

Roof Breaking Faith

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[0:00] Mark chapter 2 verse 1. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was.

And when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

But there were certain of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, Why did this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only? And 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?

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? 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 house.

And immediately he arose, took up the bed and went forth before them all, insomuch that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

[1:49] Firstly, we see the Lord Jesus creates faith. First one says, Jesus was in the house. Jesus is in the house tonight. Amen?

Jesus is here. The Lord Jesus is here. And his word is here. You can be sure that something is going to happen when the Lord Jesus is with us in the house.

And it's exciting for us to know that he is surely with us now, this very moment. By faith, he is here now in this place, in this house.

So the house is packed. It's jam-packed. If we could picture it. People everywhere. It's very exciting because the Lord Jesus is here.

And everybody wants to come to hear his word, to hear his preaching, his teaching. And it's an amazing thing. It ought to be exciting when we come into the house of God.

[2:43] When we come as a gathering of God's people. Whatever place it may be. But wherever that house is, to know that he is here. And we see in this occasion that people are flocking to hear the word of God.

And what a wonderful thing it is to see great numbers of people to come, to crowd together, to hear the word of God. We ought to come to church with that kind of expectancy. That Jesus is here.

His word is here. And we come hungry, hungering for it. Expecting God to do something. We see these people that came represent souls. Let's have people on our hearts to see people for who they are.

That every individual person is a living soul. And is precious. And to have that thought of the people that we should have on our heart. We see when Jesus was in the house.

What did he do? It says that he preached the word unto them. He taught the people. And we have the Lord Jesus' word right here. In our hands. The very precious word of God.

[3:48] We have the Lord Jesus' words in front of us. In black and white. And faith cometh by hearing. It says. God brings faith by the hearing of his word. And the hearing by the word of God.

So we picture this scene here. As you can imagine. Of sorts. As far as we can picture it. This house in Capernaum. We see that this house where the people came.

Of course the houses as they had them built then. Were rather simple constructions. With some kind of thatched or branches type ceiling.

Some kind of roof made of palm branches or mud. and perhaps tile on top, this kind of muddy kind of mud brick kind of structure. And it was just a simple shape, four walls, you could imagine.

And we see the people that they would come, they heard the word and they received the word.

They received what the Lord Jesus was saying. And we see that the Lord Jesus creates faith.

[4:50] The word creates faith. It says that Jesus creates faith in the human heart. And the word is mixed together with faith. The Bible talks about how the word of God, God makes this mixture of the faith and the word.

And it's mixed together, as it were, in the human heart. The mixing of his word and our faith. And it's mixed together. And something happens when that happens.

And we see the word brings a miracle here of life and salvation in this time where this man, this paralytic man, is touched physically, but even more so, importantly, that he's touched spiritually. And we see faith arise in this man. Faith in the name of Jesus. Faith in Christ. And it's still the same. It's still true today for us in this 21st century that when the Lord Jesus gets on the scene, that he will prompt and create faith.

He will stir that reaction. He will cause that response. Faith is excited. It's created. And we see the faith here that it was active faith. It was desperate faith.

[5:59] It was reckless faith. Some would have viewed the goings-on here of these people as mad, crazy people. They could not be restrained. They could not be held back.

And if you can picture it, this house that is full and the people can't get in, this throng, this press, this crush of people rushing together.

And these four men come and they can't get in. They had their friend there. They were carrying this man, this helpless man, carrying him to the place where the Word of God was, where the Lord Jesus was, but they can't get in.

Now, what a sad thing it would have been. And they would have felt maybe turned away. They just couldn't get in. They couldn't push through. There was just too many crowding the doorway.

And then suddenly there's this noise, this rustle, and the debris starts falling down on the crowd. And people start to get startled and worried about this.

[7:00] Verse 4, it reads that they broke up the roof. They broke up the roof. Now, that's pretty radical, isn't it? I don't know if you'd take kindly to that if it was your house and people started to wreck the roof.

They smashed the roof. They were so moved. These people were so moved to get this man to the Lord Jesus that they destroyed the roof.

And they weren't moved by the obstacles that faced them. Now, they could have turned away when the crowd crowded them out. They could have turned away and thought, oh, it's not going to happen today.

