

32 The All-Powerful Physician Healing an Unclean Woman

sermonaudio.com

Series on Mark
By Dr. Joel Beeke

Bible Text: Mark 5:25-34
Preached on: Sunday, August 9, 2015

Heritage Reformed Congregation of Grand Rapids
540 Crescent St NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Website: www.hnrc.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/hnrc

Our scripture reading tonight is from the gospel of Mark 5:25-34 which will also serve as our text this evening. Mark 5:25, hear the word of the Lord.

25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, 26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, 27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. 28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. 29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. 30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? 31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. 33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. 34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

May God bless the reading of his precious word.

Dear church family, tonight I want to show you from the word of God irrefutably that Jesus Christ welcomes the most helpless, the most hopeless, the most needy sinners to himself, and that there are no hopeless cases with him, and I pray that some of you desperately not only need to hear this sermon but will be wonderfully blessed by it. Please, as you hear the sermon tonight, listen, listen to the character of Jesus Christ and then do what my dad always said to us as children, don't ever leave the Lord alone. Don't ever leave the Lord alone, just go to him, pour out your sins, pour out your needs, pour out your impossibilities and he will heal you. He's gracious. Listen tonight to the character of Jesus Christ and don't stay away from him.

Our text is Mark 5:25-34 and I want to look with you at the theme, with God's help, "The All-Powerful Physician Healing an Unclean Woman," and we'll look at three thoughts: first, faith, needing and coming to Jesus; second, faith touching and being rewarded by Jesus; and third, faith being revealed and affirmed by Jesus.

Mark 5 is a remarkable chapter. We've seen that already two or three occasions where Jesus, the almighty Son of God, heals a demoniac and then gets involved with Jairus and will, by the end of the chapter, heal Jairus' daughter in a wonderful way and raise her from the dead, but sandwiched in the story of Jairus is this wonderful story about a certain woman, verse 25 says, which had an issue of blood, an issue of blood 12 years. That's a long time.

Notice Mark says a certain woman. This woman's name isn't mentioned, unlike Jairus', but Mark is implying something here. This woman was an outcast, we'll see that in a moment, both in church and in society because of her disease. She was, in the eyes of the world and the church, a nobody. No name is given to her unlike Jairus, a prominent man. There's a message in this, that certain woman, that unnamed woman can be you, a certain man, a certain woman, a certain boy, maybe not noticed by those around you but about to be greatly blessed by God.

Now we read of this certain woman, that she had an issue of blood; that simply means that there was within her some kind of internal flowing of blood. It may have been a menstrual problem but it certainly was internal bleeding. We don't know exactly what it was like but the implication is that she remained unclean for 12 years, thus this was a perpetual problem, something she couldn't lay aside. It produced physical, mental, emotional pain immensely, intensely in her life. She was in a bad way. She probably experienced things like abdominal swelling and chest pains, intense anxiety, profuse sweating, dizzying exhaustion, perhaps her body even began to shut down at times due to the significant blood loss. She suffered so much that our text twice refers to her suffering as a plague, and the Greek word here for "plague" actually literally means "to be whipped and flogged or scourged."

It was like a scourge was upon this woman and there was no relief, no resolution, no remedy. Not for lack of trying. She went to many physicians, the next verse says, and please do follow along with me tonight, that will be helpful, I think, if your Bible are open. She "suffered many things of many physicians," verse 26, "had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but only grew worse." You know, sometimes when seniors get into a number of infirmities, they tell you as a pastor, "It seems like my whole life is going to doctors. I go to this specialist and that one, and just get done with that one and I've got to go to that one, and I'm taking all these pills," and, oh, it can be so draining, so overwhelming. But this woman did all of that, as it were, but no doctor helped at all but everything got worse.

Now the Jews, you need to know, were quite famous for finding all kinds of cures with different herbs and bitter medicines they'd administer to people but all of these things just made this woman the sicker, and maybe you can relate to that too, maybe you've had a

health problem that just won't go away and you're trying to get to the root of it, and one doctor says this, another one says that, and there seems to be no resolution, no future. And beyond that, this woman spent all her savings, she gave up everything she had and only got worse. Physical, emotional, mental, financial anguish was her daily portion, but also and that's not so easily recognized on the surface of this story, but she also experienced spiritual anguish big time. How so? Well, we need to go back to Leviticus 15:19 where God says, "if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart," put apart seven days assuming that the issue of blood will be resolved, but this woman was put apart for 12 years. That means she was separated from the people of God, from the tabernacle, from the synagogue. We've experienced that for a few months with COVID but this was a way of life for this woman, 12 years she couldn't go up to the house of God. If she touched anyone, that person would become unclean. She was an outcast not just in society but in church. No one would want to be near her. She was ceremonially unclean.

