

## **A Woman of Faith**

*34 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction." Mark 5:34*

Last time, we talked about Dorcas, and the healing power of the Lord through Paul. Today we will continue to look at that healing power through Jesus Christ our Lord on a woman who desperately needed healing. This particular event appears in three of the gospel accounts and seems to be an afterthought or interruption from the main event, but it highlights the healing power of Jesus through faith. The healing of the woman of faith appears in Matthew 9:18-22, Mark 5:21-35, and Luke 8:40-49. We will be reading the account in Mark for today's study.

### **Jesus Ministers Despite the Mob**

#### **Read Mark 5:21-24**

21 Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea. 22 And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet 23 and begged Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live." 24 So Jesus went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him.

By this point in Christ's ministry, many people have heard about the various miracles He had performed. As he arrives at the Northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, He is met by a large crowd and one of the rulers of the synagogue whose daughter is sick and lying on her deathbed. So Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, begs Jesus to come and heal his daughter. Jesus goes with Jairus, but so do the multitude of people that were gathered. No doubt, these people were interested in seeing a miracle for themselves. So, picture Jesus being surrounded by the paparazzi of the time trying to do the Lord's work while he is being summoned by someone with high social standing. The situation was chaotic and would have made an average person anxious and guarded, but not Jesus. He was intent on helping this man and his daughter, but in the middle of his journey appears a desperate woman.

### **Flow of Blood for Twelve Years**

## **Read Mark 5:25-28**

25 Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, 26 and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse.

27 When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. 28 For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well."

We see a woman intent on remaining unnoticed and virtually invisible approaches the crowd and comes up behind Jesus thinking she can touch Him, be healed, and remain unnoticed. Why would she desire to remain invisible?

In verse 25, we see that she had a flow of blood for twelve years. This poor woman had been suffering with a condition that made her hemorrhage for twelve long years. With today's medical advances, women don't have to suffer through such conditions, but it's important to note what may have caused her illness so that we can understand her desperation, fear, and embarrassment. The condition may have been caused by a hormonal imbalance, uterine fibroids, uterine polyps, endometriosis, or cancer which would have resulted not only in pain, but anemia and fatigue. In her time, there was very little that could be done for women with such conditions, and as verse 26 tells us, she had suffered many things from many physicians. Aside from the physical pain that this condition was inflicting on her body, she lost all her money looking for a cure, and only got worse.

In addition to the physical pain, under Mosaic Law she was considered unclean and therefore was banished from her community until she was healed. Numbers 5:2-3 says, "Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper, everyone who has a discharge, and whoever becomes defiled by a corpse. 3 You shall put out both male and female; you shall put them outside the camp, that they may not defile their camps in the midst of which I dwell." This explains why she was trying to avoid being seen.

It was an act of desperation that forced her to enter the crowd of people. Leviticus 15:25-28 further details the ramifications of her condition:

"25 'If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her customary impurity, or if it runs beyond her usual time of impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her customary impurity. She shall be unclean. 26 Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her

impurity. 27 Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.”

This woman was considered unclean as long as she had her flow regardless of the reason. And those who were around her could be considered unclean as well if they came in contact with her impurity.

Therefore, this woman who was desperate to be healed was also desperate to remain hidden. So, “27 When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. 28 For she said, ‘If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.’” Her faith may have been imperfect, not fully understanding who Jesus was or what it meant to be fully healed, but she believed that even a tiny touch of his clothing would heal her.

## **Complete Healing**

### **Read Mark 5:29-34**

29 Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. 30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?”

31 But His disciples said to Him, “You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’ ”

32 And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. 33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

The woman wanted to avoid being seen or heard because she was considered unclean. She may have only lightly touched Jesus clothing to avoid contaminating Him, but she had faith that would be enough to heal her. As soon as she touched the hem of his garment, the flow of blood stopped, and she felt that she was healed. Any pain that she had as a result of her affliction was gone. In that moment, she may have felt relief that her suffering was finally over, and she could sneak away and live her life in peace, but Jesus felt “that power had gone out Him” and looked to see who touched His clothes.

Jesus stopped in the midst of the chaos and “pressing” business to attend to this hurting woman who would have been content to remain in the shadows healed of her embarrassing and painful affliction, but she needed to be made whole. By Levitical law, she would have to wait seven more days before returning to society. Leviticus 15:28 says, “But if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean.” However, Jesus made her whole in that moment. In verse 34 Jesus tells her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

The woman’s faith in Christ made her well, not her actions nor His robe. When I’m out shopping, sometimes I see signs that say, “Have Faith,” but they never say faith in what. We can’t just have faith in faith, or faith that things are going to get better on their own. We also can’t think that we save ourselves if we just have faith in humanity. It is important that we are deliberate about where our faith lies, “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified” (Galatians 2:16).

He healed her spirit by giving her peace. Although the physical flow and pain had stopped when she touched His robe, she still carried twelve years of stress, anxiety, and isolation. Jesus healed her by giving her peace. As Jesus told the disciples in John 14:27, “27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” It is only through Christ that we can have that peace that surpasses all understanding, “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

Finally, He healed whatever was causing her affliction. As women, we might feel like our bodily aches and pains aren’t important and don’t matter to the Lord, but as we see in this account, Jesus stopped in the middle of pressing business to attend to a woman who needed healing for something very personal and embarrassing to her. We can take all our aches and pains to the Lord and lay them at His feet and pray for healing. He made us, so He knows exactly what we are struggling with. Nothing is too small for Him. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God all your cares on him” (Philippians 4:6).