

Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire-iii Interview: Jim Cymbala

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of prayer and love in ministry and community outreach.

Duration: 29:29

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:37-39, 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, Ephesians 4:16, Hebrews 4:16, James 5:16, 1 Peter 5:2-3

Topics: "Interview"

Description

In this video, Dr. Richard Land discusses the bias against conservatives and Christians in the national media, as detailed in Bernard Goldberg's book 'Bias.' He highlights the outrage from figures like Dan Rather in response to this revelation. The video then transitions to a personal story shared by a pastor about encountering a man in need of Jesus during a church service. The pastor reflects on his own lack of spiritual awareness and conviction in that moment. The video concludes by mentioning the power of prayer in a church and community in New York.

Transcript

Another edition of For Faith and Family with Dr. Richard Land. I'm Harold Harper. I've got a question for you.

Do you remember where you first heard the news of the plane crash into the World Trade Center? Did you feel an urgency to share the gospel? Did you see the power of prayer in people's lives? Well, today we want to conclude a story of a church that has seen the power of prayer in their church and in their community, the community of New York. It didn't start on September 11th, but rather years ago when the pastor had a heart to call his people to prayer. And at that time he didn't feel very significant in the kingdom.

He wanted to make a difference, along with a handful of church members, and they began praying. God has blessed that church. It is a huge church, known across the country as the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

Perhaps you've heard of the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir. This church is a huge church making a huge difference in people's lives in the city of New York. Today we want to continue sharing a message that

Pastor Cimbala shared with a group of pastors a few years ago.

We've aired this broadcast in the past, and it's been one of the most requested series here at For Faith and Family. It's called Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire. Many of you perhaps have read the book by the same name.

It's available in bookstores across the country, but you've never heard the powerful testimony of the writer of that book demonstrating that God can use anyone to make a huge difference in the world. So without further ado, let's listen to Pastor Jim Cimbala share his message, Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire. Oh, I know what it is to preach when there's love in my heart, and I know what it is to just talk.

I'm so sick of just talking. See, Paul had this ability, this bonding that made him to have a passion. When my daughter was away from God 11 years ago, and my wife and I went through a two-and-a-half-year nightmare.

When I entreated my daughter, I didn't say, Dearly Beloved, could you turn to Jeremiah 11 before? I entreated her. That's my girl. That's how Paul must have talked to them.

Remember what he said in Acts 20 when he's giving a review of how he was to the Ephesian elders? Day to day with tears, I pleaded with you to cleave to the Lord. We've lost that passion. Now we're interested in more what works in Sunday school.

What's the new bus thing? We're never going to build a church with buses. Because God never intended to be built that way. But then there's more than that.

Paul goes on talking about this relationship, and he says, Now you know when I was torn away from you. Notice, this is love talk like a boyfriend and a girlfriend. When I was torn away from you.

Not when my itinerary caused me to leave you. When I was torn away from you. But just in person, not in thought.

I was always thinking about you. I tried many times to come to you, but Satan stopped me. For in the day of Jesus Christ, what is my crown? What is my joy? What is my glory? Is it not you? Creatures, listen to me, pastors.

When Jesus comes, the only thing you can show Him are the people who love God, who have come in under your ministry. What are you going to show Jesus when He comes? Your building? What am I going to show Him? My book? He already wrote the Bible. When the angels come, am I going to say, Look at the carpet and the lighting we have in this new facility.

Do you think any of that matters to God? No, Paul says, My crown is not my visions that I had that I couldn't share with anybody. Or not that I wrote a good part of the New Testament. My crown, my joy, my glory is this.

Here they are, Lord, my people. Not your sermons or your books. People.

That's all you can show, pastor. That's all my wife and I are worth. We have to present calvins and people and say, Lord, here they are.

How many pastors do you think think that way? How many pastors and Sunday school workers are thinking, This is my crown. This is my glory. This is my joy.

