

Kev's sermon notes for eGroups

Sunday, April 18, 2021

Elevation Church - Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Pastor: Steven Furtick

Sermon Title: "Unlearning Your Limitations – You Need a New Roof – There are two roofs in Mark 2 – a. The physical roof - to preserve/protect something supposedly important and b. A way-in to confront our limitations – God is a confrontational God - We have to embrace the conflict in order to grow – Don't let the gift become a limitation – Sometimes rules prevent progress – Don't learn lies and then become loyal to them – See the Inner-permission of 1 Cor 2:6-10 – Don't limit things to your senses – Arm yourself with the right people to give you faith – You have one friend that has no limitations."

Elevation Worship

- I am Yours
- Might Get Loud
- Jireh - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mC-zw0zCCtg>
- Here Again – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zflcdBuB7NY>

Scripture for this week:

- Mark 2: 1 – 12: Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man - A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 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!"
- 1 Cor 2: 6-10: God's Wisdom Revealed by the Spirit - 6 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived" — the things God has prepared for those who love him—10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from

God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. 14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness - and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. 15 The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, 16 for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

- Luke 5:20: 17 One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. 18 Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. 19 When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. 20 When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." 21 The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Sermon Title: "Unlearning Your Limitations – You Need a New Roof – There are two roofs in Mark 2 – a. The physical roof - to preserve/protect something supposedly important and b. A way-in to confront our limitations – God is a confrontational God - We have to embrace the conflict in order to grow – Don't let the gift become a limitation – Sometimes rules prevent progress – Don't learn lies and then become loyal to them – See the Inner-permission of 1 Cor 2:6-10 – Don't limit things to your senses – Arm yourself with the right people to give you faith – You have one friend that has no limitations."

- **Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc.**
- **Interested in joining Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in leading an eGroup? See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in attending or leading a watch party: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- Here Comes Church:
 - Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc
 - Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc. When you are isolated, you don't have the benefit of friends to support you. Embrace the power of numbers.
 - Old Church Basement – Forthcoming album release – quote from Going back to the place where we discovered worship for the first time – not a physical place - accessing our first love (within ourselves) – bringing you back to a pure place – absent of self-consciences."
 - Release of "Jireh" from Elevation Church and Maverick City Music – see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mC-zw0zCCtg>
 - Release of "Talk to Jesus – by Elevation Church and Maverick City Music – A testament of family faith – See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXsxw1fRHMA>
 - Release of "Build Your Church" by Elevation Church and Maverick City Music - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8PIYwK7ZFo>

- Recall the testimony of Carolyn from Columbia SC that is a interpreter for the hearing impaired for the Columbia SC campus.
- Pastor Furtick will be interviewing Bishop TD Jakes virtually on Wed. April 21, 2021 at 7PM (EST) as Bishop Jakes launches a new book (the Jimi Hendrix of preaching) – Don't Drop The Mic. This will be broadcasted on the Elevation YouTube channel.
- Opening prayer by Pastor Furtick on Sunday, April 18, 2021: “Worthy is the lamb – He is worthy to receive glory, honor, dominion and power – God, we bless your name in this place – We thank you for your provision and the very essence that resides inside of us – we are the children and we have a seat at your table – and we know our rightful place when it comes to our relationship with our Father – and we do not have to beg, grovel, or feel bad – and we can come in boldly right now into the presence of our God – so we want to use our privilege right now Lord – and use this opportunity that you gave us – and we praise you for your excellent greatness – we want to access what we have in you – just to tell you that you are holy, awesome, and wonderful – we lift you high Lord – in Jesus name we pray amen.
- 2nd Opening prayer by Pastor Furtick on Sunday, April 18, 2021: Let’s do a spiritual exercise together: Let’s do a positive opposite – whatever the devil tries to do to trip you up, do something that makes you stronger – to declare what we want to be – to contradict what we feel in our faith – Has the devil been flooding your mind with things to worry about? So now let’s “spam” the devil – verbally list everything that you have to thank God for – ready – Go. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Lord we offer this time and space – and we offer our hearts to you – do what you want – have your way in our lives - Give God the greatest praise that you can. In Jesus name Amen.
- See Mark 2: 1 to 13.
- Above Jesus - That is a strange phrase you won’t see in the Bible very much – “above Jesus” – He is not above sickness – He is not above shame – He is not above anxiety – He is not above panic attacks – He is not above political parties.
- Ponder this passage for a minute – many of us had read this passage before – the four friends dug a hole in the roof and lowered their friend into the room – as the man is lowered into the room, Jesus tells him your sins are forgiven.
- Focus on vs. 8 in this passage.
- Focus on “We have never seen anything like this!” – and we are going to spend time on this passage today.
- **I want to speak to you today about unlearning your limitations.**
- I mentioned this topic during Easter and I want to do a deeper dive today.
- Here is the saucy title for today’s sermon: “You Need a New Roof.”
- **Limitations are learned – do you know this to be true?**
- For those with children, it is great to see their confidence and swag that they possess.
- It seems that knowledge and wisdom of the scribes in Mark 2 work against them – and the people that experienced a miracle had a strategic advantage – and this is probably why I like the passage and have been preaching it for the last 15 years.

