

Reaching Out to Jesus – Matthew 9:18-26

Introduction: Warren Wiersbe calls Matthew 9 “*The Presentation of the Power of the King*” Matthew records 5 impossible situations in which the power of Jesus to heal was demonstrated and 3 confrontations with religious traditionalists in which the power of Jesus’ wisdom was put to the test. And in each case, Jesus’ power was more than adequate for every situation. There are no incurable diseases with Jesus. There are no hopeless situations with Jesus. There are no unanswerable questions with Jesus. In every circumstance, Jesus had more than enough power; more than enough compassion; more than enough time, and more than enough answers. He proved in Chapter 9 that He is the Great Psychiatrist; the Great Physician; the Great Pediatrician and the Great Philosopher.

In most of these cases, Jesus reached out to heal, and to set the record straight. However, this morning, I want to consider the power of Jesus in the account of the healing of the diseased woman who reached out to Him. This portion of Scripture is kind of like a parenthesis in the action. Jesus is on His way to heal the daughter of Jairus but suddenly He is interrupted by a weak, timid, dying woman who reached out and touched Jesus. And when she did, her life was transformed.

Do you need a transformation in your life? Well, you can have it, if you will only reach out and touch the Healer! Let’s look at this passage. **READ Mt. 9:18-26.** First, let’s look at:

1. The Hardship She Suffered

We are told that this woman had been bleeding for 12 years. She was hemorrhaging and it couldn’t be stopped. We don’t know what caused this bleeding, but whatever may have caused it, she was suffering greatly.

A. She Suffered Physically. This woman would have been pale and weak and anemic. She would have had no energy. Every effort to do anything would have worn her out. Her disease was literally beating her down every day she lived.

Mark’s gospel tells us that she “*suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors*” (5:26 NIV). No doubt, many of these doctors weren’t real doctors in the sense that we think of doctors. They were quacks as we would call them. More than likely, all these men knew to do was to try out one superstitious remedy after another. But not only that:

B. She Suffered Socially - She could not be married, because, through physical contact, she would defile her husband. If she had ever been married, her husband would have been forced to divorce her. She could not work around others because if they touched her, they would think that they were in danger of getting her disease. This meant that she was probably a beggar.

C. She Suffered Emotionally - Since the Bible says that she had been this way for 12 years. She has lived her life moving from one rejection to another. She is lonely and desperate!

D. She Suffered Religiously - Under the Law, this woman was to be considered unclean. Anything or anyone that she touched was also considered unclean. As a result, she could not mingle with people in public, or even worship in the Temple lest she cause other people to be defiled.

E. She Suffered Financially - Mark tells us that she had "*spent all she had.*" The doctors and their worthless remedies had not helped her. All they had done was drain her bank account dry. She has been left penniless and destitute.

After all the years, all the doctors, all the times she had hoped this remedy would be the one that would work for her, she has come to the place where she knows she will not get better. She knows she will die from this disease. She has just about given up.

I wonder how many people can identify with this woman? You might not be as sick physically as this lady, but your life is filled with suffering and sorrow. This lady is a picture of two types of people today:

This woman is a picture of every person who does not know Jesus Christ as Savior. In our unregenerate state, we have a condition that we are powerless to do anything about. We can spend our lives looking in many places for a cure, but instead of getting better we will only get worse. All our efforts at self-improvement will not help our condition.

Not only that, this lady is also a picture of the believer who is laboring under a heavy burden. Many of Christians are living discouraged and defeated lives today. They've have tried everything in their power to do better. They've read all the self-help books, listened to all the preachers, and gotten advice from the best counselors, but they're no better off. If that describes you today, keep listening, because as we watch this poor woman get the help she needs, we are going to find out about the help we need as well.

2. The Hope She Sensed

Somehow this lady heard about Jesus. Maybe she had heard how He had healed the leper. Maybe she had heard about that wild man just across the lake that Jesus had helped. Or, maybe she knew the paralyzed man whom Jesus had healed and forgiven.

We don't know how she heard, but we know that this lady had heard that there was power in His touch. And she sensed that this man could help her. She knew she had to get to Him because her hope had just about run out. Jesus was her last resort. She believed with all her heart that if she could just get to Him, she would be healed. She demonstrated great courage by approaching Jesus in that crowd. As she made her way through the people, she was risking a lot. She was risking passing her disease on to everyone she came in contact with. She was risking her own safety, for had anyone recognized her, she would have been subjected to public humiliation and ridicule. Perhaps, she would have been taken away and stoned to death. But for this lady, it was a risk worth taking. She knew what Jesus would do for her if she could just get to Him!