You see, you can't teach this. Brothers and sisters, if there's anything that has to change in our country, if we're going to have a revival, is we can't teach things that only the Holy Spirit can do. You can't teach love.

We have right now the cult of the teacher. The Bible says there's room for teacher. But after the teacher teaches, you've got to get before God and get filled by His Spirit.

He's the only one who can produce love. How could you teach love? You can teach about love, but you can't teach love into someone because God is love. God's love is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit.

So many times we have congregations who are in a comatose state, loveless, prayerless, Bible-less, and we're telling them to do things that they don't have the life to do. And we think we can teach them to do it. You can't.

They need to be revived by the Holy Spirit. We've got a couple somewhere here in one of these rooms somewhere in this building. Timothy and Esther Arthur.

She's from Africa. He's from the Caribbean. They're one of the choice couples in the church.

They came to me when they knew I was coming here, and they said, Pastor, could we fly with you? We'll just lock ourselves in a room and pray the whole time you're preaching. They've been here since Saturday, praying for this conference. And right now while I'm speaking, they're interceding to the throne of grace.

You think I taught them that? You think they would do that because I told them? No. God put that in their hearts. Amen.

Let's give God glory for what he did. Carol, if you and Jonathan would go to the instruments. So, you are my crown.

You are my joy. That's it. Not where I've been invited or awards from my book or Carol's Grammy Awards.

When Jesus comes, it's going to have to be the saints. That's all I can show. Later, he says the most amazing thing.

I haven't seen this in ten people in my life. I was brought up around church. My dad backslid and became an alcoholic for 20-some years.

Carol's dad was a preacher. He passed on to be with the Lord a few years ago. I've met a lot of famous ministers now.

I've been around a number of good men and women of God. But I haven't seen what I'm about to tell you now. This is stranger than fiction.

Paul says, when I could take it no longer being away from you. I mean, that's love. When I could take it no longer being away from you people.

Paul, you're famous. No, no. I can't stand being away from them.

I sent Timothy to see how you're doing. And now he came back and he told me. And then the talk gets mushy.

He told me that you remember me just like I remember you. And you miss me like I miss you. And you love me even as I love you.

And he says, and now I really live. Because you're standing firm in the Lord. Now I'm really, I'm under persecution.

I'm in a bad situation. But I don't even think about it. Now I really live and I rejoice.

Because my children are standing firm in the Lord. The ones I've nurtured and preached the gospel to. And led them into the things of the spirit.

I don't think that's common in the ministry today. I don't want to be judgmental. I'll tell you about myself.

Because I'm one of the sadder cases. When I went into the ministry, I told you how difficult it was. Just stay focused with me here and we'll close in a moment.

When in the ministry, Carol and I are struggling. We're just, we're young. We got one little kid.

We're working second jobs. Because, you know, you make \$3,800 the first year in the ministry. That's not going to cut it.

Made \$5,500 the second year in the ministry. Well, in that first few months there at the Brooklyn Tabernacle. You know, 20 people, sometimes 2 or 3 in the Tuesday night meeting.

Which was supposed to be a prayer meeting, but there was no prayer. Well, in the midst of all of that, I began one day, one Tuesday. The weather was bad.

I knew 3 or 4 people would be coming that night. So I went into the sanctuary by myself and I started to just walk around and pray. You know, sometimes it's good to just walk and pray.

Sometimes you get tired if you just kneel in one position. And it's not the position, it's opening your heart to God. And I begin to tell God, God, you know, money's missing.

Money's been missing from the offering baskets. One of the ushers was on the take. There's a lack of cohesiveness.

I don't think the people are listening to my preaching. And even though I'm inexperienced and haven't been to Bible school, there seems to be no spirit of cooperation. There doesn't seem to be much love.

There's not much worship. And I began to just complain to God about everything. And as I was praying there after a while, the Lord began to draw near to my heart as our brother was sharing what happened to him.