Now why would God give a law like this in Leviticus 15? Well, there are many reasons, of course, regarding health issues that we don't know God's wisdom in every detail, but ultimately, of course, even though we don't look at a person in a lot of trouble and say, "You must have sinned greatly," and we become Job's friends. We have to be careful with that. Sometimes we do suffer directly as a result of a particular sin but we do know that all suffering is ultimately traceable back to our deep fall in Adam. You see, in reading this chapter, all these people, the demoniac, Jairus' daughter, and now this woman, this suffering is ultimately inseparable from sin and in this case, you see, the Bible tells us that life is in the blood and where there's a loss of blood, it implies the potential of death and the wages of sin is death. So everything, you see, in terms of suffering ultimately goes back to sin, sin before the eyes of a holy and righteous God is unclean, is filthy, is abominable. Sin is anti-God. Isaiah says we are all as an unclean thing. Spiritually we're all like this woman, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags before God. A few chapters earlier, Isaiah says, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear."

So, in one sense, we can all, I hope, identify with this woman. We are all unclean sinners. J. C. Ryle comments on this beautifully, I think. He says this, "If we truly understood this, we would hate our sin more. How incredible it is that we do not hate sin far more than we do." Sin is the cause of all the pain and all the disease in the world. God did not create man to be an ailing, suffering creature, it was sin and nothing but sin which brought in all the ills that flesh has suffered. It was sin to which we owe every wracking pain, every loathsome infirmity, every humbling weakness which our poor bodies are liable to. Let us ever keep this in mind, let us hate sin with holy hatred."

So this woman is in a desperate plight. She has no temple worship. She can't go to a place where the people of God gather where the focus is on the blood of atonement, on peace and communion with the Lord. She's unclean. She's cut off from the blood of atonement and from communion, and temple doors are closed for 12 long years and yet there's good news here. There's good news. This woman has the seed of saving faith planted in her even though she lacks the assurance that she has it. I'll say more about that shortly but we

know immediately, don't we, when we read verse 34, that everything she does springs from faith because Jesus himself says to her, "Daughter, thy faith has made thee whole." Isn't that just miraculous faith? This is a woman coming to Jesus who also has the seed of saving faith within her.

So though we don't know her name, the good news is that her name is written in the Lamb's book of life and that's the most important thing, that's where our names really need to be, and yet she doesn't realize this yet. She can't believe salvation can be for her. She's regarded unclean on all sides, including herself. She can't believe she belongs to the people of God. She's a reject and maybe some of you feel like this woman in that way as well, even though you feel you need Christ you just can't believe you're a child of God. You're jealous of God's people and you say, "I can't see a possibility for me to be healed and to be saved. My salvation would just be an incredible miracle." But you see, the whole point of this story and the whole point of this chapter with these three miraculous healings that Jesus does is to say with Jesus there is not only possibility, with Jesus there is certainty, and when sinners turn to him by the grace of the Holy Spirit working in their souls, when they turn to him he saves, he heals. This is who he is. This is his specialty. This is his delight. He draws sinners to himself by his Spirit to glorify him.

And so this woman, you see, comes to this dead-end, she comes to an end of herself, an end of her physicians, spiritually as well. Have you ever been there, ever come to a dead-end of your efforts to reform your life spiritually or your efforts to heal a disease, spiritually, and you and a loved one, you've tried everything, you've gone the full length, you've done everything possible, you've had all your resources dried up in order to make room for the precious and the all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ. You've come to a point you said, "I'm just a poor, unclean, unworthy sinner. All my righteousnesses are as filthy rags and all the physicians I've gone to haven't been able to help me. I've gone to the physician prayer, I've gone to physician scripture reading, I've gone to the physician of communion of saints, I've gone to the physician of church attendance, and it seems like nothing helps me. I've suffered many things sometimes even of some of these physicians who keep hounding me and saying you've got to read more, or you've got to pray more, you've got to do this more, you've got to repent more. I never have enough. I never have anything that can heal me." It's an endless struggle, you see, for this woman. It's an endless struggle for a sinner who relies on any physician but Jesus but, you see, the amazing thing, the amazing thing is that all the physicians this woman heard about, and she went to them all, no one ever told her to go to Jesus, to the one physician who can heal anything. No one directed her there but I'm directing you there tonight, my friend, with your trials, with your sicknesses, with your spiritual needs, with your fountain of sin, with your heart remaining unhumiliated and cold. Whatever you do, you must go to Jesus. Without him we can do nothing. That's probably the major takeaway lesson I learned from COVID. I had three or four days of just tremendous darkness. I couldn't pray. I couldn't find him. I couldn't. I was numb, spiritually numb. When I came out of that by God's grace, I just realized more than ever without him I can do nothing. There's no place to go without Jesus.

