

Extreme Measures - Tech issues re sound

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[0 : 00] Mark 2. If I had a title for this message I'd call it Extreme Measures.!

Jesus was in town. Jesus was in the house. And there was excitement in this house. There was joy there. There was gladness. Jesus was there. Picture this huge crowd at this time. They were standing shoulder to shoulder.

It was a massive crowd. And no one was moving. There were chock-a-block around the doorway. There was anticipation here. There was expectancy. The people had come because Jesus was here.

Jesus was in the house. And God was about to do something. There was something, an atmosphere here. There was an excitement, an expectancy.

That's church. That's our hope. That's our faith. That the Lord Jesus is here. And God is moving. God is doing something. He is at work. And it's exciting.

[1 : 26] There's an anticipation because the Lord Jesus is here by His Spirit as we gather, as we get together. And verse 2 it says, And straightway, many were gathered together. In so much that there was no room to receive them.

No, not so much as about the door. And He preached the word unto them. Notice that the Lord Jesus preached the word unto them.

God was at work. His powerful word was working. God was working in power.

The parallel account says that there was power there to him. Where the word is, there is power. His word will not return unto him void.

His word declared will bring fruit. Will produce fruit. It will not return unto him void. It will accomplish that where to He sends it.

[2 : 41] And so He preached the word unto them. These people that were gathered. Verse 3. And they come unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was born of four.

So here was this one sick of the palsy, a paralytic. And he was born, he was carried of four men.

This account tells of people who would use extreme measures to bring a man to Jesus.

Extreme measures to bring one to Jesus. Now as these four came carrying this man on some kind of mat or stretcher or nature, carrying device of sorts, they came to the house.

And can you imagine the disappointment as they saw, oh we can't even get close to the door. Now there's this big queue. There's all these people flocking and crowding around.

And you can imagine if you could picture yourself there on that time, the disappointment they would have felt. That they might have travelled some distance. They obviously gathered themselves together, these four.

[3 : 53] They'd taken the trouble to carry this man. How these men must have felt, they had arrived too late to get close to them.

To hear or see the Lord Jesus. He was inside the house. They couldn't get close to the door. Four men here. They carried their friend.

Four people who had compassion. They had concern enough to do something for someone. To bring him to Jesus. They had this radical faith in God. And they had to get close enough to Jesus.

Here was their dilemma. And their disappointment. They had gotten together, they showed their commitment to carrying him there. And now, they couldn't get close to Jesus.

How their hearts were sunk as they arrived. And as they had loved their friends so much to bring him there. To carry him there. But the house was packed.

[4 : 55] There was no way they could get in. It seemed. Imagine a crowd like that. You see them at some events, don't you? Where it's just chock-a-block. There's no room to move.

It's just, they're all sandwiched in. It makes me think of those Japanese trains. You know, you've seen pictures of them. They kind of almost shut someone's nose at the door. They're all squashed in like sardines, aren't they?

They're just chock-a-block. They're squashed in. Their faces are almost squashed against the windows. Because they're so full, these Japanese trains. And they just squashed the people in. So you just can't squeeze one other person in. That's just what it was like at this house. Where it was just so crowded. And the people crowded around. But they did not see the need. People were crowding into this house, this place. Such that even though there was a man who was in evident need. It's like they didn't even see him.

[5 : 55] They did not have the care for the man. Or the men who were bringing the man to Jesus. They were just in the way.

Verse 4. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press. So these four couldn't get near to Jesus. They uncovered the roof where he was.

And when they had broken it up. They let down the bed. And were in the sick of the palsy. And were in the sick of the palsy. Now no one could get inside the door. Imagine these four men.

They might have walked a distance carrying this load. This man on this frame. And perhaps they walked around the house. And they might have hid in the windows.

And said, is there a way we can climb in this window here. Or this or that. To see is there any other way we can get into this place. And yet the place was packed.

[6 : 57] There was a large number of people. It seemed like there was no way to get inside.

Through this dense crowd. This thick crowd. The doorway was jammed with people. Nobody moved. Even though there's a man here in heaven's need.

People were standing in the doorway. Just blocking the way. It's as if they were blocking a miracle from someone. As much as they wanted to be there for themselves.

What would these four men do? Perhaps going through their minds. It might have been. A thought might have been. It's just too hard.

It's just too hard. They might as well give up and go home. There's no way they can get closer to this. We can feel like that, can't we?

When obstacles come. It's as if when something blocks our access to God. We can ask the question, what's blocking our blessings?