But no, they said this man must be taken to Jesus. We must take this man to Jesus. And these people knew that it was the Lord Jesus who could meet that man's need.

He needed Jesus. They just had to get the man to the Lord Jesus. Now, the easy way would have been for these men to say, look, it's too hard. You know, this is just too difficult.

[8:01] It's not convenient. Look, I'm busy. I'm not going to wait until the crowd dissipates to get to the Lord Jesus. I'll just go home and try another time.

They could have thought, I'm not going to take any risks, any chances. You know, it's a dangerous thing to start breaking someone's roof and tearing it apart. I could get injured. You know, I could get some splinters.

We could get hurt trying to climb through this roof, let alone trying to get the man through this roof. And so they could have thought, let's leave it for some other convenient time. After all, it wasn't dignified.

It wasn't logical. It wasn't comfortable, that's for sure. And imagine if you were inside the house, the bits of the roof starting to fall down, get all over your clothes, in your hair, the bits of the roof falling down, and maybe some people might have started complaining.

This is an outrage. This is preposterous. This is unacceptable, tearing up this roof and disturbing our quiet little church meeting and complaining about all the disruption that was going on.

[9:05] What's happening? This is strange. And they would have looked up. Maybe they've got some sawdust in their eyes, you know, looking up. What's happening here? This is crazy. And the first thing they would see then is this hand ripping up the branches and the mud and the tile.

You know, maybe a hand started to, what's that? You know, the hand's coming down out of the ceiling, ripping up the roof, and then there's this head pokes through this hole, and then there's four heads poking through the hole.

And then there's this man on a stretcher. This was outrageous. This was totally strange stuff. And then here comes this man, lowered down, out of the roof. It was an amazing sight, wouldn't it? A shocking sight. People would have been disturbed by this, especially the owner of the house. You know, how's my insurance going to pay for this? Now, sometimes it's hard for people to come to the Lord Jesus, isn't it?

It might upset people. It might upset their friends or their lifestyle. It might mean something quite unusual for someone to trust Christ, you know.

[10:06] I was talking with someone lately who said they joined a church like ours, and someone said, they said to this lady, oh, you've joined a cult. And that's what people can think, isn't it?

When you become a Christian, oh, you've joined some kind of cult. You know, one of those Jesus weirdos. You know, that is something that's outrageous to the world, looking on. And so, and we know that for ourselves.

When you become a believer in Christ, it could mean persecution or embarrassment. You know, your neighbours, your relatives maybe, won't want to know you anymore. But yet, this is what happened here with this man, that these four men were driven to action because they absolutely had to get this man to the Lord Jesus.

There was no ifs or buts. They just had to get him to Christ. And really, the man's biggest need was not so much that he was a paralytic, but really, truly, the man's biggest need, and it's the biggest need for every one of us, is salvation.

That's the biggest need. And we see verse 4, they could not get him nigh unto Jesus. They could not get him nigh. He couldn't get close. And that would have been so easy just to withdraw, just to give up.

[11:22] What about you and me? How's our faith? Are we moved to reach out as the ones that should be introducing others to Christ? Are we active in our faith? Are we wanting to bring other people to the Lord Jesus?

We see for these four evangelists, I don't know if they were Mark, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but these four men, nothing could stop these men. They wanted to get this man to the Lord Jesus. And nothing would stop them. Nothing. Not even the roof. What about you and me? Have we got that same heart that nothing would stop us from introducing the people we care about to the Saviour?

It really should be the same heart, shouldn't it? Are we willing to do damage to the gates of hell to see a loved one reached? Are we ready to take a risk and take a stand?

Are we able to break through all the barriers that would block the way for someone to come to Christ? Think of what are the obstacles that we can have. Sometimes it's our own reluctance, isn't it?

[12:24] Our own sense of, will that be embarrassing for me to actually speak up and say, do you know the Lord Jesus? In fact, just this last week I was actually approached by another believer from another church in a car park.

And he said, do you know the Lord? And he just came up to me and said, it was great to see another believer actively witnessing for Christ in such a public way. But yeah, it's so easy to be the opposite, isn't it?

It's easy to be reluctant, to be reticent, to kind of step back and hide. But rather let us break through. Let's be like these four men. We need the Lord Jesus ourselves.