But this woman's ears began to go open. She began to hear something wherever she went. She started hearing things about this man named Jesus. Look at verse 27, when she had heard of Jesus, she came in the press behind him. Isn't that beautiful? Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. She heard people talking about Jesus, about a man who raised people from the dead, about a man who healed the most bankrupt sinner. "When she had heard." Literally in the Greek it is when she had heard the things of Jesus or the things concerning Jesus, the kinds of things that she did, she wanted to, no, not meet him, she was unworthy of meeting him, that was too much, but she wanted to just go and touch his clothes and she thought, "Perhaps I will be healed." You see, she comes to the end of herself and she says, "Give me Jesus else I die," but she's too shy, she knows if she touches him, well, according to the laws of Moses, she'd make him unclean. She doesn't want to do that, she doesn't want to be a troublemaker but she comes to Jesus by faith, trusting in him, hoping in him as she had hoped in no physician before.

"There's a man from Nazareth," she hears, "and he heals and performs all kinds of miracles. He's cleansed lepers who are unclean just like you and me by nature. He's forgiven sinners just like us." She hears about it and she goes. You know, did you ever think about that, just talking to people or being overheard by other people hearing you talk God can use as a blessing? It appears, as far as we can read this text unless there's other details we don't know, that just hearing about Jesus from people the Holy Spirit used to plant the seed of faith in her heart to go to Jesus.

It reminds you, doesn't it, of the story of John Bunyan, we'll hear more about that Saturday evening, Lord willing, but Bunyan was trying to resolve his spiritual turmoil and wasn't making much progress until one day he heard a few God-fearing women talking and they're talking about the Lord's work in their soul, and they were so encouraging and despite their own wretched hearts, they were lifting up the name of Jesus and Bunyan suddenly realized, "These women have something I don't have," and he knew he needed it. You see, God blessed that conversation to Bunyan's soul. You heard this morning open your mouth for your children but open your mouth for everyone beyond your children as well, and don't be afraid to pray in a restaurant. "Oh, people will see me." Oh, don't be afraid to pray aloud in a restaurant. Let other people hear. It doesn't matter. Who can tell, God might use it. God might use it. Let's get rid of our unbiblical bashfulness and be open about talking to people about the things we need. Who can tell whether God might not use it.

Now verse 28 says literally in Greek, "For she had been saying, If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be whole." Not just she said but she had been saying. It's in a certain tense meaning that she didn't probably have the means to go right away as soon as she heard it but she'd been saying that to herself, maybe to others as well around her ever since she heard about him. "I really need to go to him." She had faith in the authority, the power, the dignity of Jesus.

So she goes and what a trip it was with this disposition of faith in her. You can just see her, can't you, slowly elbowing her way through the crowd. She doesn't want to come face-to-face with Jesus. Her faith is very imperfect. She's got a little seed there. She's too

bashful for that. She knows she might get in trouble, he might think it's against the law, so she has infirmities, she has fears how will he receive her? "Oh, the best thing to do," she thinks, "is if I just come behind him and I can get, elbow my way all the way by his back, he will have four woolen tassels," which every Israelite was ordered to where on the corners of his square outer robe, "if I could just touch one of those. Just touch one. He won't even know I'm touching him. He'll heal me. From everything I've heard about him, that's what will happen. He'll heal me." She believes that. Then she said to herself, "I can just sneak away again and nobody will know. He won't notice. Nobody will notice. I'll just be wonderfully healed."

Well, what happens if Jesus sees her, though, and upbraids her, and says, "Woman, how do you dare to come here? How do you dare to transgress the laws of Moses? How do you dare to make me unclean?" Do you see all the fears she has? She has a lot of fears. That's what the Bible says. She came with fear and trembling, verse 33, when she came face-to-face with Jesus, "the woman fearing and trembling," and yet she has to go. She has to go. There's no other physician. There's no other way. "If I perish, I perish," she thinks like Esther, "but then I will perish at his feet."

