

Roof Work

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon 'Roof Work' emphasizes the power of intercessory prayer and the importance of bringing others into the presence of Jesus for healing and miracles.

Duration: 19:10

Scripture: Matthew 9:2, Matthew 9:6, Mark 2:1-12, Mark 2:17, Mark 2:22, Mark 2:27-28, Luke 5:20-26

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the power of faith and the importance of bringing others to Jesus. He shares the story of a paralyzed man who was brought to Jesus by four men carrying a mat. Despite the crowded house, they lowered the man through the roof to get him into the presence of Jesus. Jesus was pleased with their faith and proceeded to heal the paralyzed man, demonstrating his power to forgive sins and perform miracles. The speaker encourages the audience to have faith and bring their loved ones who need salvation to Jesus, trusting that being in his presence will bring about transformation and healing.

Transcript

Why are you thinking these things, Jesus said? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, for your sins are forgiven, or to say, get up and take your mat and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, he said to the paralytic, the paralyzed man, I tell you, get up, take your mat, and go home. He got up, took his mat, and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone, and they praised God, saying, we have never seen anything like this.

This is a famous little story from Mark, chapter two. You can look at it when you go home. I didn't read the important part at the front, because I wanted to tell you this story.

A man was healed, who was paralyzed, but how he was healed is full of interest for us tonight. Jesus, it seemed, had a home in Capernaum, which was a city on the Sea of Galilee. He grew up in Nazareth, but there's indications, as we read the gospel, he stayed in Capernaum, as kind of a home base.

And as he was preaching and doing what Jesus did, he came back to Capernaum, and he went into a house, and he began to teach, and to heal people, but mostly, at this point, to teach. Four men had a friend who was paralyzed, and the Bible tells us that wherever they came from, one mile, five miles, 10 miles, I don't know, but there was no public conveyance, so they had to walk. They had some kind of mat, or carrying surface, that they put the man on, and then the four of them took a grown man, and walked

with him for miles, to get him into the presence of Jesus.

They weren't going for themselves. They were going for their friend, who was paralyzed. And they carried him, and they walked all that way, and the Bible tells us that when they got to the house, they couldn't get in, because the crowds were getting so huge around Jesus, that there was no way into the house.

So now you've come all that way, with your friend. You're carrying him on a mat. Conveyance structures were not that typical then, so it probably took a lot of lugging to get him there, especially if he was a large frame man.

And now you can't get in, but that didn't stop them. They probably took the stairway on the side of the house, that went up to the roof, because in those days, there were flat roofs, not roofs like we have. And the Bible tells us, when they saw they couldn't get in, they went, oh no, we're not gonna be turned away.

Our friend's gotta get into the presence of Jesus. So they went up to the roof. Now they're on the roof.

Jesus is in the house teaching. Nobody knows what's going on in the roof. And then the Bible tells us that they started taking up the tiles from the roof, and started separating them, and made a hole big enough to drop their friend into the presence of Jesus.

And they lowered him in there, and Jesus is teaching. Suddenly, people hear a commotion. Everyone looks up.

And who's coming down on the mat? Before there were ever escalators going up and down, they built their own escalator going down. And they lowered him in front of Jesus. And then, here's the important word.

And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, son, your sins are forgiven you. And the Pharisees and the religious leaders said, who is this man? He's not God. Only God can forgive sins.

And they started whispering and thinking that way. And then Jesus knew their thoughts and said, why do you think that? Why are you thinking bad thoughts? Why aren't you just rejoicing that these men brought him down, okay? Which is easier, to say your sins are forgiven, or to heal them? I'm gonna show you that the son of man, Jesus, has power here on earth to do both. Son, get up, take up your mat and walk.

And he got up, and that was one of the signal miracles that we find in the book of Mark, where the paralytic man walked. Why did he walk? Because Jesus healed him. Why did Jesus heal him? Because he got into the presence of Jesus.

How did he get into the presence of Jesus? Somebody brought him. Someone dropped him right in front of Jesus. And once in front of Jesus, Jesus saw not just the man's faith, but when he saw the men who were carrying him, and he saw their faith, he said that faith can't be denied.

I'm gonna heal this man because of their faith. This introduces us to the power of intercessory prayer. Because there are people that we know that need to be brought into the presence of Jesus, but they can't make it themselves.

They're paralyzed by sin. They're paralyzed by blindness. They're paralyzed by superstition.

They're paralyzed by unbelief. But they're hurting. And what intercessory prayer does, it touches God with one hand, and it takes the person you're praying for, and it brings them into the presence of Jesus so that

God can do miracles.

But if you wanna understand how that man walked, you can't take it away from those four men. Yes, Jesus did it. I totally give all the glory to Jesus.

But those four men, they got him there. How many say amen? Amen. If nobody carried him to Jesus, I don't see that healing taking place.

If those men didn't have that faith, that healing doesn't happen. That miracle doesn't happen. And I want you to say just one last thing to you.

