

RAISING THE ROOF

TEXT: *Mark 2:3: And they come unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.*

Hundreds of women nearly break their necks slaving at cook stoves to bake cakes and pies to raise funds for their church. But how many will raise the roof to get you to Jesus.

The church has even gone into the junk business selling rags at rummage sales to help finance a powerless empty church.

There is a reason folks have more 'church-ian-ity' than Christianity. Like the man who heard an atheist scoffer blaspheme Christ and the Bible, but remained silent until the scoffer cursed the Baptist Church he attended. Then, he awoke from his silence and gnashed on him in a split second. He was ready to fight for a church and not for Christ because he knows Him not.

No wonder religion today is disgusting and nauseating to sinners. It is the lukewarm sort. It does not get souls to Christ. It makes fun of the power of Christ to perform miracles and to heal the suffering. It knows nothing of the power of Christ to save to the uttermost, or the gutter-most.

"Oh, can you please help me! My child is sick with epilepsy". This little child's form is rent with constant convulsions. Lay your hands upon his head, according to **James 5**, and pray the prayer of faith which reads..."

James 5:14-15:

¹⁴ Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord:

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

"Woman, you are mad and beside yourself", cried the preacher. "There is no longer the power of God to heal. It has long since died out with apostles. There is a physician down the street to your right, and a clinic to your left. We will pray that the Lord will give him skill".

“But, preacher, I have been to them and they say the case is hopeless. They say nothing in their power can cure him. They talked of a higher Power, so I have come to you.”

“Sorry, we are to tell you the Lord does not heal today. Besides, this affliction is your cross given by the Lord, and you must bear it with patience until we reach the other world where there is no more sickness. There your child will be well forever.”

God have mercy on such empty, worthless chatter!

Where in the Bible do we find that Jesus has changed? Where is it written that Jesus no longer has compassion on the sick and suffering?

This same story is told to many today — with more added. God does not fill with the Holy Ghost any longer, according to the Gospel of a dead church. There is no longer the mighty rushing wind and the cloven tongues of fire. When you are saved, you have all God has to give you.

I wonder what Paul, who spoke to the Ephesian Church in **Acts 19**, must have meant?

Wild fire and fanaticism is what the glorious message of the full Gospel is called by many preachers and church members.

This is what they thought of the four men who brought a man to Jesus by ripping off the roof of a house. If a church can get even four men on fire for God cooperating to see souls saved and delivered from the curses of sin, it would have to be by the power of God. When we get united and on fire for God, we will not be delicate about rules, systems, order, or out-of-order! Be it smash or crash, everything must go to pieces which stand between the soul and its getting to Jesus. Precious souls are worth more than any roof.



God found four holy men with faith, got them together, and things were done. Oh God, find four holy men filled with faith today, for we must have a revival of the power and a demonstration of the power of Jesus Christ. We will have a good time in the Lord, and no effort is too great to get souls to Jesus for deliverance.

Some have told me they don't believe in this old-time, heart-felt religion. That is why they don't have it! It comes by faith in Jesus, and when we have that, we will want others to have it, too.

This uncared for, paralyzed man had been neglected by the cold-hearted Pharisees who were full of religion, but had not a speck of salvation. The poor soul had no deliverer. He was helpless to get to Jesus. (So are all of you who know Him not.) Therefore, four men who knew Jesus well brought him. This is where their efforts end, and Jesus takes over.

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There may be many beyond the reach of a minister who must be brought in by you followers of Jesus. Where you got deliverance, there you will bring others.

This text is a real picture of apostolic Christianity which is a living, active force in the world in any day, and is much needed again today. It suggests the need of cooperation in Christian work. The man was carried by four – no one person could carry him alone. So it is with our families and the Church. Each must take his corner of the pallet. The mother must be a Christian herself, yet she cannot make an ideal home without the cooperation of the father, and vice versa. The pastor may be a Peter, or a Paul, and yet he cannot make an ideal church himself. Every member of the board — every teacher — each member, whether young or old, must cooperate in order to bring results.



Suppose we saw laying here on the floor an enormous pile of links. Singularly, they are all worthless; but combine one with another and they will hold a ship from drifting to sea, or make connections that will move stubborn obstacles.

Thus, in this text, we have a paralytic on his way to Jesus because four men brought the sick and suffering to the Great Physician. There was no loafing on the job, or lagging behind. Each man did his part of the work. This is the mission of the church. The Lord does not want one to carry all the corners, but He does want each one to carry one of them. If you are a born-again Christian, there is a work that only you can do as a member of His Body.

The way these men worked carrying the helpless to Jesus was blessed. They worked cheerfully, with compassion, counting it a privilege. Their faith knew no difficulty too great.