Now exactly how do you go to Jesus, then? Well, the Puritans wrote a lot on that and they combed the scriptures and I'm going to give it to you in one sentence and just unpack it for a few minutes and I think you'll see why. We come to Christ, they said, when we, number 1, are drawn actively by faith to Christ. That's what this woman's experienced and she's being drawn actively by faith to Christ. She doesn't even realize it, of course. Christ knows her and is drawing her, she doesn't even realize that yet. That's number 1. Number 2, as he offers himself to sinners in the gospel. She heard about his willingness to save sinners and to heal the needy. There was an openness, an approach-ability about him, she heard, and you see, that offer, that offer of himself to sinners in the gospel God uses to draw her as well.

Then through the power of the Holy Spirit. Now she doesn't realize much of that yet at all, you see, that the Holy Spirit is the efficient cause of our coming to Christ by connecting us with the word of God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God as the Spirit applies that word to our souls, but that's actually going on inside this woman even though she doesn't realize it. She hears about Jesus and the Spirit is drawing her to him.

So I'll put it back in one sentence again for you: we come to Christ when we are, number 1, drawn actively by faith to Christ; number 2, as he offers himself to us in the gospel; and number 3, through the power of the Holy Spirit. But the beauty of this, you see, is the Holy Spirit is as willing to do this as Christ is to draw sinners, as the Father is to elect sinners. The whole Triune God is absolutely willing to save the lost and the needy and to bring sinners to faith. It's we who put up the hindrances. God is not the hindrance. Jesus is not the hindrance. The Holy Spirit is not the hindrance. The Father is not the hindrance. We are the hindrances. We throw up roadblocks by nature, human impediments, the old divines used to call them.

And what are they? Well, I'll give you eight of them very very quickly here. 1. Neglecting the Christ of the Bible, imagining Christ to be different from what the Bible reveals him to be, as if he's kind of reluctant to save sinners or to reveal himself, as if he's a kind of hidden Christ who keeps himself in the shadows. No, no, no, in Gethsemane he walked out into the moonlight and said, "Whom seek ye?" He's a Savior who loves to save sinners. He's approachable. This man receiveth sinners.

Another impediment is false conversion, just thinking that because you've had an outward reformation, an outward change, that you're changed from within. Some people are just nominal Christians and they settle in for that but their heart is not converted.

And third, despair, despair due to my sins. Some people say, "If I could clean myself up and come to him somehow but I've sinned too much." And they keep themselves away. "Why would God save me?" But as we heard this morning, the best qualification to go to him is that we're sinners, not that we're righteous. The whole have no need of a physican but they that are sick.

The fourth impediment is spiritual complacency. Life is going fairly well, maybe I don't have too many trials. I didn't get COVID. I've got my job. And you just presume on tomorrow, "I'll seek for Jesus tomorrow or someday later and meanwhile just live on without him." It's deadly.

5. Despair due to backsliding. Some people refuse to come to Christ because they believe their backsliding has disqualified them. But he says, "Return unto me, O Israel, my backsliding people and I will cause my anger not to fall upon you for I am merciful and I won't keep anger forever." He delights in mercy, Micah 7:18 says.

6. Confusion about election, as if election is somehow our enemy instead of our friend. If there's no election, my friend, you'd never be saved, neither would I. God never intended election to be an obstacle but an encouragement to come just as we are to this glorious Savior. Election is the friend of sinners. It means the door is open. Sinners can be saved because God is an electing God.

7. Ignorance of the gospel call. Some people think that the gospel call to come to Jesus is somehow something that you can push away without consequences, or something you just have to sit back and say, "Well, if the Lord works in me, he does, but, yes, I hear the call but..." No, no, no, the call is a command, it's not just an invitation. It's that, it's a warm invitation but it's also a command to come to Jesus. No one has a right to remain unsaved. No one has a right to stay away from Jesus who's ever heard the gospel.

In fact, that leads me to number 8 which is the crowning impediment of all: simply unbelief. It's the mother sin of all. A. W. Pink rightly said it when he said, in one sense, it's not sin that brings us to hell but it's the unrepentant sin of unbelief that brings us to hell because if you repent and you come by faith to Jesus, he will forgive all your sins. Matthew Henry said unbelief is the great damning sin because it leaves us under the guilt

of all our other sins. It's unbelief, you see, that will drag us to hell because we refuse to come to Jesus Christ.

Well, this woman is in this crowd, you see, and she comes and she makes her way and now she gets there and she touches. Boys and girls, she just touches one of the tassels hanging from the garment of Jesus and verse 29 says, "And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up." Now we've seen before in the gospel of Mark that Mark's favorite word is "straightway, immediately." Mark is a man of action. But this is immediate, directly, immediately this woman feels she's healed. The fountain of her blood stopped. The fountain that is the source of the problem inside of her, wherever it was, was stopped. She immediately felt whole, a sense of incredible freedom, the sovereign gracious balm of perfect health seemed to blanket her and seemed to course through her veins. She stood erect restored. She had energy. She felt well physically, spiritually. She could mount up with wings as an eagle. She could run and not be weary. She could walk and not faint.

