

“Who Touched Me”
Mark 5:24-34
(Preached at Trinity, September 22, 2010)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In the passage before us tonight the story of Jairus is interrupted to give us the account of a woman who had been diseased with an issue of blood for 12 years.
2. Jesus was on His way to the house of Jairus and the crowds were pressing around Him. The pace was slow which must have been a great source of anguish for Jairus. In the midst of the crowd a woman pressed her way towards Christ. She was quite anonymous. But, like Jairus, she was also desperate. She had suffered a humiliating infirmity for many years.
 - A. Mark describes her infirmity as great
 1. She had suffered for a long time with no improvement
 2. She had spent all of her wealth and was now impoverished
 3. She had suffered at the hands of many physicians

Mark 5:26 – “and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse”

 - a. We shouldn’t presume that the medical care in Israel was worse than the rest of the nations. To the contrary:
 - They practiced excellent hygiene.
 - They believed in prayer to the God and Ruler of heaven and earth.
 - They held the Ten Commandments in high esteem – often referred to as the greatest mental hygiene code.
 - b. The problem was that of ancient medicine which often caused more suffering than what it was supposed to cure.
 - c. I wonder how our modern medicine will be viewed 200 years from now. We cut open a man’s chest and by-pass arteries with veins from the leg. The treatment of cancer is flooding the body with toxins and surgically removing huge amounts of tissue. Modern medicine is a wonderful blessing but progress may someday prove it to be quite primitive.
 - d. Perhaps Luke the physician put it best. With the medical knowledge of that day she could not be healed by anyone.
 4. The constant flow of blood not only weakened her physically but also rendered her ceremonially unclean
 5. If she had been married she was probably now divorced since a man would often reject a woman with this kind of infirmity.
 6. She was shut out from the courts of the Temple but not from Christ
- B. The nature of her infirmity kept her from speaking with Christ openly as the others did, but her faith was great – if only she could touch the hem of His garment.

1. There was a common belief at this time that the power and dignity of a person could be transferred to another. Perhaps the memory of Elisha helped to legitimize this belief.

2 Kings 13:20-21 – “And Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the bands of the Moabites would invade the land in the spring of the year. ²¹ And as they were burying a man, behold, they saw a marauding band; and they cast the man into the grave of Elisha. And when the man touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood up on his feet.”

2. Certainly, in the early days of Christianity there were such examples of this belief.

Acts 5:15 – “they even carried the sick out into the streets, and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on any one of them.”

3. Great miracles were taking place through the ministry of Paul
Acts 19:11-12 – “And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹² so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.”

3. With this woman there was nothing superstitious in it. She had confidence that the mere touch of Christ could bring her healing.

Mark 5:28 - "If I just touch His garments, I shall get well."

4. In Matthew and Luke's account she merely touched one of the four tassels that every Israelite was required to wear on his outer robe.

Matt. 9:20 – “And behold, a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak;”

5. Her confidence was in Christ:

Mark 5:28 - "If I just touch His garments, I shall get well."

Through her faith she found healing

- I. Let's look first of all at her faith

Mark 5:34 - "Daughter, your faith has made you well"

- A. The word for faith here is πίστις – Belief, trust, faith

1. πίστις is used over 240 times in the NT
2. Faith is a gift from God. It is God's means applying the work of Christ. This is why no man has dominion over it. It is all of God.
3. Faith is our vital connection to Christ.
By faith this woman knew that the power of Christ was so great that even the mere touch of the outer tassel of His robe would bring her cure.
4. Jesus responded, "Who touched Me?" Although many were touching Him hers was by faith.
5. True faith is always an active faith – it is always full of life. It carries an attitude of certainty.

- B. Faith is the essence of salvation

1. There is indication that this woman possessed true faith

Mark 5:34 - "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."

- a. He tells her that it was her faith and not the grasp of her hand that saved her.
 - b. He calls her “Daughter” denoting relationship – adoption
 - c. He tells her to “go in peace” - The word for peace is εἰρήνη – “as applied to Christianity it is the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot”
2. Faith is a full acknowledgement of God’s holiness and our utter sinfulness. It is a full acknowledgement that we are justly condemned and helpless to do anything to resolve our plight
 - a. Truly, this woman came in humility
 - b. She came trusting in Christ alone
 3. This woman didn’t have the benefit of a full knowledge of the crucifixion. Neither did the Apostles at this point. But she trusted fully in Christ and rested in His peace.
 4. Faith is the ground of justification
 - a. Salvation depends upon Christ alone – there must be a union with Christ. His sacrifice must become our own.
 - b. Faith is the instrument through which we are brought to Christ
Faith means to trust Him alone
 - c. His righteousness becomes our righteousness
- C. Not only is faith vital for salvation, faith is also essential in the Christian life
1. Faith is the spiritual bond between the individual believer and God
We know Him, we trust Him, we rest in Him – all by faith.
 2. Faith is the lifeblood of our prayers – notice there was no doubting with this woman
Mark 5:28 - "If I just touch His garments, I shall get well."

II. Second, look at the response of Christ

Mark 5:30 – “And immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power *proceeding* from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?"

- A. The response of Christ was not that of a passive observer
1. “Who touched Me?”
 - a. This was an unusual statement since He was pressed all around by the large crowd – there must have been many people pressing against Him.
 - b. The disciples recognized the silliness of the statement – at least from their prospective
Mark 5:31 – “And His disciples said to Him, "You see the multitude pressing in on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"
 2. But her touch was different –
It was more than a casual touch. It was more than the touch of a finger. It was the touch of faith and with it came healing.
Her faith was far from perfect but she believed and Christ rewarded her.

3. Jesus looks upon her with love and compassion. He addresses her as “daughter” even though she might have been older than Jesus. He spoke as a Father to His child.
 4. She was touched by the power of Christ

Mark 5:30 – “And immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power *proceeding* from Him had gone forth”

 - a. This was not passive power. It was sovereign power
 - b. She had been granted faith and Christ responded to her faith.
 - c. It was all under His sovereign control.
His words were for *our* benefit.
- B. Christ is a personal God
1. He is acquainted in every way with our lives
 2. His power is brought to bear on our behalf but it is a sovereign power
 - a. He bestows it upon whom He will
 - b. Of all the people pressing upon Christ she alone benefitted from the power of Christ.
 - c. At the same time Jesus had His sights set upon the house of Jairus

Conclusion:

1. The woman’s faith was strong but it was also a trembling faith.

Mark 5:33 – “But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him the whole truth.”

 - a. She dared not speak. It was generally considered improper for a woman to speak in public. And to talk about the subject was embarrassing and shameful.
She was scarred and trembling.
 - b. Yet she spoke up and told Jesus all.
2. This describes our faith many times. We believe but we tremble. And yet, we always flee to Christ.
We must never forget His love for us and His great care for us.
3. Be not discouraged if your faith is a trembling faith.
Christ takes notice of your faith. “Who touched Me?”
He is sympathetic with your weakness.