

THE TOUCH

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A SERMON
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“She said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.”
Mark 5:28

THE miracle of the healing of this woman occurred while our Savior was on the road to the house of Jairus to raise his daughter, and I have not much doubt that although, in itself, it was a very remarkable miracle, it was not meant to stand quite alone, but had a relation to the Lord's dealings with Jairus.

If I read the narrative rightly, the ruler of the synagogue was about to have his faith severely tried. He had come to the Savior saying that his daughter was lying at the point of death, and beseeching Him to come and heal her. But before He had reached the house, other messengers came to say, “Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further?”

Now, in order that the faith of Jairus might be prepared for that shock, our Lord had afforded him the sight of a special miracle wrought upon this woman. Our Lord had said to him, “Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole,” and as old Bishop Hall says, “To make this good, by the touch of the verge of His garment He revived a woman from the verge of death.”

It is singular that the case of his little daughter, of twelve years of age, was here placed within the region of hope by our Lord's healing a woman who had been exactly the same time subject to a grievous and incurable malady. A woman who led a living death is healed that Jairus may believe that his dead daughter may be raised to life.

Brethren, we never know when God blesses us how much blessing He is incidentally bestowing upon others. It may be that even our conversion had a far-reaching but very distinct connection with the conversion of others. Grace smiles upon its personal subject, but its object reaches beyond the private benefit of the individual.

The Lord is strengthening the faith of another of His children, or it may be He is actually working faith in a convinced soul when He is accepting and honoring our faith, and saving us. We speak of killing two birds with one stone, but our Savior knows how to bless two souls, nay, two thousand souls, with one single touch of His hand.

I will not, however, detain you in the throng of thoughts with which I might preface my discourse upon this interesting narrative, for I long to bring you near to the glorious person of the great Healer of men. Our Lord wrought this miracle while moving on to work another—like the sun, He shines while He pursues His course, and every beam is full of grace. Not only what He does with full purpose is glorious, but He is so full of power and grace that even what He does incidentally by the way is marvelous!

The main course and design of His life must ever engross our most earnest thoughts, but even the minor episodes of His life poem are rich beyond expression, nor is there ever a point of detail which is without instruction. We cannot exhaust the subject, but must be satisfied to leave out many interesting matters, and come at once to the heart of the story.

First, I invite you to look at this woman as *a patient*, and then to observe *the great difficulties with which her faith was surrounded*. Thirdly, we will come to *the vanishing point*, and see how all her difficulties fled like the mists of the morning when she thought of Christ. And lastly, we will dwell upon *her grand success*. It may be the Lord will help us to attain some greater blessing by enabling us to follow her example.

Come, Holy Spirit, and aid our faith that it may bring us into closer and yet closer contact with our divine Lord.

I. First, then, look at THE PATIENT.

She was a woman who had suffered from a very grievous malady which had drained away her life. Her constitution had been sapped and undermined, and her very existence had become one of constant suffering and weakness. And yet *what courage and spirit she displayed*. She was ready to go through fire and through water to obtain health.

She must have had a wonderful amount of vitality in her, for where others would have been lying upon the bed of sickness, and long ago despairing, she still for twelve years continued to seek after a cure from one physician or another. Nothing dampened or daunted her—she would not give up so long as breath remained.

When at last she had found the true Physician, she plunged into the thick of the crowd to touch Him by some means or other. She asked nobody to intercede for her, but with a dauntless courage worthy to be associated with her deep humility, she forced her way through the press to reach the healing Christ. She displayed intense energy, and unconquerable spirit in pursuit of health. O that men were a tenth as much alive to the salvation of their souls.

Note also *her resolute determination*. She would die hard, if die she must. She would not resign herself to the inevitable till she had used every effort to preserve life, and to regain health. For twelve years, it appears she had persevered in different ways and in the teeth of terrible agonies. We are told that she had suffered many things of many physicians.

It is bad enough to suffer many things of one surgeon, but she had suffered many things from many practitioners. The physicians of those days were a great deal more to be dreaded than the worst diseases. If I were now to read to you even a brief account of the surgery practiced in olden times, you would shudder, and beg me to close the book.

Any reasonable person might prefer to suffer from any form of natural disorder rather than submit himself to the hands of the doctors of those days. As for their prescriptions, they were horrible. Even those of a couple hundred years ago, to be found in such books as “Culpepper’s Herbal,” are such a mess and mass of all manner of abominations that it would surely be better to die than to be drenched with such detestable concoctions.