Her whole life changed in a moment. This is actually a perfect picture of justification by faith alone, isn't it? A touch of faith. A touch of faith and by the grace of God we're justified by God. A touch of faith and our sins are wiped away. Our faith may be weak, it may be fearful, trembling like this woman, but if it's true faith, a genuine touch of faith, we are saved. Not because of our faith, not because of anything we can do, but faith is the means, the way, the instrument through which God works.

So we're justified freely by his grace. There's but a touch. We're forgiven. That's amazing. It's good news. It doesn't mean I need my faith to be to such a degree of strength before I can feel something that, well, maybe there's some hope for me. No, immediately. This woman still had such imperfect faith, it still needed to be matured and refined and purified and need to grow, but just a touch and she was healed. You know, you may have seasons of trembling and weak faith, full of shame and unworthiness in your own heart, but if you still have a touch of faith, you see, you're justified, forgiven, cleansed by your God.

Mark's description could hardly be simpler, touched his garment. Three words. Three words but what a depth, what a story lies in this touching. She finally reached him. She elbowed her way through the crowd. She was behind him. We can see her stooping down, touching his garment. She quickly withdraws her hand as if she'd done something bad, as if she'd stolen something. She's so afraid. She quickly turns around. She starts going away again, hoping nobody will notice her. And no one does except for Jesus, the only one in the whole crowd who notices her. You see, Jesus notices the nobody's and the neediest people, including this timid, bashful, unclean woman who came with an imperfect faith to the throne of grace touching the hem of his garment.

What a lesson there is in this. You see, my friend, if we touch the hem of his garment, which means if we, by the grace of God, put our trust in him alone for salvation, if we take his promises by faith and lay them back before him and put our trust in him, he will, he's promised to honor his own work of faith in us. He will heal. He will grant salvation.

It's not an if, it's not a maybe. Now whether that sense of it flows into our heart in one moment like it does for this woman, or whether it takes a gradual, more gradual period of time, of course, we know from other examples in scripture and in church history and our own experience that God has a variety of ways of making that sense of liberty felt. For one, it's in a moment indeed, like this woman. For another, it takes more time but the point is that where there's the touch of genuine faith on the word of God, the promises of God, the Christ of God, there's deliverance. There's deliverance because faith has only one object: Jesus. And though that exercise of faith is with a bashful hand, or a trembling hand, or fearful hand like this woman, with a shaken trust, with an imperfect faith, it's graciously rewarded. It's rewarded by Christ-healing power. You see, this is the character of Jesus. Jesus just confirms here Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him for he that comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder," a rewarder, not a reward of merit but a gracious rewarder, "of them that diligently seek him." Anyone who diligently seeks the Lord in truth will taste this gracious reward.

So, my friend, you've been hearing about Jesus for years, some of you for decades, many decades, have you ever heard in truth? Have you ever obeyed? "Incline your ear and come to me, saith the Lord." Have you ever looked to him? That's another expression for touching. Have you ever truly believed in him? That's another expression for touching. The Bible has lots of expressions for touching by faith. Alexander Comrie has a whole book called "A, B, C of Faith," 25 different words in the Bible that mean the same thing really, believing in Christ, touching him, looking to him, coming to him, hungering after him. It's all, in essence, the same. It's falling upon Jesus to save me and putting all my trust in his blood and in his righteousness and not relying on anything in myself.

I love the way Martin Luther put it, he said, "I will have nothing to do with saving myself. Jesus Christ is the Savior and he's my Savior and I will leave my soul wholly in his hands." He's the only place to go, but praise be to God, he has everything you need. You don't need another place. His medicine cabinet has the balm of gilead that is a ubiquitous medicine that can heal anyone from any disease. He's a Savior, after all. He's the almighty Physician, after all. He never misdiagnoses a case. He's altogether all-powerful and his blood cleanses from all sin.

Then Luther a little bit later in that writing adds this thought which I love, I actually have it cut out and pasted to my computer so I read it every day, "When I look to myself, I don't see how I can be saved, but when I look at Jesus, I don't see how I can be lost." Isn't that beautiful? Maybe you need to read that every day too. I'll read it again, "When I look to myself, I don't see how I can ever be saved," I'm just an unclean sinner, "but when I look at Jesus, I don't see how I can be lost." Because who does he say? Unclean sinners who come to him.