Do you notice the difficulties you have to overcome when you pray for people? It's pictured by that story. They carry him all that way. That's not easy.

And they're not going for themselves. They're going for someone they love. What good friends that man had.

Paralyzed or not, he had some real friends, didn't he? Carried him all that way. And then when they get there, sorry, SRO, standing room only, you can't get in. We're gonna find a way.

We're gonna find a way. You know when you really believe in God for someone that you love? You'll always find a way. Intercessory prayer for someone can't be blocked because prayer always finds a way.

You pray through difficulties. You pray through blockages. You pray through mountains.

You pray through walls that say, no, that can't happen. You go, yeah, it will happen. God will do this because I'm gonna bring this.

Yeah, let's put our hands together and say amen to that. What do you think about these sopranos here? Blonde girl over there, lady in the yellow here. You don't think they have somebody who needs to be brought into the presence of Jesus? You don't think they have a son or a brother or a relative that they love? And a miracle has to be done in that person's life.

They have to be awakened. They have to be saved. Something has to happen to them.

You could say, well, whatever will be will be. Well, that's not what exactly the Bible teaches. The Bible says without faith, it's impossible to please God.

I know the altos and the tenors on this side, they all have somebody they care about. I want you to focus on just maybe one person today that needs to be brought into the presence of Jesus through prayer. You gotta drop them into the presence of Jesus.

We have a prayer band that prays here around the clock in the building, morning hours through the afternoon into the night. Then they come back again tomorrow, they'll be doing it, and then the next day. And they're always dropping people into the presence of Jesus.

That's what intercessory prayer is. Not praying for yourself, praying for somebody else. Interceding for them.

Saying, God, they're paralyzed, but I'm gonna drop them into your presence tonight. And I need for you to do a miracle. How many have someone you love or care about? They need God pronto.

Just lift your hand. Lift your hand up so I can see. You have hands behind me there? Of course, we all have someone we love that doesn't know Jesus.

Now, the power of this, no one knows. When the man was jumping around, and they said, what happened to him? How can he walk now? Oh, Jesus did that. But no one knew the whole story.

Yeah, Jesus did it. But what got him to Jesus? Four men carrying a mat. Not discouraged by a crowded house.

Said, we'll drop them through the roof. And notice how Jesus wasn't disturbed by it. It seemed like he loved it.

Seeing their faith, he said, oh, I'm gonna do something now. Because faith just draws power from God. And unbelief shuts down everything that God wants to do, it seems.

So I wanna ask you here. You got somebody? You know, for two and a half years, the main person on the top of my list was my own daughter. But I got people right now.

I just asked about one, not 15 minutes ago. Asked someone over there about this person. I started praying again.

She's not any longer living in this city, but I'm not gonna give up on her. She's a 13, 14 year old girl who's tried to take her life. Has some kind of problems, cuts herself.

I don't care what she has. I'm dropping her into the presence of Jesus tonight. Come on, can we say amen to that? Because if Jesus can't do it, then there's no hope.

If Jesus can't do it, then what's the hope? But Jesus can do anything, everything. I don't care how difficult the situation is that that person is in. You say, but Pastor, you don't know how hard they are.

No one was harder or crazier than this guy that used to sing in the choir. And he used to sit right over there, second row, where Darrell is sitting. Used to sit there, stand there and sing.

But before he went in the choir, he was a maniac. Went from making \$3,000 a day as the top hairdresser, makeup artist in the fashion world, got his big hit in Paris. He went to France so that he could make it big.

And sure enough, he got the first Vogue cover, and then he was making \$3,000 a day and working every day. And this was back 20 years ago. Imagine what \$3,000 was back then a day.

It's a lot of money now. But while he was in France, he got hooked, graduated from one drug he was using to heroin. And in France, he told me, he had it delivered to the place where he was doing the shoot with the models and the famous people.

Had heroin delivered. So after making a lot of money, he came back to New York. In New York, they don't deliver.

There's no takeout on heroin. You know what he had to do? He had to go out and hustle. He had to go down to Alphabet City.

He has to go up to South Bronx. Had to go to Spanish Harlem. Had to go wherever to cop drugs.

So during the day, he's making \$3,000 a day, and at night, he's dressed down, and he's copping drugs. But then he had an overdose on a boat in the Caribbean doing a shoot. When he got home, they used the morals clause in his contract, and they busted him.

They broke the contract. And he publicly said, I didn't care. It just gave me more time to shoot drugs.

And he went over the edge, cut up his passport, his license, everything that had his name on it. And he went to live in the street for a couple years. Every day, trying to figure out how to make money.

So that he could get drugs. But while he was working, one of the models he worked on was a former Miss Mississippi who sings in the choir. A model at that time.

And she told him about Jesus. She not only told him about Jesus, she got some Holy Spirit burden in her because I remember her coming to me and saying, you gotta pray for this guy, you gotta pray. And I thought, whatever.