Our world needs Jesus. Our friends and family, the people we know. We need to give them Christ. We need to give them his word. We need them to hear about him and to take action. So we see, firstly, that the Lord Jesus creates faith. And secondly, we see, verse 5, the Lord Jesus sees faith.

[13:32] He sees it. Verse 5, it says, Notice that the Lord Jesus saw their faith.

It was demonstrated. It was evident. It was something that could be seen. The Lord God honours faith and he responds to faith. And God is looking for faith.

He tells us when he comes, will he find faith on the earth? It's almost as if he's expecting there to not be much when he comes. Now, faith is a precious commodity.

It's a precious, valuable truth, isn't it? A valuable component, an essential element, a precious commodity.

Where are the believers? Where are those who are truly believers in Christ? The ones who have faith. Faith will be seen. Faith will be seen. He saw their faith. It will be evident.

[14:34] It will be demonstrated. It was a group of people with faith. These four crazies on the roof. He saw their faith. He saw they had faith. In a way, you could see how it pictures the church of how we should be.

We should be willing to be the crazies on the roof, as it were. That we should be the people of faith. That he saw their faith. There's something that they were doing that demonstrated they were believers.

They believed. We need to be likewise a people who believe our God. Who believe the Lord Jesus. And show it. That we believe so much that the Lord Jesus can see our faith.

That Jesus can see that we're serious about getting people unto him. That the Lord Jesus can see. It's true. And when we as a church get concerned.

When we believe the book enough to actually say, yes, I believe it enough to tell others about this saviour. When we as a church get concerned enough. When we take action. When we take risks.

[15:32] When we prepare to go the whole hog. Even doing something a bit. Out there. When he looks at us. Does he see our faith? Or does he see our unbelief?

It's a big question, isn't it? When the Lord Jesus looks in your direction. Does he see one who's interested in bringing people to the saviour? Or not?

When his eyes glance in your direction. Can he see that you care for souls? That you are motivated by his message. That you're concerned for the Christless ones.

Some have reflected how this account demonstrates active evangelism. I know there's some churches that have related how this church could even correspond with bus ministry.

That having a bus that goes out inviting people. Bringing people. Who would otherwise not be able to come. They're bringing people to where the Lord Jesus is honoured.

[16:37] Where the Lord Jesus' word is being delivered. And that's why as a church we believe in having a bus ministry. Some would think, well it's costly. You've got to register it.

Put tyres on it. Put fuel in it. You know, fix everything that goes wrong with it. And it'd be easier not to have a bus ministry, wouldn't it? It's probably not something that's convenient or comfortable.

But if it's bringing people to the Lord Jesus, then it's worth it, isn't it? If it's bringing people to him, to hear his word. Are we the church in action? We can be caring enough to pay the price, to take a risk.

We see there's many ministries. I know the labourers in the Sunday school. We see the youth ministry, the different activities of the church. There's a cost to it. There's an expending of effort.

There's an inconvenience to it. Another meeting. But yet, it's important because it's about souls. And the Lord Jesus, as he saw their faith, he saw the unbelief of the religious ones.

[17:44] He saw it into their hearts. And he saw some were kind of standing off and they were not believing that the Lord Jesus had the authority to forgive sins.

They were disbelieving. And it says that he saw their hearts. He saw their unbelieving hearts. So we see the Lord Jesus, he creates faith.

He sees faith. Thirdly, we see that the Lord Jesus honours faith. He honours your faith. He responds to your faith. Notice that it was the Lord Jesus here.

It was not so much the man's healing that was the priority. He first addressed the first and essential need of forgiveness. He saw the man's need to be forgiven.

Look at the words the Lord Jesus says, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. What the greater matter was, was the forgiveness of his sin. Now we see some well-meaning would emphasise healing today.

[18:47] Put big banners up saying signs and wonders and healing. But really the Lord Jesus, that wasn't the emphasis, was not that. It was the forgiveness. It was salvation. And that's the essential thing.

That's what is the most critical need for every man, woman and child. The Lord Jesus was for this. This was great. This need of spiritual healing was much more vital.