Do not grumble at your work — it has a demoralizing effect on all who have to listen to you. Who are we working for anyway? Have we forgotten Calvary, and all He bore for us? Carry your corner cheerfully, for you help or hinder those you seek to bring to Jesus if you go after them with a mule face. If you whine, or act as if it will kill you to exercise some effort to bring people to Christ, it will also have a bad effect upon the other workers for Christ. If you have difficulty and hard labor to advance the cause of Christ — as these four men did — the joy will come from the lasting results. Jesus will do His part as you do yours.

This bold, original plan must have met serious objections from the outsiders. The multitude of people made it impossible for one to work his way through, much less carry another.

Many church members would have stopped here feeling they had done their duty. But love and faith working together go a step further.

“Little Faith” would raise many objections: stairway – too narrow; steps – too steep; boards – too frail; tearing up a roof – a breach of etiquette, even an infringement on private property. But “Real Faith” works by strenuous effort until finally the man is lowered into the presence of an astonished audience beneath until he lays in the Presence of his Deliverer – the Lord Jesus Christ. Such faith of personal workers is the delight and blessing to Jesus’ heart. It is the true spirit of every follower of the Lord Jesus to want to bring precious souls to Jesus regardless of their need, that He be glorified in saving, healing, or baptizing them in the spirit.

The objections do not end with a soul brought to Christ, for now – from within – the hypocritical church members turn on Jesus with serious objections to His forgiving the man of his sins.

Jesus read their thoughts and turned to the man, saying, ***“Arise. Take up thy bed and walk.”***

The next shock was in this man whose faith had been built up and inspired by the workers for the Master. He believes Jesus' words, and knowing the inward work already is done, now sees the double cure perfected. He believed. He did the thing which is impossible. He did not argue by "little faith", but by "strong faith" he takes Jesus at His word, and asks no questions.

This great deliverance presents a vivid portrayal of the necessity to preach a balanced Gospel of hope for the hopeless and the helpless.

One day this man's neighbors had come to him, their faces radiant with new glory as they testified to the power of Jesus. "The deliverer has come! The Man with the seamless white robe – the Life-giver! His words are eternal, and so much sweeter than the narrow religion of our day. Jesus heals. We have seen Him take away blindness from eyes and heal the deaf. Disease and sickness flee at His command. He is the mighty weight lifter, and with ease He breaks the power of satan." This message breathed into the soul of despondency was a message of hope in Christ alone.



There is a spiritual lesson of Jesus in this house crowded with people. When Jesus is within, His drawing power brings hungry souls and needy bodies. There are some houses where the door is shut to Him, as in:

Revelation 3:20: Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

He will not stay where He is not welcomed.

Luke 24:29: But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them.

Where the Son of God dwells in the right place of the Lord, the house will be so filled that there is no room for worldly entertainers or the attractions or pleasures of the world; there is only room for Jesus in His fullness. When He has His rightful place in our heart, He brings a multitude of new friends; but with their coming in there, the devil will always come in the midst to criticize, as in the experience of Job.

Criticizers and curiosity seekers may stand in the way of seekers getting to Jesus, but real faith overcomes all the obstacles. Some are so stiff-necked and selfish that they will not move an inch to let a soul get to Jesus. Jesus said this of the Pharisees.

Matthew 23:13: But woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Those bringing souls to Jesus need not be afraid of new methods. If you can't get them in the way others came, let them down through the roof. If you can't get folks to church by inviting, try compelling them by carrying them in your car. What if you are called a roof-breaking fanatic? Never give up. You know for whom you are working, and payday is coming soon.

Some will never come unless they are brought. When people really want to be delivered, they will not be ashamed to be helped. How often we have seen people blush and fidget when we talked of their need of salvation — because his soul was in deep concern for salvation. Also, the jailer in **Acts 16:30** cries out,

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

Four men carry an empty pitcher to the fountain of life.

Conclusion:

Mark 2:9: Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

A helpless man is raised to walk in the newness of life. Jesus shows His true compassion upon suffering humanity. And He is the SAME — yesterday, today, and forever!



Jesus deals with the true cause that lies back of all physical suffering. Any Gospel that teaches salvation alone is a half-Gospel.

There is no use trying to get people healed when the cancer of evil is festering their spiritual, moral nature.

Notice how Jesus addresses the man. “**Son, be of good cheer. Thy sins be forgiven thee.**” (**Matthew 9:2b**) That transformation from a sinner to a son and heir to the blessings of salvation and to Heaven itself is ours through Christ. This man has a new Father, and a new home. Jesus saves, easily, all who come. “Whether it is easier...”

Keep your sins, and you are fitted only for Hell. Give them up. Get right with God through the Blood of Jesus and faith in His Name. A victim of sin’s slavery, man’s greatest need is salvation.

Jesus knows all hearts. He can’t be fooled.

Church members are filled with fear and astonishment when the true power of Christ is manifested.

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