- Within this church I found myself having to do unorthodox things where I had no frame of reference – My dad was a barber and my Granddad was a pastor of a very small church (less than 200 people during Easter). As a youth pastor in SC, I found myself preaching to groups of about 50 at a time.
- **Limitations are learned – by that I mean we don't come into the world knowing what we are not supposed to do – because you're white, because you're black, because your male, because you're female, because your Baptist, because you're Pentecostal, etc. Those things are learned.**
- Recall the story of producing the song "Rattle" – and the feedback was that black people will not like it – and this was wrong.
- In Mark 2, there are a group of people called scribes – and I have been unfair to these people through the years – See vs. 6 – they judged Jesus and therefore I hated them in this passage.
- In the past I have taught this passage in a few ways – one approach was to be like the four men that bring people to Jesus and then I would give everyone an invite card – I also use this passage to explain what it would feel like to be the person on the mat being lowered in from the roof – Show me a scripture where the man agreed to this idea of being dropped from roof? And many of us are put into situations where we didn't exactly sign up for it.
- In my study this week, I felt some sympathy for the scribes mentioned in Mark 2.
- **Physically, the doorway of the room was blocked by the crowds – but that's not all that was doing the blocking – these scribes and teachers of the law were not the ancient equivalent of internet trolls – these people are not unemployed people with nothing better to do then sit in judgment – they fulfilled a specific purpose in the house that day in Capernaum – village of comfort (population of 1,500 people) – where Jesus did 22 of his miracles.**
- Sad side note: When Jesus listed all of his woes in scripture, he lists Capernaum is one of the places that would not repent - despite all that they had seen.
- **The scribes mentioned in Mark 2 were a sort of "correctness committee" – to make sure this popular rabbi was teaching something that was consistent with the laws they gave their life to defend – and I think we need to have a bit more understanding when we read the Scriptures – The scribes had traveled four days to be in Capernaum to listen to Jesus – to make sure the people are not being taught anything that was wrong – and they wanted to make sure that Jesus wasn't running a cult.**
- A Pastor Furtick classic: When I started Elevation Church in my 20s, parents followed their children to Elevation Church – when I asked them why they were here, they stated that they followed their children to church and wanted to make sure I wasn't crazy – and later realized that I was a good kind of crazy – and I thought they were judging me – but in reality they were just protecting something precious to them (their children).
- **In studying Mark 2 this week, there are two roofs - The physical roof - to preserve/protect something supposedly important – the function of the scribes was to preserve something that was very important – why were they threatened by a prophet that would forgive sins – which is an exclusive right of God alone? We first have to understand what they were protecting –**

in order to understand what they were protecting we have to understand where they've been – In Babylon, Gods people had been taken captive – and the scribes were specially trained to record the pronouncements and legal decrees of the events in order to keep a record – however in Babylon the customs were different – it was in Babylon that scribes established the oral tradition of the laws of Moses – so that God's people would not forget who they were – and the scribes were especially suited to do it – because they were trained in recording tradition.

