Reach Out

Day Fifteen: Lessons from the Woman with an issue of blood
Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48

Today’s woman is one I am beginning to sympathize with more and more. Living with a long, drawn-out illness is difficult to understand until you go through it yourself.

We learn several things about this woman from the three times her story is told in the Gospels.

- Her illness had been going on for 12 years
- She had suffered many things from many physicians
- She had spent all that she had
- She continued to get worse

Do you think she felt a little hopeless at times?

This woman listened to all the chatter going on about Jesus (Lk. 8:39-40). The next time He was in the area, she followed the crowds that followed Him.

She thought to herself that if all she did was to touch Jesus, she would get well (Mt. 9:21; Mk. 5:28). She reached out her hand and touched the hem of Jesus’ cloak. “Immediately” her hemorrhage stopped (Lk. 8:44)! In Mark’s telling it says, “Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction” (Mk. 5:29).

This woman had lived with this problem for years. She was very much aware of what her body felt like living with it! The healing was so complete that she could immediately tell the difference. There was no question that she was healed, and healed completely.
Jesus notices that power has been drawn from Him, and He turns seeking the one who touched Him.

The woman, even though afraid, comes forward and tells Him what she did and what happened to her.

Jesus tells her “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction” (Mk. 5:34).

Her faith had made her well.

Her faith brought her to the place where Jesus was – but she wasn’t made well yet.

Her faith caused her to think “if I just touch Him, I may be healed” – but she wasn’t made well yet.

Only when her faith moved her to reach out and accept the gift that Jesus held – the power to heal her – was she made whole.

She did nothing to earn it. Jesus did not owe her the payment of health in response to her belief. Jesus did come to heal – as we saw in the lesson from the widow of Zarephath. He said He was the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-2.

There were other people in the crowd pressing all around Jesus. Some of them were also seeking healing (Lk. 8:41-42), but not all received what they were looking for by simply touching Jesus (Mt. 9:27-31). Only she did.

Many things can make us well. Jesus said that physicians are for the sick, not the healthy (Mt. 9:12). This woman made use of the options that were available to her. If she had been healed by them, it would have still been by the grace of God.

This miracle proved Jesus was from God. It proved that the preaching He brought was truth. It also proved that those who seek will find (Mt. 7:7).

God’s grace is a treasure we all should be seeking (Col. 2:1-3). His healing, His comfort, and His salvation are all things of high value.

Jesus taught many parables about how the kingdom is a treasure worth giving up things for (Mt. 13:44; 13:45; Mk. 10:29-30), fighting for (1 Tim. 6:12), and sacrificing ourselves for (Rom. 12:1-2).
Be like the woman with a hopeless medical condition who did not give up hope. Push through the crowd of your own doubts, fears, and pain. Reach out (Acts 17:26-28) your hand in faith to God who is but waiting for you to do something. Do something to show Him how much you value what you are seeking.

Walk away from the things that crucify His Son (Heb. 10:29). Submit yourself to His will and be buried in baptism to wash away your sins (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:4; 1 Pet. 3:21). Learn the lessons grace teaches (Titus 2:11-14) and be found useful (Heb. 6:1-8).

This woman was blessed with having Jesus standing right in front of her face. Her fear of failure did not keep her back. Fear of not being worthy did not stop her. She had a need and she knew Jesus was the answer to it. She reached out and accepted what He offers to all of us – healing and becoming whole in Him (Col. 2:9-14).

He is waiting. He is right there (Acts 17:27) waiting. Reach out.

Enjoy!