

## Touch the Hem of His Garment

**Text:** Mark 5:25-34

### **Introduction:**

1. The context: Christ has just healed the Gadarene demoniac (Vs. 1-20)
2. The chapter: Christ demonstrates his power over devils, disease and death. “He delivered in turn a man, a woman, and a child.” (Phillips)
3. This miracle occurs back on the Western side of the lake (Vs. 21) while Christ was on His way to perform another miracle in the healing of Jairus’ daughter. So, this miracle is a miracle within a miracle! Read Vs. 21-24 for the context.
4. The key theme is found in the words “thy faith hath made thee whole” (Vs. 34). This same phrase is translated elsewhere as “thy faith hath saved thee” (e.g. Lk. 7:50; 18:42). This woman is an example of someone who through faith, experienced the saving, life transforming power of Christ. We will consider this miracle under 5 divisions.

### **I. Her Condition (Vs. 25-26)**

#### **A. The Defilement of Her Condition (Vs. 25a)**

1. Pronounced Unclean by the Law (Lev. 15:25-27)
  - a. Note particularly Lev. 15:25 – *“And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation: she shall be unclean.”*
  - b. The law reveals to us our unclean condition before God and is the “schoolmaster” that leads us to Christ (Gal. 3:24-25). Romans 3:19-20 says, *“Now we know...”* The law is holy, just and good but contains to cure, no life transforming power. All it can do is convict and condemn me. When I look at the 10 commandments, I find myself pronounced unclean! (Isaiah 64:6)
2. Pronounced Separated by the Law (Lev. 15:25)
  - a. Separated socially – e.g. from family and friends
  - b. Separated spiritually – e.g. from the temple

#### **B. The Duration of Her Condition (Vs. 25b)**

1. This woman was another hard case. She had been a slave of this impure condition for 12 long, painful years.
2. “The length of the problem does not limit the ability of Christ to remedy the problem.” (Butler)

#### **C. The Distress of her Condition (Vs. 26a)**

1. Rather than easing her pain, these doctors added to her pain!
2. Marvin Vincent documents the medical prescriptions found in the Talmud for treatment of an issue of blood:

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“Take the gum of Alexandria the weight of a zuzee (a fractional silver coin); of alum, the same; of crocus the same. Let them be bruised together, and given in wine to the woman that has an issue of blood. If this does not benefit, take of Persian onions three logs (pints); boil them in wine, and give her to drink, and say, ‘Arise from thy flux’ (flow of blood). If this does not cure her, set her in a place where two ways meet, and let her hold a cup of wine in her right hand, and let someone come behind and frighten her, and say, ‘Arise from thy flux’.” (Quoted by Butler)

3. There are many ‘physicians’ out there offering fake cures for sin and uncleanness. They cannot help you and will only add to your problem. You need the Great Physician, not the ‘physicians’.

### **D. The Destitution of her Condition (Vs. 26b)**

1. All her possessions and finances had been spent in the hopes of a cure from one of these physicians.
2. Sin is expensive whether one is indulging in it or seeking to be delivered from it. What expense people pay to cured of their sin.

### **E. The Deterioration of her Condition (Vs. 26c)**

1. “nothing bettered” = all human efforts had failed. She grew worse under their treatment. Others had failed and she had failed.
2. “grew worse” = her condition was further deteriorating. She could not be “healed of any” (Lk. 8:43) of these physicians.
3. In a similar way, the sin problem does not get better with time and effort, it simply gets worse.

## **II. Her Confidence (Vs. 27-28)**

This woman came to Christ in faith that He could do what she and others could not do. Look at...

### **A. The Prompting of her Faith (Vs. 27a)**

1. “when she had heard of Jesus” = news of this one called Jesus finally reached her in her desperate state. Her heart was stirred with hope that she could finally be cured.
2. “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*” (Rom. 10:17) Hearing the good news of Jesus Christ is the most important news you will ever hear. He is the only one who can save you (Acts 4:12; John 14:6). Jesus is bread for the hungry, water for the thirsty, balm for the broken, conqueror for the captives, deliverance for the damned, father for the fatherless, healer for the helpless, hope for the hopeless and victor for the vanquished.

### **B. The Persistence of her Faith (Vs. 27b)**

1. This was the action of her faith. Her faith drove her to overcome the obstacles that stood in between her and Christ.
2. “the press” = the word speaks of the crowd surrounding Jesus and pressing in upon Him. Verse 24 says the people ‘thronged’ him which means they “pressed in on all sides” (Strongs).
3. Isaiah 55:6-7 “*Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the*

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*unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”*

### C. The Perception of her Faith (Vs. 27c-28)

This woman had faith in some specific truths about Christ. She had...

1. Faith in His Person (Vs. 27c)
  - a. Matthew’s account specifically mentions that she touched “the hem of his garment” (Matt. 9:20). Luke says “the border of his garment” (Lk. 8:44). The reference is to “an outer garment...to the four corners of which tassels were attached (Num. 15:37-40; Duet. 22:12)” (Hiebert).
  - b. This woman did not touch Christ’s garment generally but she touched it specifically. The O.T. predicted that Messiah would have healing powers in the borders of His garment. Malachi 4:2 *“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings...”*
2. Faith in His Perfection (Vs. 27c)
  - a. The ribband of blue on the four tassels of Christ’s garment would have reminded her of the law. (See Numbers 15:38-40)
  - b. That ribband of blue in the border of Christ’s garment testified of two truths:
    - i. **The corruption of man** on account of his disobedience to the law
    - ii. The **perfection of Jesus Christ** on account of his perfect obedience to the law
    - iii. We see our sinfulness in the light of His holiness, our corruption in the radiance of His beauty, our transgressions in the blaze of His perfection and our iniquities in the mirror of His purity.
3. Faith in His Power (Vs. 28)
  - a. “for she said” = imperfect tense. She said this “within herself” (Matt. 9:21) repeatedly as she made her way to Christ
  - b. “I may touch but his clothes” = what power Christ has that even just coming into contact with His clothes would heal!
  - c. “I shall be whole” = this is the language of faith! She was absolutely certain of Christ’s power to heal her.
  - d. Note: Under Jewish law, her touch should have made Christ unclean. But instead of her making Christ unclean, Christ made her clean!