After he lost his wife. And the Lord began to indicate to me that he would show me what was wrong with the church, the main problem, so that I could really address it. And then out of nowhere, like a bolt, the Lord just said, the main problem in the church is you.

You're prayerless. You don't love my people. Those are my people.

And you don't love them. You're just preaching down to them. You're phony.

You're artificial in the pulpit. You're afraid to just talk and be natural. You think you have to act like a preacher.

And I abhor you acting like a preacher. I don't want you to be a preacher. I want you to be you.

I'll make you a preacher. You just be you. Well, I remember dropping on my knees, and then I went on my face.

And I was there for a long time. You know, whom the Lord loves, he chases. And anybody bears fruit who's connected to the vine, that branch is cleansed and pruned so they'll bear more fruit.

And God began to do it overhaul early on in my ministry, of which there's had to be many, because I have the tendency to slide back into mechanical, just get through, just preach. In other words, sometimes the burdens are so great, the activities are so great, if I'm not careful and don't spend time with God, I become a professional. I become a two-bit preacher with sermons.

New York City doesn't need sermons. It needs God. You've got to bring God to the people.

A couple years ago was one of the clinchers, though, for me. Church has grown. We've started over 20 churches throughout the city and around the country, choirs working so hard, producing albums.

You know, we've seen God bless us so many ways. And on Easter Sunday night, we're having a big outreach, and a girl who is a crack addict and a heroin addict and has the virus, HIV positive, she's giving her testimony in the choir of what the Lord has done in her life. At that time, we only had three meetings in the day, but at the end of a long Sunday, I've been there from early in the morning.

The evening service at that time was at 7.30, so it's now 9.30, 20 to 10. And I'm so tired that I make an invitation after the choir sings and she gives her testimony. There's people all over the front of the church.

The personal workers are working with them. Everybody's doing their thing. And I'm just so exhausted.

I pull my tie down, and I just put my feet like if I would drop on the floor now and just let my feet dangle over the platform and just go, God, I'm so tired. Inner city, everything is rushed. The subway runs under our church.

It's not an easy place to be. So as I'm sitting there, I'm just saying, well, God, thank you. I got through the day.

There's a guy I see looking at me down the center aisle about the fourth row up. He's in the aisle. Everybody's, see Jonathan's playing? That's just the way Jonathan was playing that night.

He's playing the organ, and people are praying, and we're giving counsel because when they come in with problems, you can't rush them in and out. You've got to pray through. You can't give them a little memory verse and say, on your way now, they're dealing with problems you can't imagine.

So this guy's looking at me, a black guy. I thought he was 50. He was only 32.

Gives you an idea how he looked. And he's looking at me, and he's kind of sheepish. He's got a cap in his hand.

He's looking at me. He looks filthy. And us being in the inner city, the doors are open to everyone.

Anybody could come through the door because that's what a church is supposed to be. Church is not supposed to be a nice place for the family. Where did you find that in the Bible? It's supposed to be a Holy Ghost intensive care unit.

It's supposed to save lives. That's supposed to be a nice place for Mom and Dad and Junior. That's nowhere found in the Bible.

It's supposed to be a place where no matter how messed up you are, you can come. And no matter what color you are, you can come, and someone will love you and give you the gospel of Jesus Christ. That's what the church is supposed to be.

Well, I'm down here, and my feet are dangling off. And this guy goes there, and I say to myself, what a bummer. I'm going to end Easter Sunday after all this work handing money to some guy panhandling because that happens in our church.

People come in and look to hit somebody up for money. Come here. He walks toward me, and he got, as God is my holy witness, he got within six feet of me, seven feet of me, and I smelled a smell, and I've smelled a lot of smells in my life.

I smelled a smell, an odor that was horrific. Feces, urine, street, sweat. In fact, it was so bad that as this guy stood in front of me just right there, and my legs are dangling off, I would breathe in when I looked away, and then I would talk to him.

Exhaling, I would go, what's your name? You homeless? He said, yeah. He smelled horrible, face, hair matted, filthy clothes. I didn't know that he had been laying on the side of our building.