What with cupping, leeching and cutting, cauterizing, blistering, and incision, strapping, puncturing, and putting in setons, patients were made to undergo all manner of unimaginable tortures. The physicians of her day were worthy to have been familiars of the Inquisition, for they had reached perfection in the arts of torment.

Yet the heroic woman before us endured every process which was supposed to have virtue in it. I know not how many operations she had endured, nor how many gallons of nauseous drugs she had swallowed, but they had certainly caused her a vast amount of suffering and bitter disappointment.

Meanwhile her money had been paid away freely till she had nothing left to procure her comforts when she most needed them. As long as her money lasted, she never stinted a single penny of it. The resolution of the woman is well worthy of being observed. She is determined that, if beneath the sky there is a cure, that cure she will have, and as long as there is life left in her, that life shall be spent in somehow or other seeking to baffle death of his immediate prey.

I am glad when I see such resolution in an awakened soul, but how seldom is it to be seen. I am happy when a man, however ignorant of the way of salvation, nevertheless resolves, “I will be saved if salvation is obtainable. Whatever is to be suffered, whatever is to be given up, whatever is to be done, if there is any way of salvation procurable by any means, I will have it. The whole world shall not be reckoned too great an expense. Self-denial of the most arduous kind shall be a trifle to me, if I may but be saved.”

Surely, brethren, the salvation of our immortal soul is worthy of all the intensity of zeal, constancy of purpose, and resoluteness of determination of which we are capable. Who shall count its worth?

Against what shall we weigh the soul? Fine gold of the merchants is as dross compared with our undying spirit. The diamond and the costly crystal are not to be named in comparison with it.

Job said, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." And truly the ransom of the soul is precious. It is a hopeful sign, a gracious token, when there is a determination wrought in men that, if saved they can be, saved they will be.

I admire also this woman's *marvelous hopefulness*. She still believes that she can be cured. She ought to have given up the idea long ago, according to the ordinary processes of reasoning. For generally, we put several instances together, and from these several instances we deduce a certain inference.

Now she might have put the many physicians together, and their many failures, and have rationally inferred that her case was past hope. She might have said, "My disease is incurable. I must ask for patience to bear it till I die, but no longer dream of a cure." But no, bright-eyed woman as I have no doubt she was, she saw hope where others would have despaired. Something within her buoyed her up, and she still had hopes of better days.

And so when she heard of Jesus, her heart leaped within her. Her hope said, "The blessing has come at last. I have long waited for it, and now God has sent it to me. Here it is, and I will seize it at once. Now has the Sun of Righteousness arisen upon me with healing beneath His wings, and I will bathe in His sunlight. Now I have escaped from mere pretenders, and have found one who has real power to heal."

You see, then, the patient. A woman of spirit, of resolution, and of hopefulness. Such persons make grand workers when they are converted. May God grant that I may have many such men and women before me, and may the Master come this morning by His Spirit and do His healing work upon them.

II. But now, secondly, I beg you to join with me in considering THE DIFFICULTIES OF THIS WOMAN'S FAITH.

They must be weighed in order to show its strength. The difficulties of her faith must have been as follows.

First, she could hardly forget *that the disease was in itself incurable, and that she had long suffered from it*. Taken early, many maladies may be greatly mitigated, if not altogether removed. But it was now very late in the day with this poor sufferer. Twelve years—it is a long, long portion of human life during which to have been continually drained of the very sustenance of that life.

To pine and bleed for twelve years is enough to render one hopeless. Can a cure be possible? Can the disease which has taken root in the body for twelve years be eradicated? Can the incurable be healed after all? Her heart would naturally inquire, how can this thing be?

Do you wonder that after being so long weakened by her complaint, and rendered more and more infirm by its long continuance, if it looked to her to be an utter impossibility that she should be healed? Yet observe her conduct and admire it. She staggered not, but believed in Jesus.

And then again *she had endured frequent disappointments*, and all these must have supplied her with terrible reasons for doubting. "Yes," she might have said, "I remember the first physician I applied to, how he told me it was a very small matter, and that if I would purchase a bottle of the large size of his Egyptian elixir, which he had imported from the tombs of the Pharaohs at enormous expense, I should speedily be well. Alas, he only relieved me of my gold.

