

## “Just A Touch”

**Matthew 9:21 (NIV)** “She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.”

We're on week 2 of our series of “What she said,” a look at 5 meaningful moments of women in the Bible. Last week we looked at Ruth and her dedication to faithfulness and commitment, today we are looking at a woman of whom we know very little about. We don't know her name. We don't have a lot of quotes from her, in fact in the 3 gospels that tell her story, the Matthew account is the only one that has her directly speaking this quote. We know she spoke to Jesus, but all we got is a summary statement. This is a woman who was in a position of pain. A position of suffering. A position of desperation. Her last chance for hope was an encounter with Jesus, and in that way she is like us all. An interaction with Jesus is not our last hope, but truly our best and only hope. We are going to be looking at this woman's story from 3 different perspectives, and 3 different touches we can take away from it.

Matthew 9, Mark 5, and Luke 8 intertwine together to give us a full picture of the scenario. Here's what we know. Jesus was busy. Not just average busy, but busy for even Jesus. He was teaching and was interrupted to go save a dying girl.

**Mark 5:21-24 (NIV)** “**21** When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. **22** Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. **23** He pleaded earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” **24** So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him.”

**Matthew 9:18-19 (NIV)** “**18** While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, “My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live.” **19** Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.” - Matthew 9

**Luke 8:40-42 (NIV)** “**40** Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. **41** Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house **42** because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him.”

You see how congestive and aggressive this situation is. Mark states “A large crowd followed and pressed around Him.” Luke even states “The crowds almost crushed Him.”

Jesus had so many people fighting for his attention. People just like us, all wanting something from God. Jesus became aware of a little girl who's life was ending and Jesus shifted what He was doing to go tend to her. He knew God had a plan for this little girl, and that this situation would bring God glory. While Jesus' focus outwardly was on Jairus' daughter, there was another woman who was also desperately in need of Jesus. A woman who had been through incredible suffering for more than a decade. A woman, who saw how busy Jesus was, but wasn't willing to wait.

## **Touch #1: You can't wait for life to seem convenient to draw closer to God**

There are a lot of times life seems so busy that we feel like we need it to slow down or calm down for us to draw near to God. We need ball season to be over. We need school to slow down. We need work to let up. We need so many things to line up before we take the chance to prioritize God. Life rarely works that way, and like us, **we need to realize that if we think Jesus is worth it, we can't wait for it to be convenient.**

**Mark 5:25-28 (NIV)** “**25** And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. **26** She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. **27** When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, **28** because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.””

**Matthew 9:20-21 (NIV)** “**20** Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. **21** She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.””

**Luke 8:43 (NIV)** **43** And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her.”

This poor woman had been through so much. I know there's only so much I can relate to on this subject, but I know the concept of bleeding for twelve years is a miserable, lonely, sad place to be. There's the physical pain and suffering that comes with it. Not only did she just endure her own body's pain, but her doctors had brought on suffering as well. She had also spent all of her financial resources. So she was in pain, she was alone, she was destitute, and if this wasn't something you had knowledge of, by the laws of Judaism of that time, she was also spiritually and ceremonially “Unclean.” Because she was bleeding, she was untouchable. She had to separate and keep her distance from everyone else. **Because of their beliefs at the time anything she touched became unclean in the process.**

When she was talking about touching Jesus' cloak, it wasn't just about knowing He had power, but it was also the fact that because this woman was considered unclean, she wouldn't have dared intentionally touch Jesus because that would make Him unclean as well.

**Some of us find ourselves in that same place and position, we won't draw near to Jesus because we're too broken. We're too sinful. We've made too many mistakes.** Folks that is never gonna be the case. No matter who has turned you away, Jesus is gonna welcome you in.

**Romans 5:20-21 (NIV)** **20**The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, **21** so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

**1 John 1:9 (NIV)** “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

Jesus wasn't going to reject this woman, and this woman had enough faith to believe that an encounter with Him would be enough to heal her. She believed Jesus could do what doctors couldn't. She believed Jesus could do what money couldn't. She believed Jesus could do what her own body couldn't. Remember the phrase we focused on for this message

**Matthew 9:21 (NIV) 21** She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.””

She didn't say this to anyone else. She said it to herself. **Touch #1: You can't wait for life to seem convenient to draw closer to God**

**Touch #2: We Need To Speak The Truth of Scripture Into Our Lives**

**What we say to ourselves is important.** She had enough faith to encourage herself to move forward. When we speak death and hopelessness into our lives, we can't be surprised when we end up hopeless.