I know what you're going to say, I could just hear the "buts" beginning. "Yeah, but, yeah, but, you know, you don't know what a sinful, you don't know who I am. You don't know. I don't know if I've really ever touched him." Stop with it all. Stop with it all. Tonight he comes to you and says, "Come to me just as you are." You don't need to leave this house of God tonight really, do you, with the issue of blood still flowing in you? He can stop it

tonight. He can turn you tonight. He can move you to reckon yourself dead unto sin and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord tonight. Aren't you weary of sin? Aren't you weary of trying your false physicians? Go to Jesus. Bring every lust, every sin, every fountain, every wrong thought, every murmuring, every blind spot. Lay it all before him. Touch him. Trust his promises. Touch him in his word. Take his promises, lay them before him. He won't let you down. You see, the focus here is not if I may but touch his clothes, it's not if I may but touch his clothes, but the focus is if I may but touch his clothes. He's the answer. He's the answer. Go to Jesus.

This woman touched him, touched his clothes. It didn't cost her anything. All those other physicians charged her, this was free, but it cost Jesus everything. It cost him everything. To dry up the fountain of her blood, Jesus had to shed his blood. To heal her by the touch of the hem of his garment, he had to be stripped of his garments on the cross and hang naked and shameful and painful and accursed and die for her. But that's the beauty of Jesus. This wise physician, this all-powerful physician is not only the physician but he's also the remedy, he's also the balm. He's everything. He's a precious person, a precious substitute. For unclean sinners, he comes, he's worthy to be sought, he's worthy to be touched but he says, "Come to me whoever you are," as we heard a few weeks ago, "all ye that are weary and heavy-laden. Come to me, I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. It's easy. It's light. I've borne the price for you."

Why would you stay away from Jesus? Why? "Yeah, but would he save me? Why would he save me?" No, you've got it just backwards. Why wouldn't he save you? Aren't you a sinner? He came to seek and to save, what, good people? Righteous people? Healed people? Sinners. Now if you're not a sinner, then you've got a good argument. But if you're a sinner, you have no reason to stay away from Jesus. Zero. In fact, he commands you, "Come to me just as you are."

Verse 30, "And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue," that is, power, "power had gone out of him, turned him about in the press," that is, the throng of people, "and said, Who touched my clothes?" That's amazing. In a flash, he turns around and his eyes are going over the crowd. We know he knew, of course, who touched him. Even in his human nature Christ is not ignorant of his own power in healing someone. But he asks this question not out of ignorance but because he wants to reveal the healed woman. He wants her faith to come out into the open. He wants her to come forward to glorify him, to be an evangelist for him.

"Who touched my clothes?" Luke in the parallel account says something quite amazing. He says they all denied. They all denied. In other words, it got very quiet and they all looked around. "Did you touch him? Did you touch him? No, I didn't touch him. I didn't touch him. No, I didn't touch him." No, no one touched but the woman is silent, you see. She's afraid. Oh no, she's going to get in trouble now. She's going to get in trouble now, daring to go to Jesus, daring to touch him, against the law.

They all denied. Now you can hear a pin drop. Jesus doesn't say anything. No one is talking. This woman's conscience is thundering. She's afraid. She's trembling, Mark says,

but now she can't hold back. Her plans for secrecy are dashed to the ground. She must go public. She can no longer remain a hidden disciple like Nicodemus. Verse 33, "the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her," interesting phrase, "came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth." I just love this verse. This is beautiful. You see, this is my third point: faith being revealed and then affirmed by Jesus. With mingled awe and fear and dread, she confesses all the truth. You see, that's what happens when we break open into the gospel. We have no secrets with God anymore or with man, for that matter. We say, "I'm unclean. I'm an outcast. But I touched him and he's changed my life."

At first glance you might think, "Well, this seems to be a confession that her uncleanness is being passed on." No, not quite because it says the woman knew what was done in her. The woman knew what was done in her. That's powerful. In the midst of all her fear and trembling, she also had joy and it can be, especially in the beginning of the way, that we combine within us when we don't have a full grasp of the gospel, it's not clear, we don't really understand the character of Jesus, we can have a certain joy in him even as we have this terrible fear and dread that somehow we're stealing him by claiming him. How can you steal the true Jesus as a needy sinner when he says he will receive all who come to him? But we don't realize that at that point. This woman didn't realize it anyway.