"Then another famous professor assured me that his pills would do the work if I took them some three hundred times, and was careful to purchase them only of himself, as he alone possessed the secret, and no one else could prepare the genuine article. He had no doubt that I should be greatly improved after the three hundredth box. But alas, after tedious delay, I was no better."

She recollected how, under each new treatment, she interpreted every little change in herself into a hopeful sign, but soon found herself rudely shaken out of her dream by an increase of the evil. Her adventures were many, but all alike sad in their end.

She remembered the grave old physician to whom she went some years ago, who shook his learned head, and assured her that he had scarcely ever met with a more terrible case. It was a great mercy for her that she had come to him, for there was not another man in Palestine who understood the disease.

He believed that he could certainly stop the issue of blood by the daily use of his Balm of Lebanon, prepared from the best gums of the cedar, and the richest juices of odoriferous herbs, mixed in an extraordinary manner, in accordance with the suggestions of the ancients, and the observations of many years of practice.

It was a mercy indeed that he had a little left of this matchless balm, which she could have at a very moderate price considering how much expense it was to him. She had taken it, but it had made her feel a new pain, and had brought on a fresh disease. She had paid heavily to endure two maladies instead of one.

She had changed her doctor, and this time engaged a Greek physician, who heartily condemned all his predecessors as fools, and taught a system so profound that the poor woman could not understand him at all, but believed in him none the less for that, for she set it down to her own ignorance and his deep learning.

He failed, however, and she then tried a Roman doctor, a plain, blunt, practical man, who talked no Greek, but was greatly skilled in the rough and ready treatment of wounded soldiers. After trying medicines for a very considerable time, he informed her that hers was a very suitable case for a famous operation which he had himself first practiced—a beautiful operation indeed.

He had tried it on many scores, and although none had recovered, he believed that his treatment was the best known. She had declined that heroic operation, but she had endured another, and another, until she moved about painfully, with the scars in her flesh of wounds which she had received in the house of her medical friends.

When we consider the long story of which I have thus tried to make a rough draft, it would not have been at all extraordinary if she had said, “I cannot trust anybody else. Now I give it up. I would sooner die than be tortured any more. Better to let nature alone than that I should put myself into the hands of any more of these infallible deceivers.”

Yet she was not dismayed—her faith rose superior to her bitter experience, and she believed in the Lord. It is more easy for me to tell this to you than it is for any of us to realize what her difficulty really must have been. If you too have tried by good works, by ceremonies, by prayers and tears, to obtain salvation, and have been defeated at all points, it is not extraordinary that you should be slow to believe that you can ever be saved. May your faith also, like hers, swim over the crests of the billows of disappointment, and may you hope in the Almighty Savior.

There was also another difficulty in her way, and that was, *her vivid sense of her own unworthiness*. When she thought of Jesus, she viewed Him as a person who was holy as well as powerful. She revered as well as trusted Him. I am sure she did, for though she summoned courage enough to touch Him, her modesty led her to go behind Him, as unworthy to be seen.

She was evidently afraid to face Him, lest He, knowing her unworthiness, as she knew it, should spurn her, and forbid her approach. She was an unclean woman, according to the ceremonial law, and the shame of her disease prevented her venturing upon any verbal request, or open application. She had great confidence in His power and mercy, but she had equal awe of His purity, and therefore feared that He would be angry if she touched Him.

This must have very much hampered her. “How shall I venture to draw near to Him? The other physicians I could approach, for I knew them to be like myself, but concerning Him I find that He is a prophet mighty in word and deed—a man of God—and something more. How shall I dare to approach to Him?”

The thought that she would go behind shows her ignorance of the Lord’s divinity or her forgetfulness of the attribute of omniscience, but still it proves that she labored under a sense of unworthiness, and yet she believed. Ah, dear hearers, when you are bowed down with a sense of your

own sin and folly, may the Holy Spirit lead you still to believe that Jesus Christ is able to make you whole.

I do not know whether the other difficulty did occur to her at all, but it would to me, namely, that *she had now no money*. She had spent all her living, we are told—all her living. The physicians whom she had previously consulted had all been great in the matter of fees—they could diminish her wealth if they could not establish her health.

She had carefully approached them with promises of large reward, assuring them that anything she could give would be freely rendered if she could but be cured. But now she can offer nothing. Her disease remains, but her estate is gone. She is reduced to poverty by her efforts after health—how shall she come before the great Physician of whom she has heard so much?