- The only reason that the people knew who they were when they came out of Babylon was because of the scribes – now Jesus comes as the expressed image of God – to show everyone what God is really like – to fulfill the messianic prophecies about him – to save His people from their sin – and the scribes in Mark 2 are asking why does this prophet speak like that? The scribes were not villains – they were perceived to be heroes – protecting the legacy and protecting the identity of God's people – however – here is the problem - the oral tradition became more important than the truth.
- At the same time the scribes are thinking this, the debris is falling from the ceiling – where four rednecks (joking here) have to move through every excuse to bring their friend to Jesus.
- One of the things that Jesus described to us is that God is a confrontational God – Yes God is a comforter – Scripture tells us that God comforts us with comfort - so that we can comfort others in the same manner that God comforts us. Paul also tells us that God comforts the downcast – where God can speak words of encouragement while everyone else is speaking words of condemnation.
- Here is the key point: The same God that comforts the downcast also confronts the dysfunctional – and God loves you too much to leave you in something that is limiting you – and knowing this fact that God is confrontational may violate our perception of him as it was handed down to us – but know that God is confrontational – God will get up in the face of anything that will keep you from being what God wants you to be.
- The key point here is that God will break through any of the beliefs that you have developed about you, him, or others that runs counter to our promise and potential.
- Scripture is clear on this – God is not an “avoiding-conflict” God.
- And many of us will never experience the growth because we will never experience the conflict.
- Call the humorous story of sweat “Reflect” Holly asking for “escalation” during a customer service phone call.
- It's great that we have this nice gentle faith about our lives – but when something really matters to God's heart in our hearts – there comes a time to escalate – there comes a time when people can't do things for you – and we have to go above people and go to the only one that has all authority – and all power – Aren't you glad that God's power does not need people to operate? Aren't you glad that God decides to use you in a certain way? God please get involved before I lose my mind and do something that I probably will regret! God will confront it – God will tell King Pharaoh – God has a mighty hand – God has an outstretched arm – God says that I've seen the misery of my people in Egypt and I am coming down there.

- Not everyone likes this kind of preaching because it's confrontational.
- **When you have an addiction that's robbing you the daylight of your life – you need a confrontational God.**
- Back to Mark 2 – when the confrontation with the scribes is escalating – this is one of five things in the Gospel of Mark showing us the confrontational nature of God.
- **When Jesus is confronting the scribes, Jesus is asked why is he breaking the Sabbath? Jesus is trying to teach them – Sabbath is made for man and man was not made for the Sabbath – and the scribes have things completely out of order – in other words the scribes have turned the gift into a limitation.**
- **When Jesus heals this man on the Sabbath, the only thing the scribes can say is that is the wrong day to do it – the Sabbath was given to people as a gift – but the scribes turned it into a limit – Sidenote: don't let your gift become a limitation – don't let one thing that God gave you one season of your life to protect you – that becomes something that prevents you in the next season of life.**
- Here is an example: We learn to deal with certain people in a particular season because we have to in order to survive. And even when the enemy is gone, we are still swinging at air – The way we see ourselves in certain seasons doesn't apply in other seasons – and God can give you something as a gift in one season – God continues to give us a song about multi-generational faith – and we should not restrict the expression that God wants us to bring – those rules were there for a reason – the scribes were there for a reason; to preserve the identity of His people – however sometimes what was sent to preserve something begins to prevent something – Has this happened in your life?
- **Do you need new rules?**
- **While we're at it ask this question: Who built your roof to begin with? Who set the limit on your life where we say God can do this but no more? Where we hear things like: *"This is what people from your background and your education can do but no more – who put the roof on you that says that you have to be married by 25? Who put the roof on the fact that you can't have virtual church with effective on-line experiences?"***
- **I feel bad for the scribes in Mark 2 – and I have expressed similar levels of doubt as well.**
- **If we've never seen something before then we think it can't be real.**
- **If you've never seen a healthy marriage, how can you know it is real?**
- **When we see something that we don't understand, we don't think it is the image of God.**
- **At the same time Jesus is breaking rules, four men are breaking a roof.**
- **And then I realized that they were two roofs being removed and Mark 2 – one was physical – a roof in Peter's house in Capernaum – Most of the things God did in the world was in a marketplace not in church – and we should not confine God in those areas of our lives that are most comfortable. Not everything that God wants to do is going to be through a preacher – but rather your particular field – don't become loyal to lies – where those lies then become limits – in some cases, better to ask for forgiveness than permission.**

