

“Voices of Advent: The Man Who Slipped Through the Roof”

Joy

by
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What For the paralytic who was healed by Jesus after his friends lowered him through the roof, he needed more than a touch to his body, he needed an encounter with God himself. This modern-day monologue can be performed or read in-person or online.

Part of the Voices of Advent series, the script will help your congregation reimagine a famous passage of the Bible and experience the miracle of Christmas with renewed wonder.

Themes: Advent, Christmas, Joy, Healing, Monologue, Forgiveness, Grace, Miracle, Reader's Theatre

Who 1 male actor, late 30s or older

When The present moment.

Costumes and Props The actor can wear casual clothing. If you want to suggest the first century, the actor can be dressed in a long robe.

Why Luke 5:17-26; Psalm 37:8

How Think of this character as a blue-collar worker, zesty and confident.

Time Approximately 4 minutes

Lights up. Actor addresses the audience.

When you look at me, you probably don't see a man who was run down and trampled by horses. If you do, you should go see your eye doctor.

You probably can't tell, either, that I was someone who worried a lot. The horse thing and the anxiety are connected, by the way.

Maybe you've heard that Psalm that goes, "do not fret, it only leads to evil." I can tell you, it's true. My life, until I met Jesus, was one long and tiring fret.

I was like Samson, chained to the millstone, turning that big round object to grind grain. My chains were resentment and anger. But unlike Samson, I wasn't strong. I was even weaker than *weak* Samson after he was duped by Delilah and they cut his hair.

That's right. *(Flexes like a body builder)* These legs and these arms were useless. I was bedridden and paralyzed. Unable to move my body. The only thing I could move was my mind and it pushed thoughts around and around, worried, angry.

I guess you could say I was paralyzed in body and mind, because this thinking led nowhere. And I was so stuck.

But who wants to criticize a paralytic, amiright?

When I shared my despair with friends and family, no one could blame me. All that potential, all that possibility, lying there with dormant and useless limbs. What were they to do, add insult to injury and tell me to cheer up?

I wasn't anything special before my accident. I mean, I went to the synagogue on weekends. Showed up for work through the week. Did my best to follow the law and made the sacrifices necessary to atone for the big stuff: a few turtle doves here and there, the occasional goat. But I wouldn't have called myself religious. Just full of zest for life.

But all that zest was quickly zapped when I stepped in the path of a unit of Roman soldiers as they tore through a side street to quell an uproar near the Temple.

We were in the holy city for a festival. And what can I say? I was filled with fervor and passion and that energy you get when you're with people you love on the streets of the Holy City. I felt invincible.

You'd think I was a high priest the way people almost venerated me after the accident. "A Hebrew of Hebrews, who stood up to Rome," they'd say. The last stand I ever took.

And so my bitterness and my anger were never really checked or challenged by those around me. Until I met Jesus, that is.

At Christmas, we tend to use words like "hope" and "peace" and "joy"...as we very well should. But we often overlook the very reasons those words have such appeal in the first place.

Until the advent of Jesus in my life I lived on the other side of those words. In despair and the regret that tells you every day there is no reason to hope and no way to experience joy again.

It was my friends who cut a hole in the roof and lowered my helpless body through it. Popped me right in front of Jesus. You shoulda seen the look on his face.

The surprise. And dare I say the profound respect he had for my friends for the bold move they made to get me in front of him. Some say they were motivated out of guilt that their bones didn't get crushed during the events on the fateful day that turned me into a paralytic. But Jesus himself recognized they were moved by faith in him to heal.

The strangest thing that day was what he said for everyone to hear. "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

I don't know what I expected, precisely. I wanted him to reach out his hand and heal me. I'd imagined it a thousand times ever since I heard of his miraculous power. But Jesus said what no one else would say: I was a sinner with a sickness that went so much deeper than my body. A man with a problem worse than failed limbs.

You know the rest of the story. Look at me! I walked out of there with a bed in my hands, my whole future ahead of me. Restored and set free.

The religious people were scandalized. Those hungry for righteousness had their needs met. And those with eyes to see saw the glory of God revealed.

It's kind of a perfect Christmas story, isn't it?

Suddenly, there's Jesus in the midst of humanity, after all those dark days of despair. Just as surprising as a grown man as he was a baby. Emmanuel, God among us.

And the force of the collision, as the truth of who Jesus is, impacts the human heart, is more violent and transformative than the impact of a charging Roman horse against a body.

With a single word, Jesus can set you free from your sin and despair into what only can be described as true joy.

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I'm no elegant or sophisticated man that deserves God's grace. But I was given his grace anyway.

If you are doing a candlelight service, this is the moment to light the candle.

God's grace changed me forever. I hope you encounter Jesus' grace in a way that changes you this Advent season.

Lights fade.

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