I should not wonder but what the thought of His great-heartedness, and the many cures which He had worked gratuitously helped her to get over that difficulty. But still it occurs to many to dream of purchasing salvation, and to this day many need to be reminded that Jesus gives His grace to those who have no money, nor any other price to offer Him. His terms are “without money and without price.” But many awakened consciences forget this.

Perhaps the worst difficulty of all was *her extreme sickness* at that time. We read that she was nothing better, but rather grew the worse. She had been bad enough before, but they had aggravated the disease with their strong acrid medicines, and sharp incisions, and fierce blisters. They had made her worse than nature would have left her if it had been let alone.

She had reached a frightful stage of the disease and was confessedly beyond all human help. She was as bad as she could be to crawl about at all. Usually such a sickness depresses the spirits, unnerves the mind, and makes the sufferer feel a lack of energy, so that, resolute woman as she was, we should little have marveled if she had said, “No, I can do no more. I must yield. There is nothing now but to lay me down and die, for I am in such a condition that all attempts to gain health are futile.”

What a grand faith was hers which made her rise above her weakness, overcome her depression of spirit, throw aside the lethargy which was creeping over her, and believe that everything was altered now, for she had no longer to deal with a pretender who would fail her, but with one sent of God, and clothed with infinite power, who could meet her case—even hers.

III. So now we come to our third point, which is THE VANISHING POINT OF ALL HER DIFFICULTIES.

We read of her first that *she had heard of Jesus*. It is Mark who tells us that, “When she had heard of Jesus.” “Faith cometh by hearing.” What had she heard of Him? Is it not more than probable that she had been told of that scene which is pictured in Luke’s Gospel, in the sixth chapter and the nineteenth verse, when, “The whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.”

On one especial day, great multitudes followed our Lord, and pressed upon Him to touch Him, for whosoever touched Him was healed of whatsoever disease He had. What a wonderful scene that must have been when men were so enthusiastic to be blest that they thronged the great Physician!

Not that our Lord was more able to save on one day than on another, but that still there were certain days in which the power seemed to emanate from His person more mightily than at other times, always, as I judge, in proportion to the faith of the people who surrounded Him. On that occasion, being followed by a great company who believed in His healing power, they saw such wonders wrought that they made a general rush at His blessed person, and all who touched obtained healing.

Some conceive that even the healthy touched Him and gained greater vigor from the touch. I should not wonder. At least, in spiritual things it is so. The woman had heard of all the wondrous cures He had wrought, and she said to herself, “Then I will touch Him, and be healed. For if these reports are true, then if I may but touch Him, I too shall be made whole.”

She seems to have believed Christ to be charged with marvelous power, somewhat like a Leyden jar charged with electricity, which gives forth its power most freely. She was not a woman of any great

wisdom, her chief quality was energy. She made a great blunder about our Lord and His garments, but it did not touch the vital point—she so thought of Him as to glorify His power—and it sufficed.

She truly believed *in Him*, and if you believe in Christ, though you are in the dark about a thousand things, your faith will save you. If you do but really believe in Jesus, all your mistakes about Him will not really destroy His power to bless you, nor set His heart against you, nor destroy the value of your faith. “If I touch but his clothes,” says she, “He is so full of power that He will heal me.”

The point to notice most distinctly is this. The poor woman believed that the faintest contact with Christ would heal her. Notice the words of my text, “If I may touch but his clothes.” It is not, “If I may but touch his clothes”—no, the point does not lie in the touch, it lies in what was touched, “If I may touch *but his clothes*. If I cannot get near enough to Him to touch His flesh, if I may touch but His clothes.

“Such is the power which dwells in Him that it overflows even into His garments. And while He wears them they are charged with the virtue which I need—it reaches even to the blue fringe which, as a Hebrew, He wears upon the edge of His robe. I am sure if I touch but that fringe, if I cannot do any more, there will be a connection between Him and me, and I shall be healed.”

Splendid faith! It was not more than Christ deserved, but yet it was remarkable. It was a kind of faith which I desire to possess abundantly. The slenderest contact with Christ healed the body, and will heal the soul—ay, the faintest communication. Do but become united to Jesus, and the blessed work is done. Effect the junction, and the virtue comes to you. “If I touch but his clothes, I shall be made whole.”