She comes and she falls down and she tells him all the truth, in front of the whole crowd she becomes an evangelist. They're all listening. You can just imagine what she says. "O Jesus, yes, I'm the woman. I'm the woman that touched thee. But I want you to know, Lord, I have an issue of blood for 12 years. I'm an unclean woman. I'm separated from Israel. I can't go to worship. I'm an outcast. I've suffered for all these years. I went to doctors, no one could help me. I've given all my money, no healing has transpired. But I heard about thee. I heard about thy love for unclean sinners like me. I heard about thy compassion, thy authority, thy power, so I came believing in thee. I came with fear and trembling. I touched thee and thou hast healed me. And whatever you do with me now, Lord, it's up to thee. I fall into thy hands." But even as she's talking, as she tells all, as she tells all, her faith is growing exponentially as she's coming out of hiding, as she's confessing everything. You see, faith concealed becomes faith revealed in the hands of Jesus. Jesus won't let his people stay in the dark. They've got to come out. They've got to make it public.

She told him all the truth for the entire crowd to hear. I can actually look around from this pulpit tonight and I can see different faces of people in the last decades who tried to keep it secret that you were a disciple, even to the point of not attending the Lord's Supper, but then you came to the Lord's Supper for the first time, you couldn't hold back, you had to break out into the open and there was a sense of liberty given to you. Oh, it's a joy for a Christian to speak openly about his or her Lord.

But why did this woman still tremble then and fear so much? Well, it was such a big thing, the unclean touched the clean and it was against the law. What would Jesus say now? Here she stands, she bows before him, she's just at his feet. She fell down before him, the text says. She didn't just get down on her knees gradually, she just collapses, as

it were, just, "This is who I am. I'll tell you everything, Lord, knowing you know everything about me anyway, yet telling you everything about me as if you knew nothing about me." That's the way a sinner, an unclean sinner comes to this glorious Savior and what does the Lord do? "Oh woman, how dare you to touch me, the hidden Savior!" Of course not. "Daughter." The first word from his lips as she ever hears him speak in her entire life is daughter.

Daughter. It's an amazing word. I'll never forget the time when I called my son "son" in the presence of someone else and the man later came alongside me and said, "You know, my dad has never called me son my entire lifetime. I really miss that." Daughter means you belong to the family. Jesus is affirming her faith. She doesn't just reveal it but he affirms it and this is the only place where Jesus in all of the gospels ever addresses someone in this way who's not a physical daughter or is not part of a general group, like the daughters of Jerusalem, he says, "Weep not for me, O daughters of Jerusalem." But in this context, this special word "daughter" has great significance. She's heard Jairus refer in Jesus' presence to his precious daughter being at the point of death, and Jesus picking up on that in the middle of the Jairus story, turns to her and says, "My daughter, the object of my love, whatever is going to follow from my lips now, dear trembling timid soul, I'm going to address you with all the filial affection and love and compassion of a tender father with his daughter." That's basically spelling out what Jesus is saying, daughter. The first thing he does is he gives her tender assurance that she's part of his spiritual family.

So faith concealed became faith revealed which now becomes faith affirmed, and through this tender word "daughter" the Holy Spirit tonight wants to encourage you, sinner, you who are still hesitating to come to Jesus, to come not with fearing, not with trembling, not being ashamed, but just come as you are and trust the Savior. This is who he is. This is what he is like. He will comfort you. He will heal you. He will save you. But then Jesus gives a double affirmation, he adds to his affirmation, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be healed of thy plague." That doesn't mean the faith itself is her salvation but the faith saved her because the faith was focused on Jesus, you see. Faith is, of course, a gift of God and this woman received this gift, exercised it, it brought her to touch the hem of his garment, and so Jesus said, "thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

In the Greek it's even more beautiful. Literally, "Go into peace. Go into peace. That is your future, woman. Be thou whole from this plague." What a comfort this is for this woman. She heard who Jesus was, she heard what he was, she heard what he did, she heard his name and she believed. She experienced as many as received him, "To them gave he power to become the sons," and we could add, "the daughters of God, even to them who believe on his name."

You can imagine, well, maybe we can't imagine what must have flowed through that mind of that woman when she expected Jesus to reject her and instead he gives her a double affirmation, a double assurance that her faith is true. She came outwardly trembling because of the magnitude of her fear within and Jesus smothers her fears with

words of assurance that she's part of the family, the spiritual family. And then with the unequivocal assurance that faith was wrought, has wrought her healing because it brought her into living contact with the power of Christ. Then he gives her the command to go out under the canopy of the peace of the God of the covenant with her plague gone.