And it's the same for us as a church. We could get extended. We could get stretched such that we're offering programs for this and programs for that.

And that can be a trap of a church too, where they might run programs for social means. Now there's times past where we have had soup kitchens as a kind of outreach of the church. We're not against that if someone wants to take on that ministry.

But it's like sometimes you're going to offer this, this and this. And you're spreading yourself too thin. And you're getting away from the essential, the spiritual needs, which are the most essential.

[19:47] We're here for people's spiritual needs as the essential. If we can help them with social needs, with food, then we can do that too. But some churches get to the point where it's the social gospel.

And they're all about running welfare programs and social programs and things that the worldly organizations could offer just as well.

And it's taking away from that evangelistic effort. And we see that, for example, as we know, the Salvation Army. At one time it had a great salvation emphasis where they were out on the streets open air preaching.

And they were preaching and declaring the gospel forthrightly in the public spaces. And yet now they're just jangling cans to take money to do things that really the world could do that.

The world could probably do a better job of that. I know looking back, I've had the experience myself. As a layman in a remote Queensland country town, I was in the Gideon Society at the time, helping give out Gideon New Testaments.

[20:58] And they did a good work, I thought, at the time. And we thought, well, there's a Salvation Army homeless shelter here. And what a great opportunity to give them some New Testaments that they can give to the people residing in these homeless shelters run by the Salvation Army.

And what a natural, obvious thing that they should want to have some New Testaments to give to these men that they were housing in social need. And yet they said, no, we can't take them because we're not allowed to be religious, basically.

We're not allowed to give people the gospel. We're not allowed to give people the New Testament. And you think, what is the point of that? Honestly, really, isn't it?

I think General Booth would be turning in his grave to think that they can't even give out a New Testament in a Salvation Army program. You know, this is the woeful situation where churches get detoured into social programs at the expense of the evangelistic program.

So what does this story mean for us today? It's saying we must bring all men to the Lord Jesus. We know that he is the one who's ultimately the saviour. He will see fit to save who, trust him.

[22:09] And yet, it's our responsibility to be like the four men on the roof, isn't it? Here was this man. They could see the value of this soul, this one soul. People might have discounted this man.

He was paralysed. He was palsied. Someone who couldn't walk. You know, he had an obvious deformity. Some would discount people who have some physical affliction like that, as if they would think him less than themselves.

And some would not even bother to reach such a one. Friends, there's some who can't help themselves. And we know that's true, isn't it? In our world, they can't do anything.

This man couldn't get on the roof. He couldn't get into the door. He couldn't even walk a foot or two. And so these four took it upon themselves, and they said, it's worth us tearing up this roof to get this man to Jesus.

They were saying, it's worth all the efforts that we can expand. It's worth all the sacrifice. It's worth all the embarrassment and the shame factor for us to do this outlandish thing.

[23:16] To reach this man for Christ. It's worth it all, isn't it? And it's the same for you and me, that we should endeavour to bring people to the Lord Jesus. When you think about it, there's four kinds of people in

our story.

I must confess, I've borrowed some of this material, but it's just so good, I thought you won't mind me copying some elements of this. But as someone has reflected, there's four kinds of people here in this story. Firstly, there's the helpless.

This paralysed man. He had no way of getting to Christ. He was helpless. And it's the same today. There's people paralysed in Elizabeth. There's people paralysed in Adelaide.

They're paralysed by sin, by ignorance, by whatever addiction they have. They're paralysed. They're confined. They're restrained.

They've got no way to get to Jesus. They're blinded in their minds. The only way they can get to the Lord Jesus, if someone brings them to the Lord Jesus. They're helpless. Someone's got to bring them.

[24:16] Think of it for yourself. Before you knew Christ, you were helpless. Think of the helpless, friends. Secondly, we see the hinderers. There were some that were at the door.

You know, they could have made way. Surely they could have made way for this man who needed to be brought in. And there were hinderers there. They were standing by the door. Spectators. Onlookers. Listeners. But in a way, they were kind of selfish. Not doing anything to help. They were hinderers. The people had to go through the roof because of these hinderers.

They couldn't get around them. They were making it hard. Doing nothing to help the situation. What about you and me? Are we in the hinderers? Not doing anything. Maybe getting in the way. Maybe not joining the evangelistic effort when we could.

