they get to the other side. The Egyptians are taken care of. God's taken care of the Egyptians, now what? Now you have a million and a half to two million people wandering through the desert and what does God do? He gives them manna every day. What do the people do? They complain every day because they're getting manna every day. No meat, no eggs, all the stuff that we like to eat. You know if you have eat manna every day it starts to get old after a while. But they were living in the middle of a miracle but they were complaining about it.

Would you recognize a miracle in your life today? With something God is doing in your life today would you recognize it? You won't if your eyes are on your circumstances. Take your eyes off your circumstances. God didn't bring you here by accident today. You needed this message. You needed to be able to go out here with your faith bolstered and to bolster the faith of your neighbors. You need to be ministers in your own community. Take your eyes off your circumstances.

Okay what's the second T? Turn your circumstances over to God. Turn your circumstances over to God. And I love this bible verse. I love this bible verse from Matthew. Matthew 7:7-11, "Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be open to you. For everyone who asks receives and those who seek find and those who knock the door will be opened. Now here comes the practical part. Which of you if your son asks for bread will give him a stone? Or if he asks for fish will give him a snake? If you, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him? Now a lot of times this bible verse is associated with our salvation and absolutely right. It's a powerful bible verse for our salvation. But this is practical. Jesus is talking about practical

gifts here and now when He talks about who of you if your son asks for bread would give him a stone, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to you? It's practical. You need to take your eyes off your circumstances and then turn your circumstances over to God. Jesus said it, ask.

Now as men we don't like to ask for directions or anything, right? Low and behold before I'll ever ask for directions. Well my wife comes home one day and she brings in a box maybe about the size of this piece of stone right here and it had a nice picture of a desk on it and she goes you won't believe this great deal. I think she got it at IKEA or something. She goes you won't believe this. Paige needed a desk for school so I got her a desk and it had a picture of it and she goes, but some assembly is required. And I knew that meant me but she goes you can put this together and I says yes I can put it together. I hauled it up to Paige's room and started putting it together because I emptied the box, took the instructions, don't need those, put those in the box and started assembling the thing. It's just three sides, a top and a couple of shelves. This ought to be easy until I figured out, half way assembled I figured out that there were four different sizes of screw in this box. But the size difference was so small you would have never really realized that there were four different sizes of screw that, that, that and that. Some recent graduate from Cal Tech decided this desk was so important he wanted four different sizes of screw.

So as I'm starting to disassemble what I had assembled, my wife comes in. How's it going? Oh it's going pretty good. Well she didn't believe me. She goes you need some help? And I thought to myself, help, help? I don't need any help. I'm doing just fine. And I said no honey thank you very much. And she did that wife walk, you know, where you kind of look like this and headed out of the door and closed the door and not quite sure if she wanted to leave or not. But eventually I got this desk together because what did I do I was humbled and I pulled the instruction book back out so I could figure out the sizes of these screws.

But that's what our life is about. We have to be willing to ask. Humble yourself before the Lord. Ask for your needs. Give Him praise but ask for what you need. That's what you need to do. Ask and it will be given to you. Take your eyes off your circumstances, turn your circumstances over to God and then the third part is the toughest thing to do: trust God with the results. Trusting God with the results is the most difficult thing that you will do. Because go back to the Exodus, the book in Exodus, the people they were grumbling, they were complaining, they had prayed to God to liberate them. He was in the process of doing it, but they weren't trusting God with the results. When you pray to God, are you willing to trust Him with the results of your life? And He is worthy of that trust.

You know we just came through the Easter season and I love the bible verse from John 19:30, Jesus' three final words on the cross, "It is finished." It is finished. That's the most powerful words that you can imagine. It is finished. What is finished? His Father's plan? Absolutely. His Father's will? Absolutely. But it is finished means your victory is complete. I said in the Good Friday evening service that cross is a victory sign for your life. It's a victory sign because you don't need to fear sickness, you don't need to fear financial hardship, you don't need to fear emotional turmoil, your victory in Christ is complete if you'll take your eyes off your circumstances, turn them over to God and trust Him with the results. Because Jesus on that cross, here's what He did: He signed a contract for your life. He signed a contract for your life.

Now you've all signed a contract, a car loan, a house loan, a credit card. You've signed a contract, but what does a contract take? It takes two signatures. Christ signed the contract with that cross. Are you willing to sign your name to that

contract for it to go into force? That's the only way it's going to happen is if you will trust God with the results of your life. Take your eyes off your circumstances. Turn your circumstances over to God and trust God with the results. If you do that, if you do that your miracle begins today. Your miracle begins today. Let's pray. Father we love You, we praise You. How awesome it is to think that You created the heavens and the earth yet You sent Your son to die for us. Who are we that You would send Your son to die for us? That's how much You love us. Father, today we are going to take our eyes off our circumstances. We're going to turn those circumstances over to You and we're going to trust You maybe for the first time, somebody out there maybe for the first time is going to trust You with the results. In Jesus' precious name, Amen. Thank you, thank you very much.

HYMN - "To God be the Glory"

To God be the glory great things He has done. So loved He the world that He gave us His Son Who yielded His life an atonement for sin and opened the life gate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear His voice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the people rejoice. O come to the Father through Jesus the Son and give Him the glory great things He has done.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the earth hear His voice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the people rejoice. O come to the Father through Jesus the Son and give Him the glory great things He has done.

THANK YOU/BENEDICTION - SSC

SSC: Well thank you Jim for that powerful message. Now receive the benediction. May you leave this place knowing that the Lord is with you. You do not walk out of here alone, you walk out of here hand in hand with a God of miracles, with a God who can and will show you His will for your life. Grab a hold of His hand. He will not let you go, Amen.