- Side note: Pastor Furtick's advice to his 15 year old son: "I hope I set a good example for you – I hope I have shown you how to treat a woman right – I hope I've shown you how to maneuver through difficult times – I hope I've shown you how to seek God – I hope I've shown you how to make friends with your own creativity – and to use this creativity in the service of others – However if you discover something in your dad that limits what God wants you to be, don't be loyal to my limitations. My ceiling can be your floor."
- It is the inner-permission that matters.
- See 1 Cor 2: 6-10.
- These are the things that God has revealed to us by his own spirit.
- See Mark 2: 6-8
- We need to think beyond the limitations of our senses.
- The scribes thought those things because they were taught those things – we are taught to think about how we are in Christ – we were taught how to function in the world – we are taught how to think about the definition of power – you were taught about those things you can and cannot accomplish – and if we've never seen it before, it's hard to believe that it can be – and in chapter 2 of Mark we see that Jesus is able to do what no one else can see.
- See Mark 2:5 – How can you see faith? Jesus was able to see faith in the form of an open roof in the action of the four men – Jesus saw their faith (not the man on the matt) – praise God that the right people into our lives to lead us to healing – the right people that won't give up when they see the crowds – Here is a question: If the right people can get you healed – can the wrong people keep you paralyzed?
- Some of the greatest limitations that we put on ourselves come in the form of people that have no purpose to serve in the present season of our lives – you need a new roof and you might need new relationships – when you surround yourself with people that are stuck in the limitation of what God used to do, it is very hard for us to believe that all things are possible.
- Here is a challenge today for someone that has been blocked lately (think writers block or peace block): The biggest block in the passage of Mark 2 is not the crowd at the door – it was the limitation within the hearts of the scribes – who were sitting there thinking to themselves.
- It is easier for Jesus to just heal the man then to forgive the man's sins because Jesus will have to die to forgive his sins – and Jesus knew that the man needed to be forgiven more than he need to be healed – Jesus gave the man the gift of a limitation so the man could realize a gift that he didn't know that he needed.
- What are limitations that God is telling you to un-learn?
- Recall what I said during Easter: Personalities are not permanent – temperaments are given – – there is no such thing as a negative person – however there are negative patterns – what limitations do you have to unlearn based on the lies that you have believed? Your limitations were learned – you do not always think like that.
- See Luke 5:20: 20 When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

- The man's friends had taken him as long as they could - dropping him into the center of the room – Then the man found a friend that had no limitations (Jesus) – And the real beauty of it is that this same friend lives in you as well – and whatever external limitation that you place on yourself, God will reveal an internal grace that is greater than the external limitation. I declare this over your life – I prophesied over this over your life.
- Pastor Furtick's closing prayer on Sunday, April 18, 2021: We have a Jesus that can see faith and we have a God that can forgive sins – Let's put the issues of our life at the feet of Jesus – Jesus was proving in Mark 2 that he has all authority – There is no problem that you can name that is greater than the power of God – In the name of your son Jesus - who walked this earth and lived a life that we could not live – The one who died a death on a sinners cross – The one who in the weakness of flesh, demonstrated the strength of God – In that name – In the name of Jesus – I speak to every human frailty – I speak to every sickness – I speak to every disease – I speak to every insecurity – I speak to deep shame – I speak to secret shame – I speak to fear – In the name of Jesus, you will rise up above what is holding you – and demonstrate the authority of the word of God in your life – This day – This week – This moment – you will break through every roof – You will break through every tradition – You will break through every barrier – You will break through every limitation – You will break through every name that has been placed on you – His name is greatness – and I speak this over every life – God we have evidence that you heal and forgive – Because the greatest block in our lives will not be something standing outside the door – It will be something that grows in our heart – And right now we bring it all before you. There are some things that only your spirit can reveal – We pray for a revelation as to who are in you Lord – and once we find this out, we will never be blocked again – use this moment to escalate – we just need a way into your presence – through the sacrifice of your son – and now we receive your touch in this moment – in Jesus name. Amen.