By the very nature of her disease, it would have taken all the energy she had to drag herself out of her bed to struggle through that crowd to get to Jesus. She was desperate!

Have you reached that place in your life? Have you come to understand that Jesus is the only hope you have? If you're here today, and you're lost, you desperately need to get to Jesus! He is your only hope. He's the only source of salvation for you. If you have never trusted Him for salvation, then you need to reach out and by faith touch Him today!

Or, you may be here today and you are at the end of your rope. The weight of your burdens is dragging you down. You may be saved, but you're living a defeated life. If that is you, you need to reach out and touch Jesus as well. The sooner you come to realize that Jesus is the only one who can help you, the sooner you can get the help you need! Listen what He says to you:

Matthew 11:28 (NIV) *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*

Hebrews 4:16 (NIV) *"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."*

1 Peter 5:7 (NIV) “*Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*” _Why should you carry that burden, or fight that battle, or live a defeated life for another day? You don’t have to! Get to Jesus, and reach out and touch Him. He will help you!

3. The Healing She Seized

When this lady got close enough to Jesus, she reached out a trembling hand and touched the hem of His garment. The word “*touched*” means “*to cling to or to adhere to.*” In other words, she seized Him and held onto Him until she got what she came after! Then, immediately she received what none of the doctors or their remedies could give her; she was healed! Instantly, she felt the change in her body. She knew she was a different woman!

And, as soon as this woman touched Him, Jesus knew that “*power*” had gone out from Him. Mark’s Gospel says Jesus looked around and asked, “*Who touched My clothes?*” Of course, there were hundreds of people bumping into Him that day, but her touch was different. This lady’s touch was a touch of faith.

Mark tells us that the woman knew that it was her touch Jesus was talking about so she came to Jesus in fear and fell before Him. Why was she afraid? She was afraid of being rejected again! She was afraid of being humiliated again. But Jesus wasn’t going to shoo her away. He wanted to help her with her problem!

But, when the lady told Jesus everything, Jesus heard her faith. He saw her determination and her heart, and He healed her.

Now, don’t forget: Jesus was on His way to heal Jarius’ daughter. This little girl was at the point of death! But as Jesus made His way to Jarius’ house, in spite of how serious the little girl was, Jesus took time to stop for this woman! For you see, her need was important too. And so, for that moment, she was the center of His attention!

That ought to tell us something. In spite of how busy God is controlling the universe, listening to each and every prayer, keeping gravity in check – He still has time for you when you call on Him in faith. Don’t think for a minute that He doesn’t care for you! Don’t believe it when someone tells you that you’re too bad for Jesus to love. You’re not too far away to keep from touching Jesus. Jesus was all God, but He was also all human. Jesus became flesh so He could be touched by our infirmities.

This lady found out first hand how personal the Lord is. Jesus called her “*daughter.*” This signifies that fact that they are in a different relationship now. She got more than physical healing that day. This lady who was considered an unclean outcast, a nobody, and a loner, now had been adopted into God’s forever family! Her faith had brought her a whole lot more than she bargained for that day! Jesus said to her, “*your faith has healed you.*” That meant not only physically, but spiritually as well. She had been made whole! And she would never be the same.

Whenever you come to Jesus, you always get more than you bargained for. You get more than fire insurance –

- You get delivered from the penalty of sin.
- You are adopted into God’s family.
- You are promised a home in Heaven.
- You become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus.
- You’ll gain a new direction and new desires in life.
- You’ll get peace in having a secure relationship.

All that in exchange for your old way of life. Sounds like a good deal to me.

Conclusion: If you’ve come to the place where you know that you are lost and in need of a Savior, please know that Jesus is passing by today. If you’ll just reach out and touch Him, He will take time to save you today. If you’re a believer, but you know that something is missing in your Christian life, today would be a great time to reach out and touch Him and let him fix things up.

If you’ve reached the place where all other remedies have failed, all other means have exhausted themselves and you need help right now, I want to invite you to come to Jesus!

Don’t be one of those people who brush up against Jesus this morning and leave unchanged. If you need help, look to Him, He has the power to change your situation. If you need help, get to Him and touch Him by faith!