Not doing anything to get people to the saviour. The hinderers. Another group is the hellish, if you like. The tough crowd. Some who got upset because they were bringing people in.

[25:20] They were criticising. These religious ones. They were saying, Look, this is ridiculous. This is outrageous. He can't forgive sins. They were criticising.

They were unbelieving. They were rejecting the saviour. They were really the hellish crowd. Religious. But of the devil, really.

They were the devil's crowd. Against. Against the whole idea. The concept. Against the concept of evangelism. And then we see the helpers.

These four men. The helpers. The people who went out and brought the man to Jesus. The helpers. These were commended men. These men, they cared enough to put themselves out. To climb on the roof, for goodness sake. To help a man who couldn't help himself. These men, they carried this man. Paralysed. You know, would have taken strain and effort. What could they do?

[26:12] They broke in. It says when Jesus saw their faith. Now faith is not something just said. It's done. Faith without works is dead. We can see this man.

This story shows how you are to do all that you can. Anything. If it's not illegal or immoral. To get people to the Lord Jesus. Get people to him.

Amen. So think about these four men. Someone has pictured, if you could imagine, what these four men are like. And they've used four C's. So, just think about these four men.

First, we've got Mr. Compassion. Mr. Compassion. He had sensitivity. He'd seen the crippled man. Walking by. And thought, that's so sad. We've got to do something about this.

This man, he's crippled. He needs help. He had compassion. Have compassion. Brother, sister, have compassion. Oh, the Lord Jesus, as he beheld the city, he had compassion. And he wept over it.

[27:08] Let's have compassion. Let's not get a hard heart. A cold heart. You can imagine Mr. Compassion. He wept. Every time he looked at that fellow, he was moved with compassion.

It says, it takes compassion to be a witness, doesn't it? A love for souls. Now, let me quote a famous movie actor who said this. Anything can happen to anybody.

In the last movie I did, Above Suspicion, I played a paraplegic. I went to a rehab centre and I worked with the people there so I could simulate being a paraplegic.

And every day I would get back in my car and drive away and go, thank God that's not me. And I remember the smugness of that. As if I were privileged in a way.

And seven months later, I was in this condition. The point is, we are all one great family and any one of us can get hurt at any moment. We should never walk by somebody who's in a wheelchair and be afraid of them or think of them as a stranger.

[28:12] It could be us. It could be us. In fact, it is. So said Christopher Reeve. The man who played Superman. I'm not encouraging watching a worldly movie but I'm just making the point that Christopher Reeve, as he played a paraplegic in one movie and thought how smug and how he was so privileged and yet only months later he became a paraplegic in a wheelchair himself.

You know, friends, there's a man in a wheelchair in our church who at one time, he was a very able man but he had a car accident. His name's Lyle. He was a computer programmer and he's still got a mind, very alert and intelligent.

It's just he's got that affliction now that he's in a wheelchair and so we need to realise, yeah, that could be me one day. That could be me. I know when I worked in disability at one time too, the director always had that heart that, yeah, it only takes one little car accident and I could be just like these brain injured clients that we serve and it's just having that heart, that mind, isn't it?

Yeah. Absolutely. Just got to have that heart. So be like Mr Compassion. You know, it's sympathy, isn't it? That says I'm sorry but compassion says I'll help.

Compassion is more than sympathy. It says I'm actually going to help and that's what Mr Compassion had. He thought, yeah, I'm going to help this man and then we see another man of the four is Mr Confidence.

[29:41] He had faith that Christ was the one to take the man to. We can do it. He was confident. Yeah, we can take this man to Christ. I don't know how but we can do it.

We can do all things through Christ. It's a scriptural thing, isn't it? So this man, Mr Confidence, he was a fireball. We can do it. Yes, we can. We can do it. Let's do it.

Believe God that we can. It takes faith to trust in Christ and to reach out for him. We must make sure that it's faith in Christ that is our trust.

There's a time where there was a time where some skydivers were parachuting out of a plane and filming themselves and there was one who opened his chute and then the picture went berserk because the cameraman had fallen to his death.