## III. Her Cure (Vs. 29)

### A. The Speed of her Cure (Vs. 29a)

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1. 'straightway' = the healing took place in an instant, in a moment of time.
2. Challenge: Salvation is a moment in time experience, not a process. You have to be born again before you can start growing!

### **B. The Soundness of her Cure (Vs. 29b)**

1. "fountain of her blood" = the source of the problem was dealt with.
2. "dried up" = this was no superficial cure. It was a complete cure.

### **C. The Sense of her Cure (Vs. 29c)**

1. "she felt in her body that she was healed" = as soon as she came into contact with Christ by faith, she recognized the change within her. "Amazing grace tis heaven below to feel the blood applied"
2. 2 Corinthians 5:17 *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*
3. Illustrations
  - a. John Newton – Amazing Grace
  - b. Sam Jones (1847 to 1906)

Sam Jones was an intelligent man with a lawyer's degree but was a drunk and would beat his wife until she was black and blue. However, he was converted to Christ in August of 1872. A turning point came when he was on a six-week drinking binge and heard that his father was seriously ill. On his deathbed, his father's words pierced the heart of young Sam – "My poor, wicked, wayward, reckless boy. You have broken the heart of your sweet wife and brought me down in sorrow to my grave. Promise me, my boy, to meet me in Heaven." Overcome with emotion, Sam fell to his knees and took his dying father's hand, and shouted "I promise, I'll quit drinking and set things straight. I'll meet you and mother in heaven." The father died and Sam kept his promise. He tells about his last encounter with drink: "I went to the bar and begged for a glass of liquor. I got the glass and started to drink and looked into the mirror. I saw my hair matted, the filth and vomit on my clothes, one of my eyes totally closed, and my lips swollen. And I said, "Is that all that is left of the proud and brilliant lawyer, Sam Jones?" I smashed the glass on the floor and fell to my knees and cried, "Oh God! Oh God, have mercy!" The bartender ran to my side and thought I was dying and I was! I said, "just let me alone." I picked myself up and staggered to my cheap rooming house and went through three days and nights of hell, but when the morning came, something had happened to old Sam Jones." Sam Jones went to the clothing store and bought a new set of clothes and then then went to the barber for a bath, a shave and a haircut. Putting on his new clothes and looking pale and weak he returned home to his heart broken wife. At first, she didn't even recognize her own husband. He recounts the scene: "Honey, God has given you a new husband and the children a new daddy, and I wonder if you will forgive me and start all over again." She grabbed me in her arms and cried, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I have been praying for this!" And I have been going around the country bragging about Jesus ever since."

4. Jesus Christ can take a man like Saul, a murderer, blasphemer and persecutor and turn him into a preacher of the Gospel; He can take a woman like the woman of Samaria with shattered morals and broken hopes and dreams and make her clean and pure; He can take a dishonest tax collector like Matthew and make him honest and trustworthy; He can take a proud, rough fisherman like Peter

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and make him humble and gracious and the good news is that Christ can transform you too!

### IV. Her Confession (Vs. 30-33)

#### A. The Prompting of her Confession (Vs. 30-32)

1. The Purpose of Christ's question (Vs. 30) Christ did this for the woman's benefit. It was intended to encourage the confession. Christ would have us declare our faith openly and publicly.
2. The Protest of Christ's question (Vs. 31) The disciples were quick to question the wisdom of our Lord's question. Not surprisingly, Peter acted as their spokesman! (Luke 8:45) Christ was aware of something the disciples were not. They were only viewing things from the outside appearance.
3. The Persistence of Christ's question (Vs. 32; Luke 8:46)

#### B. The Proclamation of her Confession (Vs. 33)

1. Observe her humility – “fell down before him”
2. Observe her honesty – “told him all the truth” She went public with her testimony! She declared what Christ had done for her “before all the people” (Lk. 8:47)
3. Challenge: Baptism for the Christian is a vital, first step of obedience to publicly declare your faith in Christ.

### V. Her Comfort (Vs. 34)

Because of what Christ had done she knew the comfort of:

#### A. A New Position (Vs. 34a)

1. 'daughter' = this is the only time Christ uses this title of a woman. “It affectionately assured her of the spiritual relationship with Him into which she had entered.” (Hiebert)
2. 1 John 3:1 *“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:”*

#### B. A New Promise (Vs. 34b)

1. What she already knew by experience was now confirmed by His Word.
2. The promises of God are the foundation of our salvation.

#### C. A New Peace (Vs. 34c)

1. Romans 5:1-2 *“Therefore being justified by faith...”*
2. Colossians 1:20 *“And having made peace through the blood...”*

#### D. A New Preservation (Vs. 34d)

1. “be whole of thy plague” = these words were a guarantee that this cure would be permanent. She was to continue in that state.
2. We are “kept by the power of God” (1 Pt. 1:5) See also John 10:27-28. “...whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever...” (Ecc. 3:14)

**Conclusion:** Have you touched the Lord by faith? Do you confess Christ publicly?