

Come to Jesus

BY PASTOR JOE FOCHT



But as He [Jesus] went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians... came from behind and touched the corner of his garment.

Luke 8:42b-43

Jesus was headed to Jairus' house, where Jairus' daughter lay dying (vv. 41-42). But on His way, there was what seemed to be an interruption. To Jesus, however, this was not an interruption; you cannot interrupt Someone who knows the end from the beginning. To Him, a broken heart and life is never an interruption.

This woman's story is one of despair and fatigue. Can you imagine bleeding for 12 years? Church tradition says her name was Veronica, that she had been wealthy before her illness, and that her hemorrhage resembled an ongoing menstrual cycle. The law stated that a woman experiencing such was unclean (Leviticus 15:19-25). Therefore she was cut off from family, employment, religious leaders, and worship opportunities; she was a burden on society, ruined, depleted, defiled, ostracized, and alone. She was not allowed to enter the temple. Additionally, Jewish leaders of her day typically viewed a prolonged illness as a consequence of sin. Specifically, they likely thought her ongoing cycle was due to adultery.

After spending all her livelihood on medicine, the woman heard about Jesus (Mark 5:26-27). Verse 28 records that she said to herself, ***"If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well."*** The Greek word translated *touch* here means to cling to, to take firm hold of. ***[She] came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped*** (Luke 8:44). This woman, in all her fatigue and sorrow, pushed through the throng, grasped Jesus' garment, and was immediately rejuvenated. Mark 5:32 says ***He looked around to see her who had done this thing***, and the woman came forward and fell at His feet. She likely said something

like, "Lord, Master, I am undone; 12 years of my life are gone, down the drain. My husband left me, my kids have turned away, and I don't have a friend. I'm unclean, and I didn't mean to defile You. But when I touched You, I immediately felt Your healing power." Wonderfully, He is willing to be our last resort—willing to wait until our reaching out is genuine—until all other means have failed.

And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well."

Mark 5:34a

As she trembled, the whole crowd was listening and probably thinking, *Who is this lady?* They likely thought, *Oh great, now all of His garments will have to be cleaned.* When we come into contact with Jesus, however, our defilement doesn't defile Him; His purity purifies us. This is the only person in the four Gospels whom Jesus calls 'daughter'. He doesn't rebuke her; He encourages and cheers her. He was not willing to let her slip away after so many years of loneliness and feelings of unworthiness. Instead, she walked away with the memory of the look in His eyes, of a love she had never known, deep compassion. Tradition records that she was so overwhelmed with Jesus' grace that after returning home, she had the entire scene depicted in bronze.

Sometimes Christians say, *I am not worthy of knowing God; I am unclean.* They try to slip away through the crowd, desiring anonymity. But Jesus desires us to have a relationship with Him. Relationship does not wait until glory; it begins now. Do we know Him? Do we know His voice? This woman, though healed, also expected a reproof; that was all she knew. That was what the religious world had taught her.

All other things had failed her. Though she had tried so many other remedies, Jesus

willingly accepted her. He wants you to be burned out on everything else; He wants you to be disillusioned. God daily loads us with benefits and gives us an abundance of blessings in our lives. But they cannot fulfill us. None of them is the center, the richness He longs to give us.

There are so many people who feel unclean, unworthy. It is said that loneliness is one of the greatest plagues of our society. But Jesus wants to know us. He wants to own us publicly. It isn't enough for us to just be saved and get lost in the crowd. He is never content with any of that and He longs to say "This one is washed and cleansed; this is my daughter." That's what's in this process for us. The woman went on and lived her life,

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always remembering the eyes of Jehovah God meeting hers. Redemption and a relationship with God are His free gifts to us through Jesus Christ. By His Spirit, in our brokenness, we say, "Abba, Father." Is that real to us? Is that real to you?

Jesus is not content with religion. He wants a relationship, and you can be a testimony of His love. He loves you, and it's all right if you've tried everything else. Tired of religion? What is your choice? Come to Jesus. 🙏

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