He jumped out of the plane without his parachute and he thought he was having a great wow of a time taking the pictures of the other guys with their parachutes opening and then when he went to reach for his ripcord he realised that he was free falling without a parachute.

[30:55] Nothing could save him because his faith was in a parachute that he never buckled on and it's the same for you and me. We can have faith. We can have airy fairy faith but our faith must be in Christ.

It must be assuredly in Christ. Only faith in Christ can save you. Otherwise you're jumping out of a plane without a parachute. So there's a confidence but it's a confidence that's in Christ.

It's a sure confidence in Christ. So we've seen what we've seen so far. Mr Compassion cared about this man. We've seen Mr Confident. Yes we can.

We can do something. We can get through this. Then we see a third man was Mr Courage. He's the one that says let's do something and it took a great deal of courage. It takes courage to step out of the shadows and to reach out and say you need Christ.

It takes courage doesn't it? For any one of us. No matter how experienced a Christian you are it always takes courage for you to open your mouth and tell of the Saviour of salvation.

[31:55] And for this man as he broke through the roof it would have taken courage. There was one preacher that saw courage demonstrated by a little boy and he tells the story like this.

He says, There came walking up to me this little lad and he stopped and looked at me with serious determination in his eyes and I stopped speaking as the congregation was quiet as death and he said this.

The little boy said this, You asked me what would I have done if I had been the crowd when Jesus fell under the weight of his cross. And he looked up at the preacher and he said, Please sir, I would have helped him carry it.

This was just a Mexican lad, eight years old, his father was a minor, his mother was an outcast from decent society and the preacher, he says, I've been preaching on Simon of Cyrene and I asked the congregation to determine in their hearts their reaction to that scene.

And little Pedro moved towards me and he said that I would have helped him carry it. And I lifted my arm and I cried, Yes, and if you had helped him to carry his cross, the cruel Roman soldiers would have beaten down on your back with their whips until the blood ran down to your heels.

[33:14] And this young lad said, He never flinched, he said with cool courage, I don't care. I would have helped him carry it just the same. And then two weeks later, the preacher was closing the service and the same little Pedro came up and as he stood at the door, the preacher was greeting people and Pedro came up to him and the preacher patted him on the back and he said, Oh, don't, my back is sore.

And the preacher said, I stood in astonishment. I barely touched his shoulders. And then he showed me his back. He was crisscrossed from his neck to his waist with ugly bleeding sores.

Who did that? He cried in anger. Mother did it. She whipped me because I came to church. Now that little boy had some courage, didn't he? He had some courage to stand for Christ.

We have need of courage today, don't we? Brothers and sisters, we have need of courage. To courage to stand for Christ, even when it's hard, even when we mocked, even when we scorned, to take action for Christ, to let's take courage.

Let's get up on that roof. And he was ready with the others. And then we also see the fourth man, Mr. Creativity, you could say. And he had some God-given brains.

[34:26] He was the ideas man. And this was a novel idea. Now sometimes there's novel ideas. There's novel ways to present the gospel. We're not against new ways, new methods.

As long as the message is the same, as long as the message is not compromised, we can present it in different ways, through different channels. We've got to be willing to go through the roof sometimes, to do something a bit radical.

And here he plans, he works the detail out, he maps out who, when and how. And these four men, they get together. Think about these four men. Think about, brothers and sisters, how we can be co-laborers.

We can be co-workers. We can be laborers together with God. That's what these four men were, wasn't it? And they were bringing this man to Jesus. And how we can likewise have that love that will find a way, will find a way to reach, even those that, some would count, they're the unreachable. I like how some say, that we should reach to the gutter most. The gutter most. No one is too low. No one is too far in sin, that they cannot be reached. Mind you, do you have questions about some?

[35:33] You think they're too far gone, they're beyond redemption. But no, while they've got breath, they have, they still have the opportunity, don't they? They still have that capacity.

As much as we might think, they're beyond saving. That his blood avails. Will we reach the lost? At all costs. There was costs here.

Imagine, this roof would have had to be replaced. There was time, there was cost. You'd think, this is reason why you wouldn't even bother. Don't even bother. But this team of men would have taken trouble and effort.

You would expect to fix that roof up again. What about you and me? Do we care about souls? It's worth the cost. That's why we invest in gospel literature.