**Proverbs 18:21 (NIV)** “The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”

So often what we tell ourselves will push us away from steps of faith. That pure faith that knows Jesus can do all the things we can and can't. That pure faith that leans on Jesus because it's stopped leaning on our own understanding. She had tried everything else, and Jesus was all that she had left to have hope in. Rapper Andy Mineo states “The opposite of faith isn't doubt. It's when we have it all figured out.” **When we realize Jesus is our true hope, our future truly begins.**

Look what happens when she acts on her faith:

**Luke 8:44 (NIV) 44** She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.”

**Mark 5:29 (NIV) 29** Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.”

In Mark and Luke's account of this story, **her healing took place the moment she took action.**

She didn't get a special blessing from Jesus teaching. She didn't take a class. She didn't baptized. She didn't serve in the children's church or on the parking team. She believed enough to take a step of action, and it brought her healing. A few weeks ago we talked about the story of a blind man who had a 3 stage healing process. This woman literally applied faith + laundry and got a miracle. We would all be surprised if we had a little bit more courage to truly put our faith into action. But remember, the crowds were thick. Jesus was almost being crushed. For

this woman to get close enough to Jesus, it also meant that she was too close to get away from Jesus, and He had some questions for her.

### **Touch #3: We can't be silent when God is calling for our testimony**

**Luke 8:45-47 (NIV)** “45 “Who touched me?” Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.” 46 But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.” 47 Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

**Mark 5:30-33 (NIV)** 30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?” 31 “You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’ ” 32 But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. 33 Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth.

This is a woman who had been living in isolation. This was a woman who had been living in perpetual distance from people. This is a woman that up until this point only spoke to herself in scripture, and now was surrounded by a large crowd of people, and was being questioned by the messiah that had just healed her. And in the presence of all these people, she gave her testimony. God used this woman's testimony to share with and minister to this crowd in a way that was completely different from how Jesus had been operating so far. Jesus gave this woman a chance to testify and she used it well!

Jesus didn't actually have to say anything to this woman for her to be healed. That part had already been accomplished. The work was done in her body, but the work was only beginning in that crowd. There would be people that would hear this woman's testimony that day, and it would shift their whole life eternally.

***The Bible is not a convincing argument for those who don't believe in the Bible.*** When people are out there asking questions in the world, a bible verse to them won't carry the same weight as a personal testimony. You should absolutely be able to give a scriptural reason for why you believe what you believe (**1 Peter 3:15** "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."), but please understand.

***Like this woman in the story, your testimony holds power!***

Jesus didn't have to speak for her to be healed, but Jesus used her faith, her action, and her testimony to provide a witness and example for that large crowd 2,000 years ago, and for us here today

**Mark 5:34 (NIV)** 34 He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

**Matthew 9:22 (NIV)** “22 Jesus turned and saw her. “Take heart, daughter,” he said, “your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed at that moment.”

**Luke 8:48 (NIV)** “48 Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.””

This woman who only exists in a few verses of scripture in this one moment is a champion of faith. She rose beyond the bitterness. She rose above the discouragement and disappointment. She rose past the crowds and inconveniences, and she reached for Jesus. Imagine how different her life looked from this day forward. To wake up the next morning for the first time without her own body rebelling against her. For her to be able to walk up to someone and touch them without it being an issue. To be able to sit with people and have a meal without apprehension. Her life started anew. It's a beautiful thing to imagine, but let me ask you this, what would life be like if you are finally free from the things hanging over you. How beautiful would it be to be free from your thorn in the flesh, from the things that torment you, from the things that easily entangle you.

**Invitation:**

Have you given up on things ever getting better?

Have you been refusing to take a step of faith?

Are you talking yourself out of following God?

Are you refusing to give God praise and testimony for the things He's done for you?

This story was literally the pause in the midst of another miracle.