She said, no, you don't know who Danny Velasco is. He's way beyond anything. Because by now, he was out in the street.

He started hearing demonic voices, whatever voices. One cursing at him, one accusing him, one laughing, all at the same time. He was the guy that you crossed the street and you said, no, I'm not walking on that side.

I'm gonna cross, especially if you're not from New York. You saw him in the street, you crossed the street. Had hepatitis A, hepatitis B, hepatitis C. Went down to 107 pounds, 112 pounds.

But this radical choir member, she got a posse praying for him. She made me pray for him on Tuesday nights and got the church praying for him. I never met him.

And then one day, when he was just about to die, he was riding a train because he was riding the trains. That's where he lived, in the trains. And a drug addict facing him on the train, who was also riding the trains, looked at him and said, yo, you need to get to a hospital, you're gonna die.

And he didn't wanna die in the street. He didn't want to offend his family and hurt his family. So he said, yeah, I'd rather die in the hospital.

He was gonna die. He got off at the next stop and there was a hospital. They took him into emergency, the way he told it to me.

They put him in a room. He was really sick. He wakes up, becomes conscious, and he has all the voices screaming at him.

And somewhere in the midst of all those voices, he hears a little whisper. He said it was either an angel or the memory of the woman, Wanda, who told it to him. Danny, the day you call on Jesus, he will set you free.

And out of nowhere, in that room, with all the voices, all the craziness, all the chaos, he just said, God, Lord, Jesus, help me. And the way he told it to us and audiences around the world, the presence of God filled that room, healing him, changing him, touching him, working in him. And immediately, when he called on the name of the Lord, all the voices stopped.

Every voice was shut off. How did it happen that way? Somebody had dropped him into the presence of Jesus. Once you get into the presence of Jesus, something good is gonna happen.

You're gonna have to wait sometimes. It might not be the way you thought it would happen, but how many believe that Jesus does everything well? Say amen, he does it in his time. Yeah, let's say amen to that.

How many of you have someone? Close your eyes with me. Maybe a son or a daughter, a sister, a mom, a dad. And if they were to die tonight, you don't have such a good feeling about their eternal destiny.

That's what I wanna focus on. I don't wanna focus on someone who has a bad leg or is facing cancer. If they're Christians, I don't wanna focus on that.

I wanna focus on somebody who is out there. Holy Spirit, bring to remembrance and create faith in our hearts. Everyone who has someone really focused in on now, you wanna bring them through prayer into the presence of Jesus.

I want you to stand up. Stand up right where you are, behind me, in front of me. Pastor, I got someone that I love.

Now, the Bible also says about the power of prayer where two or three of you agree on anything. As touching anything, when two or three of you agree, it shall be done unto you. There's not only power in dropping people into Jesus, but there's power in agreement in prayer.

So that's how we'll end. But right now, I want every man to find a man whether you're in the choir, in the balcony, downstairs, just face the man. Every woman, face the woman.

Just tell her the name of the person that you're dropping down. Don't give any details. Just give a name.

She'll give you her name. Then I want you to pray out loud together. Every man, turn.

Come on, face another man. Get a prayer partner right now, everyone. They're gonna play that song, that hymn.

Come on, everyone, everywhere. Lift your voice and pray. Lift your voice and pray for that person.

Fight every discouragement. Overcome every difficulty. Shake off every lethargy.

Just join hands in front of you, facing each other. Come on, agree together. Agree together.

Don't be embarrassed. Agree together. God, we drop her in front of you tonight, Lord.

We drop her in front of you, Jesus. Just lift your voice up and agree. Lift that person up, and then you'll drop them right down into the presence of Jesus.

Lord Jesus, we drop them down in your presence. We don't have the power to do it, Lord. Only you can do it, Lord.

I drop her in your presence, Lord. Just speak that word, Lord. Speak that word.

Bring healing to her, Lord. Bring healing to her mind, Lord. Her emotions, Lord.

We drop them, Lord. We drop them in front of you, Lord. We bring them to you, Lord.

Wake them up, Lord. Deliver them, Lord. Deliver them, Lord.

Wake them up, Lord. Deliver them, Lord. Some of us are here tonight because someone prayed for us, God, and now we pray for someone else, Lord.

We're gonna close your eyes with me. Close your eyes. We're gonna give God one last clap offering.

But Lord, we believe that you have sent angels on assignment in answer to our prayers tonight. I believe that because you said when you pray, believe that you will receive and you shall have the thing you asked for. I believe that the Holy Spirit is working right now speaking to some people that we pray.

You're gonna send dreams in the night, visions. You're gonna send somebody to them. They're gonna remember a song.

Something's gonna happen, Lord, and you're gonna make a way where there's no way. And we will give you all the praise and all the honor and all the glory for we have broken through the roof and we have dropped them into your presence. Let's put our hands together and shout hallelujah while we clap our hands.

Everyone turn and hug a bunch of people. God bless you.

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