He used to lay in his own urine out there. So as I looked at him, I said, how long have you been in the street? He said, I've been homeless six years. We're just in a deserted truck.

What's your name? David. What are you into? Liquor. He said, I do a little crack, too.

So I reached, just like I'm reaching now to give him some money. You know, guy's down. Easter Sunday, the least you could do is something good.

And as I took out my money, just like I did, I pressed in and put it. I want that Jesus you were talking about. I got so convicted because here I am, a pastor of a church, and I'm not only not in the spirit, I don't even sense that Jesus is sending me somebody for the kingdom to get rid of.

And at that moment, as the Lord is my holy witness right now, I forgot about him and I lifted my eyes and my hands to heaven. And I said, Oh, God, forgive me, please. Very thing.

I don't want to be. Oh, God, help me, please. I totally forgot about him.

But I'm telling you, whatever your theology is, I'm just telling you what happened. God gave me a fresh filling of his spirit and his love. His love began to just well up inside of me like incredible.

And David picked it up in a moment. He knew something was happening to me. It all happened like this.

And as I just sat there, legs dangling over, weeping with my hands up, he fell against me and leaned against my chest. And he began to weep. I took that smell and made it like the most beautiful perfume that I had ever smelled in my life.

I began to breathe in it and God spoke to my heart and said, You smell that smell? That's what you and your wife have been called to do. Love that smell. That's the smell of the world that I sent my son to die for.

If you want nice smells and nice people, you'll never work for me. But if you're willing to, I can use you for my glory. David Ruffin that day found the Lord Jesus as his savior.

We got him into a hospital. He detox for a few days that Thanksgiving. We had already fixed his teeth.

He had a gaping hole here. She should have died several times. He was once in a crack house and laying in a mattress and accidentally in a stupor dropped his cigarette butt and the mattress went up and he was so out of it, it took somebody else pulling him out at the last second or he would have burned to death.

But God kept him alive so he could hear the gospel. That Thanksgiving, he sat in my table with my children and my wife with his teeth fixed, handsome, shaved, clean. He works for the church.

The doctor said, you know, you'll never be able to have children because of something the way how he was living. He got married to a girl from Africa a few years ago. She just gave birth to their second child.

He goes out now and gives his testimony. He preaches like Billy Graham. I'm telling you, when I hear him, I don't even want to go.

And it all began when God sent a smelly drunk and this minister was not ready. Now, this thing cannot be taught. And I'll tell you why.

Paul couldn't teach it, could not produce this in people. In the second chapter of Philippians, he tells them, I'm sending Timothy to you. He's the only one I have that will care for your interests.

Everyone else seeks their own interests. He's talking about the preachers that were with him. So I only have one Timothy who's like me.

He'll care for you and be ready to go down for you and live for you and cry for you and pray for you. Everyone else here, they're interested in their own interests. What's the next church in their career? And does somebody notice how good they preach and all that? But I only got one Timothy.

Like a son, he labors with me. See, this thing can't be taught. It's got to be caught by the Holy Spirit.

God's not done with me and he can begin a new transition now in my life. I know he's used me in some small ways, but something inside of me is saying that there's a whole world of something out there that if I'll just let God get a hold of me and fill me with this kind of love. These people have been so kind to say, Pastor Cimbala, close the meeting any way you want.

See, I'm a personal believer that lectures and then close the meeting with a benediction. That is not a New Testament meeting. Get to the throne of grace.

Come boldly to the throne of grace. Get that from Pastor Cimbala. I got to get that at the throne of grace.

That's why in our services we leave time at the end for people to just pray. You know, Jesus didn't say my house shall be called a house of preaching. He said it should be called a house of worship.

A sermon is an arrow that's supposed to direct you standing on God's word to the throne of grace so you can receive what God has for you. Over this building here, that's the answer to your discouragement is to come and say Jesus so that your name might be preached. What an amazing testimony.