That's why we've got some marked New Testaments coming. 2,000 of them. Because we want to get the word of God out. It talks about how the word was published. We want to get the word out to souls. And there's a time, there's a cost.

[36:32] Do we care enough to put something out, to put some effort, to do whatever it takes? These four men thought it was worth it for this paralytic man.

that by all means we'd save some. Of course, it's God saving. We're only just the channel. We're only a messenger. That's all. But everything that we do as a church too should be like these four men.

And we should be like a stretcher to get men to Jesus, to get men to the Lord. And that should be the end result of all that we do, that that is the motive, to invite people to Christ.

And we do it together. They had to work together, these four men. They had to agree to work together as a team. And likewise too. We want to have that one goal. We want to have that one mission that we all care about souls so much that we'll want to invest ourselves in that great blessed charge to tell others.

Think of the cost of the roof. It was all worth it. It was all worth it. And we're all part of evangelising, every one of us. Don't think that the evangelism is just the witnessing team or the evangelist you call in every few months.

[37:45] And so we can use every scriptural means. We can use innovation. We can use every left field, even, ideas, just whatever it takes to take the gospel to our world.

And these men, they didn't mind the cost or the difficult circumstances. They didn't deter them. So look at this as we close. what faith they had. It says the Lord Jesus, he saw their faith.

You can have faith. Now some will think, well I've got to, I've got to get a bit more faith before I do something. I've got to get a bit more qualified. The Lord Jesus says, just a little grain, just a little seed as a mustard seed can work wonders, can't it?

It wasn't the, that there had to be some huge amount of faith. Just believe. And the Lord Jesus saw their faith. Friends, the Lord Jesus, what did he do?

He gave forgiveness to this man. Our world, our community, this city, Elizabeth, needs salvation. We need to be the ones to communicate this message.

[38:48] We must tell them. These four men put themselves out to tell, to reach this man. And so the Lord acted on their faith. What about you and me?

Will our faith be so serious and active that we'll press in, that we'll go beyond all the obstacles, all the reasons why not, all the reasons why it's too hard, that we'll discount that.

That we'll even break through the roof as it were, we'll go over and above all the obstacles that would hinder us, even the biggest obstacle is usually looking at us in the mirror, isn't it?

I know, I speak for myself. The biggest problem is the one who's looking at yourself in the mirror, isn't it? And why don't I care enough? Why don't I put myself out?

Why do I just neglect? Why don't I take the pains and efforts that I could take? We see when Jesus is in the house, the Lord Jesus is in the house, that he creates faith, that he'll see the faith, that he will honour the faith, that he'll act on that faith.

[39:55] We'll see the man was healed. Christ gave him forgiveness, he saved him. And we all need Jesus today, don't we?

I know I'm speaking, I suppose, to those that I would expect most would know the Saviour here tonight. But really, if you're not certain of your salvation, it's a blessed assurance that you can have. It's called a blessed assurance. Amen? A blessed assurance. That's one of the songs we sing, isn't it? Not a false assurance, not a false hope, but a God-given hope, a God-given assurance that as you trust Christ, trust Christ, that you can know him.

The one who died on the cross for your sins, rose again from the dead. Your loving Saviour, he beckons to you to come unto him. And so we would urge one and all to come to him, and then having come to him, let's invite others to come.

Let's invite others to come to get closer to him and to take what measures that we can, even if it's putting ourselves out, it's extending ourselves, it's expending ourselves, that we would put ourselves out to tell others to reach out.

[41:15] Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for the example of these four men. We see the compassion, we see the confidence, Lord, we see the courage, and Lord, we see that wonderful grace that you gave to see that man healed and most of all forgiven.

And Lord, we know our world needs the Saviour today. We know your forgiveness is still man's essential need, that we can be saved from our sin and know your saving.

Lord, we thank you. Give us that faith that these men had to tell others, to reach others, Lord, to be your witnesses. Give us the courage, Lord, we pray.

Help us, Lord, to overcome whatever the obstacle is. And especially if it's our self, Lord, we want to nail that self to the cross. We want to nail that man that is the old man that would hinder us, Lord, that nothing would hinder us from being a witness for you.
We praise you, Lord, in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.