[7 : 58] What's blocking our blessings? Breaking up. What's stopping them? Breaking up. They could have turned away because the crowd was there.

They could have made an excuse. They could have just given up. But no. They would overcome the opposition. They were willing to bear the cost of even tearing up the room.

This was a pretty radical move, wasn't it? They didn't give up. They had courage. They had determination. Their faith was not a faith that could be easily deterred.

That's the kind of faith that the Lord wants us to have, isn't it? That we'll keep on keeping on. So they took the sick man. They saw there's no way in through a door or window if there was such. They went up the steps, you'd imagine, that were walking up the side to get access onto the roof. Then they started to rip open the roof, tearing it with their bare hands, you could imagine.

[9 : 00] But they tore the pieces off the roof. They were desperate. Nothing would stop them from getting to Jesus. They'd taken their rent to Jesus.

They turned their obstacle into an opportunity. This was something really quite unorthodox, wasn't it? Quite out of the box. Something really disruptive and bizarre.

Now, a first century home in Palestine was such that it had a flat roof. And people would sometimes spend time on their roofs.

And perhaps lounge on their roofs or whatever they might do depending on what the season was. But it was a place that was like a flat roof.

And I'm given to understand the same hard stone tiles that could be removed. Now, these roof tiles would have been covered with sod or dirt as a kind of insulation.

[10 : 04] So, it would have been quite a disruption even though those tiles could have been replaced once. But you can imagine what a disruption could have been for the householder.

And here was this house that was filled with people. Imagine what it would have been like when these men started to dig away at this roof. They'd dig away at the sod, the dirt, the materials, to tear it away.

And so they went to this extra effort to get access. They did this extra work. This was radical. This was unusual procedure, wasn't it? And yet these four men persisted in this to tear it away.

Again, think of it. They might have had the thought, this is too hard, let's quit. They might have thought, what will people think? Tearing the roof off.

We're going to make a spectacle of ourselves. We're going to make fools of ourselves. We're going to make a spectacle of ourselves. But the prime motivation they had. We've got to get our friends to Jesus.

[11:10] We've got to get this man to Jesus. So they tore up the roof. It didn't matter what people did. It didn't matter the discomfort. The cost, naturally, of effort and time.

And of remediating that roof. And they put it back to how it was afterwards. So they tore up the roof. Now imagine you're inside this home. You're inside this house. And there's something a little bit of scratching.

You think there's a fossil in the roof or something. Or you think, oh, what's that? A rat or something. Or you imagine they're sitting in your house. And suddenly, oh, what else just starts to come down? Oh, what's happening? And then you start to see pieces of the ceiling flaking off. And muttering down. And maybe the old feather or twig starts to fall down.

And then you get bigger and bigger and bigger pieces. And then the roof starts to cave in. Above you. What it would have been like for the people inside that house. And they might have started to look up and they were horrified.

[12:12] What's going on? There's some monster up there or something. Or then they started to see someone's eye. And then maybe their face as they hold on bigger and bigger.

And they could see there's a man up there looking down. Imagine if some of that dirt starts to fall. Maybe on the Lord Jesus himself. And on the crowd of people in that room.

And they see the space peering above them. Looking through the hole. Then someone starts to kick a hole in the room. You start to see a foot maybe coming through.

And the hole gets bigger and bigger and bigger. Until then, this bed gets let through the hole. Wow. Now, some have tried to interpret whether this bed might have been let down vertically.

You know, how big was that hole? Whether it was a big hole such that the bed could be let down vertically when he tied onto it. So that then he might have come down vertically face to face with Jesus lying on this bed.

[13:17] But then you imagine it could be possible that a hole was big enough that the bed could be let down horizontally. So it would have been a big hole in such a case. So whatever the case, I wonder what the owner of this house would have thought about this act of vandalism.

That his house is getting damaged. I'm sure that he wouldn't have been impressed about this stranger that suddenly emerged through this hole in his ceiling on a stretch of bed.

On some contraption of a bed. Imagine the man himself lying down on some kind of mats with perhaps ropes attached.

Or maybe just let down on a hole in the corners of the sheet to load the load could catch him and bring him safely to the ground. Imagine him there maybe dangling precariously.

He might be thinking, I wish my friends had given up rather than put me through this embarrassment. What's stopping you from coming to Jesus?

[14:22] What's stopping people from coming to Jesus? What's stopping us from getting people to Jesus? Maybe we need to resort to some extreme measures.

Extreme measures. Like someone has put it, when the devil blocks the door, go through the roof. Surely no decent person would think of breaking open someone else's roof.