Well, let me close this sermon tonight by answering this question: why exactly did Jesus want this woman to make this all public and expose all her thoughts? I just want to give you a couple quick reasons as we close. First, to show her and you and me today there's never any advantage in hiding anything from Jesus. You don't have to hide anything from God. You see, it's like a child in the family, it's very painful to hear your child sinned but you're not going to disown your child when your child tells you with tears, "I have sinned." You don't disown your son or your daughter. So, you see, you can share everything going on in your life with Jesus. That's one of the joys of being a Christian. You don't have to hide anything anymore. You're received the way you are and he makes you better, he helps you put off the old man and put on the new man and live more fully for him. You may tell him all the truth like this woman did. All the truth.

Second, he wanted her to tell the whole story to encourage the most unclean sinner also sitting here tonight to come to this Savior with all your needs, all your diseases. Though there are a thousand multitudes around you and numerous impediments against you within you, he's saying to you tonight like he said to the impotent man, "Stretch out your hand, stretch out your arm and you shall be clean." Not one word of rebuke will be given to you, in fact, he'll give you the grace as you try to do the impossible, to stretch out your arm. He gave this woman the grace to do the impossible, to believe on the Son of God and to come. That's what he does and like this woman, not one word of rebuke will be given to you when you go to this Savior.

Third, he wanted to reveal and publicly confess her own faith as well as declare all that God had done for her in private. Sometimes the most powerful testimonies are about what God has done privately in the soul of his people. It can stir other people up like John Bunyan when he heard those women talking. You see, Jairus is waiting there. Jairus has a daughter who is going to die any minute and Jesus is taking his time and talking with this woman and Jairus, no doubt, his heart is pounding, "Come, Jesus! My daughter's at the point of death!" But now Jairus hears, "Daughter, you're healed of your plague." He looks at the unclean woman, "If he can do it for her, he can do it for my daughter." You see, when you hear what God's done for others, it can encourage you to go to Jesus yourself.

Then fourth, Jesus also wants to affirm her faith even as he strengthens it. That's the beauty of this whole concluding part of this story. "Now you are affirmed, woman. Now you can go back into peace, you can go back into the temple, into the visible fellowship with God, back to the synagogue, back to society, back to where your assurance of faith can now continue to grow. You are no longer an outcast. You are received by me. You will be received by those around you. You are whole." What a blessing.

And finally, the all-powerful Physician, the Prince of Peace, wants to pronounce his shalom upon this woman. "Go in peace. Go in shalom" Shalom. Peace is not a negative

word, you see. It doesn't mean merely the ceasing of conflict or war. It's a positive word. Shalom. Peace means wholeness, prosperity, health, completeness. All the war is raging in her mind, all the lack of rest and tranquility in the soul, it's all reversed now. She experiences Romans 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see.

This can be you. This can be you. If you have faith, the touch of faith in Christ, this is you. Daughter, son, you are whole in Christ. Your faith has made you whole. You have the peace of Christ with you and so what does that mean to the saved, to the lost? Well, to you, my unconverted friend, it's actually good news. You need to ask for grace that you don't have to leave this place tonight with your issue of blood still running. Flee to Christ now. But you say, "But I have so many fears." Well, so did she. "I have so many uncertainties." So did she. "I don't know a lot." Neither did she but she went to Jesus and she came away blessed. You go to Jesus, you will come away blessed.

But it also speaks to you, dear child of God. Some of you have been believers for years, even decades. There are times and seasons of suffering. Sometimes we feel our entire spiritual journey is a lost cause. Sometimes we walk in darkness and sickness, disease, misery, and we panic and we worry and we get stressed. I know of what I speak in the last few weeks. To whom shall we go? The same Jesus. "But my faith is failing me. I'm in darkness. I'm full of fear and trembling. I'm scared. I don't know what the future will be." Go to Jesus. Go to him in the word. Go to him in prayer. Go to him in his promises. Touch him by faith. Whether you're a prominent Jairus or whether you're an unnoticed unclean woman, go to Jesus. He's the all-powerful Physician. He will heal you. Amen.

Great God of heaven, please bless this sermon and please let it be the breakthrough for some who are still fearing coming to Jesus. O Lord, that no one, no one listen to Satan's voice that they'll be unwelcome coming to Jesus just as they are and telling him all the truth. Help us so to come and ever so to come even as believers, hiding nothing from him but finding our all in him for, Lord Jesus, thou art our life, our salvation, our Redeemer, our nearest kinsman, our all-powerful Physician. Thou art everything we need for this life and a better one to come. So bless us, we pray, with thyself. In Jesus' name. Amen.