You've been listening to For Faith and Family with Dr. Richard Land. I'm Harold Harper. Our special guest today has been Pastor Jim Cimbala.

It's so amazing to hear how he felt when he first started at the Brooklyn Tabernacle. He didn't feel as though he was making a difference. Now his church is making a huge difference in the city of New York and across the world.

It all started with his passion to call his church for prayer. For many churches, the middle of the week prayer service is the least attended service, but not at the Brooklyn Tabernacle. God has called us to be people of prayer.

What would happen in your life if we became men and women of prayer, if we became prayer warriors? Perhaps there are times in your life right now that you don't feel you're making a difference. I certainly hope that Jim Cimbala's testimony at the Brooklyn Tabernacle has inspired you and has encouraged you. If you haven't read the book, Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, you need to read this book.

It's an incredible book. It will challenge you and inspire your walk with the Lord. It's available in Christian bookstores across the country, but what's not available in the bookstore is the message that you heard today.

Jim sharing from his heart to pastors about what God did in his life and what God did in his church. We're making the message available today in its entirety when you call toll-free 1-888-324-8450. That's 1-888-FAITH-5-0.

If you'd like to write to us, you can do so by addressing your envelope to For Faith and Family, Post Office Box 25185, Nashville, Tennessee, 37202. As always, whenever you call or write, you will automatically get a one-year subscription to our magazine. It's designed to equip you and your family to address the cultural issues of our day.

Once again, the number to dial is toll-free 1-888-324-8450. That's 1-888-FAITH-5-0. Well, we're simply out of time.

Let's go back to Dr. Richard Land for his final comments as we close out today's broadcast. I want to thank you for being with us and listening and sharing with us, as Brother Jim has shared with us the powerful story of how God has used him and his ministry at the Brooklyn Tabernacle since 1972. Thank you for being on the program.

And God bless you, and God bless your ministry. God bless you. Folks, thanks for listening.

God bless you. God bless your family. God bless.

Well, that wraps up another edition of For Faith and Family with Dr. Richard Land. Our program is a production of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. I certainly hope you were encouraged by our program today.

Remember, you can get your copy of today's broadcast by calling toll-free 1-888-FAITH-5-0. That's 1-888-324-8450. Or you can go to our website at faithinfamily.com. Please continue to pray for us.

Your prayers and financial support help us to stay on the air in your community. Once again, the number to dial is toll-free 1-888-FAITH-5-0. That's 1-888-324-8450.

If you'd like to write to us, you can do so by addressing your envelope to For Faith and Family, Post Office Box 25185, Nashville, Tennessee. Our production engineer for this program has been Matt Hawkins. Our producer has been Tim Cutman.

I'm Harold Harper. I hope you will join us next time for For Faith and Family with Dr. Richard Land. Stay tuned for Dr. Richard Land's one-minute commentary on today's news entitled For Faith and Family Insight.

We'll give you time cues 2, 1, and 30 seconds out. For Faith and Family Insight, coming to you live in two minutes. Two minutes, mark.

For Faith and Family Insight, coming to you live in one minute. One minute, mark. For Faith and Family Insight, coming to you in 30 seconds.

30 seconds, mark. Now, here's Richard Land with today's For Faith and Family Insight. For years, Christian broadcasters have been saying the national media is outrageously biased against conservatives in general and Christians in particular.

Now we have detailed documentation of this bias in Bernard Goldberg's new book, *Bias*. Goldberg, a veteran newsman with CBS, is airing the national media's Dirty Linen in public. Dan, rather, is apoplectic.

Senior producers, not above describing Gary Bauer as, quote, the little Christian nut, end quote, told Goldberg that his sin was unforgivable. This book is selling like hotcakes. I wish every American would read this book.

They would never again be as susceptible to the media's bias. Dr. Land wants you to have a free subscription to Light Magazine. Call 1-888-54-FAITH and join us again for the next For Faith and Family Insight.

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