It was strange. It was unexpected. It was out of the ordinary. Where does this man end up? He was let down through the roof it says.

And the parallel account of Luke 5 verse 19. It says that he was let down into the midst before Jesus. Let down into the midst before Jesus.

Right there. He came right down. Right at the right place. At the right time. With the right person. The Lord Jesus right there. The one that he wanted to get to.

[15:25] The one that his friends wanted to get him to. And these men wanted to get him there despite the difficulties. Despite the crowd. Despite all the reasons why it was too hard. And they did.

They got him there right in that room. Right in the midst. In the midst of the crowd. And walking to Jesus. And what is hindering us?

That we need to remove. To get out of the way. So that we can come to Jesus. So that we can. Invite others. And give others that encounter with the Lord Jesus.

Now if we have a friend. The best thing that we can do for our friend. Is just what we can do. Is that right? If we have a friend. If we have someone we love and care about.

The very best thing that we can do. Is to get them to Jesus. Introduce them to Jesus. May they have an encounter with him. People were watching.

[16:25] They were standing. Aghast. This was shocking. This was just. Not the dumb thing. This was damaging someone's home. This was revolutionary.

But these men went to work. It didn't matter. That perhaps they thought they were a bit odd. Odd boys. People say that about you don't they?

About me? I know they say it about me. I know about you. When you start to talk about Jesus.

When you start to tell people about your faith. When you start to reach out. I know they say it about me.

About men. What an oddball. Yeah. They might do their signs as well. You know. That's what people can say about Christians. About those who are born again.

When they want to share their good news. The gospel. The blessed message. And yet it's the best thing we can do. For anyone who is our friend. So these men.

[17:22] They went to work. They were moved to action. And they were willing to put themselves out. They were putting themselves out. They put time into this. They put labor. They put energy. They put their resources.

And cost likely. Remediating that. Really putting it back to how it should have been. Taking the trouble. To take their friend. To Jesus. Do we do that? Do we take the trouble?

Do we put the effort in? Do we go to the expense that it might incur us? That we can care enough. Put ourselves out. To step out of the comfort zone.

And to break through the roof as it were. These men were willing to inconvenience themselves.

Verse 5. When Jesus saw their faith. He sat under the sick of the palsy.

Son. Thy sins be forgiven thee. These four men. He brought him there. Believed the Lord Jesus.

They showed their love to their friend. They carried him to the Lord Jesus.

[18:18] And this friend could do little for them. Here he was. A paralytic. He was sick of the palsy. He had some limit. Limitations to his movement.

Such that perhaps he was. I don't know the extent of his paralysis. But certainly he was. What some would have considered in those days. Perhaps.

A hopeless case. Right in one. Don't even care about it. He's a hopeless case. He's a lost cause. Don't waste your time. On such a one as this.

Everyone said. Oh he's just a beggar. He's one of them. He's one of them. He's not wasting time on them. But these four men. Had faith.

These four men. That loved and cared. And put themselves out. Had the perseverance. To get this man to Jesus. Despite all the obstacles. Despite all the reasons. Why not? Despite all the reasons.

[19:15] Why it was too hard. They had the faith. That the Lord Jesus. Could heal them. So notice now. The Lord took. Notice of the faith. Of their faith.

Of the faith. Of the faith of the paralyzed man. Perhaps. Certainly he mentioned the faith. Of the four friends. Now as someone has put it.

Again to picture this story. These four men. Had gone through a lot of trouble. To see their friend. Heal. Of his paralysis. And so now they hear the teacher say.

The teacher only. Talks about forgiving his sins. We can imagine him shouting. No. He's paralyzed. We brought him here to walk. Wait a minute.

But the Lord Jesus says. Son. Thy sins. Be forgiven thee. So. The Lord Jesus hearing you. That the man's real need. For salvation.

[20:15] The man's real need. His greatest need. It wasn't the paralysis. That's secondary. As someone's. Described it. What good is it. That.

If this man. Two whole legs. And walked. Right into hell. With him. The healing was secondary. To. That which was the primary.

Need. His salvation. So here is this paralyzed man. He's paralyzed. He can't walk. He can't do anything. He doesn't do anything. And he doesn't say anything.

You know. There's nothing we can do. He was this man. He was helpless. Helpless. Helpless. He can't do anything. He doesn't do anything.

And he doesn't say anything. But the real problem was his sin. That was his problem. And his greatest need. His essential need.

