

“Doctrine: AHA! A Tearful Moment”

The Reflection Series

Scripture: Mark 5: 24b-34 (NIV)

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. 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.” ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. 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. ³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering

Subject Question: What Three Aha-Realities are found in Mark’s account of Jesus healing of this woman?

Compliment answer: It’s Ok to Seek Him, It’s Ok to touch Him, and it’s Ok to Adore Him.

Big Idea: The Three Aha Realities that are found in Mark’s account of Jesus healing of this woman are: It’s Ok to Seek Him, It’s Ok to touch Him, and it’s Ok to Adore Him.

Homiletical Idea: “AHA, Really? YES!”

Purpose: I want the congregation to think critically discern the meaning and the promises of this story of Jesus’ healing.

Introduction: Healing. So much of Christianity is divided over this issue: Does Jesus still heal today? And if He does, then how can I be the right person or do the right things to move the healing hand of my Master? To be honest, Jesus does heal at times. But Jesus also, in His sovereignty and Will, and aligned with His overflowing grace for us on a personal level, chooses not heal. The greatest healing that any person can ever experience is a new heart, granted and gifted when a person responds to the claims of the Gospel and accepts

Christ as their personal savior. Jesus said, you must be born again! Nevertheless, in this case, Jesus healed a desperate and discouraged woman who had been suffering for years. The insights that contain several Aha-moments that we can glean from this encounter are truly wonderful and compelling. Let's explore the encounter between the Master and the Maiden.

(It's Our Story)

Ground Work: MacLaren's Expositions

The second stage of this story sets forth a truth involved in what I have already said, but still needing to be dealt with for a moment by itself-namely, that Christ answers the imperfect faith.

There was no real connection between the touch of His robe and the cure, but the poor ignorant sufferer thought that there was; and, therefore, Christ stoops to her childish thought, and allows her to prescribe the path by which His gift shall reach her. That thin wasted hand stretched itself up beyond the height to which it could ordinarily reach, and, though that highest point fell far short of Him, He lets His blessing down to her level. He does not say, 'Understand Me, put away thy false notion of healing power residing in My garment's hem, or I heal thee not.' But He says, 'Dost thou think that it is through thy finger on My robe? Then, through thy finger on My robe it shall be. According to thy faith, be it unto thee.'

And so it is ever. Christ's mercy, like water in a vase, takes the shape of the vessel that holds it. On the one hand, His grace is infinite, and 'is given to every one of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ'-with no limitation but His own unlimited fullness; on the other hand, the amount which we practically receive from that inexhaustible store is, at each successive moment, determined by the measure and the purity and the intensity of our faith. On His part there is no limit but infinity, on our sides the limit is our capacity, and our capacity is settled by our desires. His word to us ever is, 'Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.' 'Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.'

A double lesson, therefore, lies in this thought for us all. First, let us labor that our faith may be enlightened, importunate, and firm: for every flaw in it will injuriously affect our possession of the grace of God. Errors in opinion will hinder the blessings that flow from the truths which we misconceive or reject. Languor of desire will diminish the sum and enfeeble the energy of the powers that work in us. Wavering confidence, crossed and broken, like the solar spectrum, by many a dark line of doubt, will make our conscious possession of Christ's gift fitful. We have a deep well to draw from. Let us take care that the vessel with which we draw is in size proportionate to *its* depth and *our* need, that the chain to which it hangs is strong, and that no leaks in it let the full supply run out, nor any stains on its inner surface taint and taste the bright treasure.

And the other lesson is this. There can be no faith so feeble that Christ does not respond to it. The most ignorant, self-regarding, timid trust may unite the soul to Jesus Christ. To desire is to have; and 'whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely.' If you only come to Him, though He have passed, He will stop. If you come trusting and yet doubting, He will forgive the doubt and answer the trust. If you come to Him, knowing but that your heart is full of evil which none save He can cure, and putting out a lame hand-or even a tremulous finger-tip-to touch His garment, be sure that anything is possible rather than that He should turn away your prayer, or His mercy from you.

