



# Hands to serve Him



**WORLD WEEKEND  
OF PRAYER**  
FOR CHILDREN AT RISK

**6-7 JUNE 2020**

*Adults' talk outline*

## Unity

### Putting our hands to serve Him – networking

Passage: Luke 5:17-26, Jesus forgives and heals a paralysed man.

Children and young people around the world are suffering through the hands of those around them who mete out abuse, pain and aggression. That's not what Jesus wants. **His hands are loving hands.**

**Jesus stretched out His hands** and died for us on the Cross. He suffered for our salvation. Yet Jesus' hands also brought healing, blessed children, washed the disciple's feet, wrote in the sand, proved his resurrection to Thomas, glorified God in Ascension. **Yes, and most especially, came together in prayer.**

The story of Jesus and the paralytic man is recounted in 3 of the gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. It was obviously an event that reverberated around Galilee and beyond. Even now 2,000 years later we marvel at the power of its meaning and message.

It's a story of **hands**. Four men working for a common cause. Four men helping a fifth.

Jesus' hands bring the **power of forgiveness and the miracle of healing.**

**The account throws up a number of questions and challenges for our work to help children at risk in our cities**

### How were the men of story able to work together?

The four men who carried their friend to Jesus had a common goal: they saw the need of their friend, paralysed and unable to walk. They had heard about Jesus. They believed that bringing him to the hands of Jesus was the answer. 4 more questions; think how these apply to hands serving together for children and young people suffering and in danger.

- i) The paralytic needed help – he couldn't get to Jesus on his own. **But was he a willing participant?** We can only help those who want to be helped.
- ii) **Did all five have faith, a trust they all shared?** The paralytic and his friends had faith that Jesus will be able to heal. Perhaps some were more reluctant than others but they all had some belief.
- iii) The men carrying had to work together. They all had to lift their corner of the mat. **Did they walk in different directions?**
- iv) Do you think they prayed before they left the paralytic's house? **Is that what united them?**



## Obstacles

What happened when it proved much more difficult than they imagined?



The men tried to take their friend into the house to lay him before Jesus. However, when they got there they found they could not find a way to do so because of the crowd. Jesus was teaching and healing, probably hundreds had followed Him and turned up in hope. The house was completely surrounded by people. Here are a few more questions to ponder and apply.

- i) Thus having worked together with a common plan and on arriving at the house where Jesus was, their plan suddenly appeared thwarted. **How could they get in to Jesus?**
- ii) One of them has an idea to go up on the roof- what do you think the others said? Did they think it was a waste of time? **Are we prepared to change our plan of action?**
- iii) Even on the roof, who had the idea to loosen some tiles? What did the others say? What did the paralytic think about being let down. **What did the sceptics say about the house owner's likely reaction?** Are there sceptics in your city networks?
- iv) Yet they do work as a team. **Were they guided by the Holy Spirit?** What united their actions? A common, obvious and pain filled need. And what about young people in our cities?

## Networks

How can we bring our hands to serve Him for children of our cities

**God says "See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;"** *Is 49:16*

This is God's promise that he will never, never forget us – it's as if He has engraved us on the palm of His hands. That's like your name being a Divine tattoo in a place where you are always protected – His palm. What encouragement is that for all those children whose abuse breaks our hearts. Let's build networks of prayer. Let's be imitators of God's palm.

Let's make our hands His hands. Let's bring our hands in **UNITY**, overcoming **OBSTACLES**, releasing surprising **OUTCOMES**. Let's network

## Outcomes

How many were impacted by the persistence of team action?



It was quite a surprise. Suddenly the ceiling is landing dust and bits of masonry on the crowd below seated around Jesus. Do you think the crowd kept quiet? Imagine the commotion. But as we see throughout the Gospel accounts, Jesus never seems perturbed by an unexpected interruption. What about us. **Do we get easily perturbed? Are we ready to be interrupted in the middle of some other task, to meet a need?**

Jesus is surrounded by sceptics. Are we? Rather than perform the anticipated miracle, Jesus does something even more astounding: he forgives the paralytic's sins. "Friend, your sins are forgiven." That's worth more, much more than physical healing. That's the ticket for eternal restoration into heaven. Do you ever wonder what Jesus was teaching on when the roof fell in?

And a few more questions

- i) Even with apparent success, the first thing they hear on the roof is Jesus forgiving sins. **Did the friends fill disappointed at this moment?**
- ii) **What did Jesus see?** "When he saw their faith." (Mk 2:5) Jesus saw the faith of a team working together! A team with a common, agreed programme of action!
- iii) And the teachers of the law, what were they thinking? **Do we meet scepticism amongst authorities, official leaders?** How does that impact the result?
- iv) **What was the outcome of all the men working together?** "He got up, took his mat and walked out!" A miracle. A life completely restored.
- v) **Who were amazed?** Everyone! See when we put our hand together to pray, work as a network, embrace amazing outcomes, the whole city wakes up and notices. "We have never seen anything like this!"

World Weekend of Prayer campaign is a global initiative held over the first weekend of June every year, uniting hundreds of thousands of adults and children globally. It is organised by Viva, a charity that inspires lasting change in children's lives through the power of collective action in 38 community networks worldwide.

**Viva**  
together for children