[21 : 10] Really. His greatest need. Man's greatest need. Man's greatest need. His salvation. His salvation. It's the same for everyone. It's the same message. This is our clear mission. To take them. To Jesus.

To take them. To Jesus. To bring them. Bring them to Jesus. Will we be like these four men? Will we be like these four? Will we be like these four men? How much do you really believe?

How much do you care for lost? How much do we care? How do we show that we care? for those who are spiritually paralyzed, helpless, hopeless cases.

Some would say, write them off. They're on the scrap people ready. God can't fix them. They're too far gone. God says to go to the uttermost.

Some have said, go to the gutter most. Go to the worst, the furthest. The most sinful. No one's too far. The word says, the Lord's arm is not shortened.

[22 : 13] Yet it cannot save. His ear is not heavy that he can't hear. So they put their faith into action. These four men, the Lord Jesus saw their faith.

They're not named now. They're not named. In the scriptures we see names of men and women of faith. These four didn't even get their name mentioned.

Yet the Lord Jesus saw their faith. Amen. He saw their faith. They did not get any praise or any light up in the hall of faith.

But they had faith. Jesus saw their faith. And they did that simple, practical measure of bringing the man to Jesus.

They simply did what they could to get them to Jesus. And they put their faith into action. The Lord Jesus saw their faith. He commended their faith. He rewarded their faith.

[23 : 13] He saw their determination. They had faith in who the Lord Jesus was and what he could do. We can see, can't we? In who the Lord Jesus is and in what he can do.

They recognized his authority. They recognized his authority. They believed in him. And the faith that they evidenced, the faith that the Lord Jesus saw in them, their faith drove them into action. They showed that they trusted him. This was not just a token faith. This wasn't just a claim of faith. There was faith in action. Now we see verse 6, a reaction from the Pharisees. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts.

Now the Pharisees opposed the Lord Jesus. They resisted him. They hated him. Imagine them as these prim and proper people looking at the roof getting broken into.

[24 : 18] And what a shocking, odd sign it was. And they would have probably resented the intrusion of this paralytic, disturbing their time of being able to pick up with the Lord Jesus.

And then seeing this crippled man. What's he coming in here for? But even more so, they resented the Lord Jesus. They resented what Jesus said to him. And the Lord knew their hearts.

We read verse 7. Now this is what they were thinking. Why did this man thus speak blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God only? Now the Pharisees had sound doctrine.

By and large they, certainly in part here, they had sound doctrine. Who can forgive sins but God only? Yes. And he did.

And he did. Because Jesus is God. He is God. Only God can forgive sins. Yes. And he did. And he does.

[25 : 16] Verse 8. And when, immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

So the Lord Jesus perceived it in his spirit. And it says how he tries the reins of the heart. He can know the intents of our heart. The Lord Jesus has this x-ray vision that he can see the very core of our being.

And see what our heart is saying, what our spirit is saying. And he saw how they were reasoning in themselves. The Lord Jesus knew them through and through. And what they were thinking.

Because he's God. He's God. Verse 9. Whether it is 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.

What's easier? Verse 10. But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine own house.

[26 : 26] He says, so you know that the Son of Man hath power on earth. So that you know I have the authority. So that you know I've got the authority, the power, to command and to extend forgiveness and to deliver forgiveness.

I say unto thee, he said unto the man, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk. And go thy way into thine own house. So when the Lord Jesus saves us, he sets us on our own two feet.

And he says, take up your bed and walk. And he doesn't get the man to give the bed to the friends. He gets him moving. He gets him walking. Go thy way. And go into thine own house, it says.

I think it might be in the other account in Luke 5. And there's some wordy.

[27 : 38] But it's got the sense of walk and keep on walking. That sense of walk and keep on walking. And when the Lord Jesus ministers to this man and sets him free from his affliction, he sets him on his course and says, go thy way.

Luke 5.25 it says, of the man. And immediately he rose up before him and took up that whereon he lay and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

Glorifying God. So here was this man. This man left that room much differently than what he came into that room. How he came into that room.

He came with infirmities and he left completely restored and healed. He came with infirmities. He came with no hope.

But he left with complete victory. He came with questions. But he left with the solution. He came with faith. And he did not leave disappointed. A healed man was filled with joy.

[28 : 45] He praised God. He departed to his own house. Luke 5.25 glorifying God. God got the glory. And verse 12 of Mark's account.

Mark 12. Mark 2.12 it says, And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all. In so much that they were all amazed. And glorified God.

Saying, we have never saw it on this fashion. They were all amazed and glorified God. He went to his own house glorifying God.