- A. It's Ok to Seek Him (Vs.24b-27b) *A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶She 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. ²⁷When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak..*
- B. So many times when I read this story I put myself into it. And maybe you do to. Think about it, life has a way of draining our attention, our security, our physical as well as our spiritual well-being. Like this woman I often have to get knee deep in a situation and then remember that I can go to the Lord. I can seek His help. I **Need** his help. And I know I need His help.
- C. And then of course I beat myself up for not going to the Lord first to begin with. I not only spiritually beat myself up, but I put myself down. Why aren't you more spiritual? Why didn't you go to the Lord... what's wrong with you.
- D. And maybe this is the first lesson for all of us here. Jesus understands how we think, how we feel. Notice that Jesus didn't belittle the woman for not coming to Him sooner. He didn't say, well you know I could have helped you so long ago and maybe if you'd tried me first you wouldn't be broke and desperate. No, no scolding on His part. She in her time made it to Jesus, and there it is—she made it to him. And she found Him. Of all the lessons we can pull from this first part of the story maybe this is the one that we need to hear the most. Stop putting yourself down—stop beating yourself up, give yourself permission to go **now**, knowing that you should have or could have gone first to him, but in reality that doesn't matter, go **now**, this **day**, this **hour**, this **minute**—for when you do, you'll find that He's not in the critical, scolding mode as much as he's in the understanding, caring listening mode. He doesn't love you less for not considering Him first.

(It's Our Story)

- A. It's Ok to touch Him (Vs. 27b-30) *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."²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. ³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"*
- B. Lots of us tend to think that Jesus was mad or appalled or bothered that someone had touched Him. But I think it's just the opposite. He was surrounded by people who we fascinated by Him—curiosity seekers, the crowds whose heads were seemingly right but whose hearts were hopelessly wrong; whose hands reached out and touched Him just so they could say they touched Him.
- C. Yet... In the midst of all the jostling... A finger which conveyed not necessarily a right head, but O so much more, a right heart arrested his attention. That touch Jesus must have been refreshing! Even delightful! How surprising to feel a touch, not of fascination, but what he always had desired: of faith. And I think that touch, "touched" Jesus; more, surprised Him, encouraged Him—the woman's actions to reach out and touch his garment somehow went further, and touched the very heart of Christ.
- D. Could it be Jesus felt the genuineness of her action; her vulnerability, her sincerity, her shy boldness, her willingness to take a chance... if so maybe that's what faith really is. A contrite spirit, a longing soul, a pure heart... A faithful willingness to reach out and touch Him and more a fateful assurance that He wants us too. Could it really be that to move the hand of God... we first have to touch the heart of God!

(It's Our Story)

- A. It's Ok to Adore Him. (Vs. 31-34) 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. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."*
- B. Can you imagine her even now, rising up, covered with the dirt, wide eyed, knowing somehow that the 12 year flow of blood was gone and more, the unending hopelessness that had driven her to this Good

Man... Maybe for the first time in a long time, she felt a semblance of normality, and sanity. How she must have taken pleasure in the thought that she could once again return to her place in the land of the living...

- C. One little aside in our story. She had nothing left to pay Him for doing what the doctors of the age could not do... how could she say thanks...? At this point all she had to offer Him was an unending appreciation; her own hearts devotion and perhaps a life-long adoration. And in essence that's all Jesus really wanted from her.... and from us. She now had a story to share ... a saga of sequences that had changed her life. A testimony of a touch from the Master's hand.
- D. I can see her now, watching Jesus as He moved on out of sight... she, head held a little higher, a little bounce in her step, thinking to herself, How can I not but share what this man did for me... .you see it really had been Our Story all along. And our lessons that we can share with others: Its Ok to seek Him, he can be found, It's Ok to touch Him, he actually wants us to. And yes, It's Ok to adore Him... how can we not...?