We never saw it on this fashion. It was amazing. People were saying, we've never seen anything like this before. We've never seen such a thing. This is astonishing.

It's amazing. Luke 5.26. The parallel account says that they were all amazed. And they glorified God. And they were filled with fear. Saying, we have seen strange things.

[29 : 49] They were filled with fear. We have seen strange things. This is weird. This is really weird.

This is really strange. The city had never seen anything like this before. It's interesting, the reaction, isn't it?

The reaction of the Pharisees. The reaction of the crowd. The reaction of the field man. It says, they were all amazed. And they glorified God. And they filled with fear.

It was sensitive. This is a God. This is awesome. This is awe-inspiring. And sometimes, in some circles, they use this word, awesome. And they kind of, there's a throwaway line.

And they kind of, they cheapen it, don't they? This is awesome. This is a big meeting with all this grass in the town. But this is awesome, isn't it? Awesome. Awe-inspiring.

[30 : 51] This creates awe. This fills us with awe. With a wonder. With a fear of God. God is at work. God has done something here. So the city had never seen anything like this before.

And what they did was radical. It was a strange thing. It was crazy. It was urgent. They could have maybe gone and seen Jesus another day. And the crowd wasn't so thick.

But it was urgent. They didn't want to wait another day. They didn't want to wait another hour. Until maybe he finished his sermon and started to move on. They could have grabbed him when it was a more convenient time. It was urgent.

It was urgent. And friends, the work of reaching and bringing people to the Lord Jesus is urgent. It is urgent. He says, compel them to come in at my house, may we go.

There's an urgency. It was unconventional. Sometimes we've got to do some unconventional things. There are some things that the world might mock us for. Some have done open-air preaching, as I have done.

[31 : 53] And there's different ways of boldly, in the marketplace, doing things that the world would market us to do.

Some people in the crowd were just standing in the way.

Some people in the crowd were just standing in the way. they were kind of obstructing they were just bystanders I mean they were there to hear Jesus to maybe get something for themselves but they thought nothing of this man they thought nothing of this man who wanted to get into the house they were just standing in the way as a roadblock an obstacle will we be like the poor men or will we just stand back in the crowd and get in the way it's a question so as someone has kind of pictured it two responses we've got it can be a bringer or a blocker with evangelism as a church when we see someone who's got an evident need of Christ we see a newcomer we see one sitting on their own a big bringer that's not getting away that's not giving any reason to say oh that church is a bit cold oh that church is a bit standoffish a bit clicky clicky when the sun is calm but it's almost like that getting away come on bringing it in pushing it out getting in the way like the crowd that door friends let's be very careful

I'll just consider it imperative to have that time for men an effective ministry can mean doing what seems unusual and certainly it means stepping out of our comfort zone it wasn't convenient for these poor men to do what they did you know I'd imagine a lot of the front page news poor men tear up man's house you know smashing the roof down causing a public nuisance you know probably a criminal offence I'd imagine but they could have got in big trouble I don't know I'm being imaginative to you but you can imagine it wasn't not naturally it wasn't a dumb thing to go into someone's house through the roof breaking an entry who knows what it could be called they were tearing the roof out but they were reaching out reaching out to the processes they tore that roof off their motive their their heart was to reach out and so let us extreme measures if need be the real miracle in this account was the man having his sins forgiven that was the real miracle walking away was the secondary miracle now the devil may block your door they could go through the roof they could be you could think of that in other ways other than solving in other ways other than reaching out to people that consistency in faith the Lord Jesus saw their faith they weren't put off by the crowd they weren't put off by the fact that it was difficult they weren't put off by the fact that it would have been easier not to do what they did but they were persistent their faith was unstoppable and so should ours be such that if the devil blocks the door go in through the roof find a way to do something that God has brought your heart

God can make a way where there is no way and God can work it out when it seems like there's no way it's just impossible and you feel like taking the bat and ball and going home that God can make a way persistent faith have that faith that these men have God can make a way God can work it out and the end result is that he will be glorified he will be glorified God gets glorified as we sing they glorified God they're all amazed and they glorified God we never saw it in this fashion we don't remember that day as we remember that day in two gospel accounts we sing this record of these poor unknown men we've never seen anything in this fashion extreme measures the people of God has been taught in closing to consider when obstacles come to persevere persevere press through break through the roof if you have to our efforts should not be interred and face obstacles we must face them we have our faith that God will make a way

[37 : 43] God will make a way and he will be glorified for those who are in the world and