I want you carefully to observe that the woman did not seem to think anything about herself. You could not lay the stress upon the pronoun, “If *I* touch but his clothes, *I* shall be made whole.” It would not be in accordance with the context. No, it is, “If I touch but his clothes.” It does not matter who I may be, what my uncleanness may be, what my character may be, what my state of mind may be, if I touch but his clothes, contact being established, I shall be healed.

Every person who comes into contact with Jesus by the touch of faith will partake of His healing power. She knew this, and shut her eyes to all other considerations. She lays no stress upon any mode of touching. No. “If I touch but his clothes”—not embrace Him, nor grasp Him, hold Him, wrestle with Him—no, she believes that any sort of contact will answer the purpose.

Now it is always a blessed thing when a man is taught of God to forget himself, and even to forget his faith, and only think upon the Lord Jesus who is the object of our trust. I admire this woman’s single eye. She sees nothing but Jesus. Dear heart, she felt that the virtue to heal was all *in Him*, and not in her, nor in her touch.

She knew that, whatever she might be, His power could master every difficulty of her case, and that the result did not depend upon the mode of her touch, nor the length during which it lasted, but on Him alone. It was from Him that the virtue was to come, and come it would, however slender the contact. This faith is worth cultivating.

To forget everything else, and only to consider the Lord Jesus and His power to bless—this is wisdom. Here am I, a poor lost sinner, but if I can only get to Jesus I shall be forgiven and saved. Here am I, vexed with unruly passions, diseased with this sin and that, but if I may only touch Him, He is so full of healing power that, mass of spiritual disease though I may be, the moment I touch Him, His virtue will battle with my disease and vanquish it forever.

Behold this woman. Again fix your eye upon her till you have become like her. All her thoughts have gone towards the Lord Jesus. She has forgotten herself, forgotten the rampant fury of her disease, forgotten her being behind and out of sight, and even her own touch of Him she has put into a secondary place.

Everything she looks for must come out of Him. She knows that connected with Him she will obtain the blessing, but apart from Him she will abide in her misery. “If I may touch but his clothes”—not because His garments are in themselves powerful, but because they are, “*his clothes*”—the garments which He is wearing, and which consequently will be a medium of communication with Himself.

There is the vanishing point then, she has come to think of Jesus, and of the certainty of cure through contact with Him. If you, seeking sinners, would but think more of Christ, all would be well. You who cannot believe, if you would relinquish your perpetual thoughts about your faith, and even about your sin, and begin to think of Him—the Son of God, exalted to be a Priest and a Savior, the Christ whose finished work is all for sinners, the Christ of the resurrection, Jesus the ever living, Jesus in whom all power dwells, methinks you would soon obtain eternal salvation.

When your whole heart sets itself upon Him, and no more upon itself, you will enter into peace, and enjoy rest for your souls.

IV. Fourthly, let us speak of HER GRAND SUCCESS.

Let me remind you again, however, of how she gained her end. She gave to the Lord Jesus an intentional and voluntary touch. Upon the intentional character of it, I must insist for a minute. She pressed into the crowd. She was hustled about, I do not doubt, and in her weak state, ready to faint or even to die. In the midst of those rough men who pressed about the Savior, she found no sympathy.

But she is desperately resolute, and bound, by hook or by crook, to touch his clothes. She presses in behind, for she cares not where she touches Him, but touch Him she must. In the throng, the garments of Christ became entangled, and at some little distance from Him she perceives just a bit of the blue fringe hanging out behind. Now is her time—she has only to touch *that*—so strong is her faith that even the hem of His garment suffices her, for it will make a connection between her and the Savior, and that is all she needs.

Her finger is put out, and the deed is done. Yet note that she was not healed by a contact with the Lord or with His garment against her will. She was not pushed against Him accidentally, but the touch was active, and not merely passive. “Thou seest,” said one of the apostles, “the multitude thronging thee and pressing thee.”

There was nothing remarkable of efficacious about such unavoidable and involuntary touches. Her touch was her own distinct, intentional, voluntary act, and it was done under the persuasion that it would bring her a cure.

Such is the faith which brings salvation. It is not every contact with Christ that saves men. It is the arousing of yourself to come near to Him, the determinate, the personal, resolute, believing touch of Jesus Christ which saves. We must believe for ourselves. The Spirit helps us, but we ourselves believe.

Some of you sit still and hope that the Lord will visit you, and you wait by the pool till an angel comes and stirs the water, and all that kind of thing. But that is not according to the tenor of the Gospel command. The Gospel does not come to you and say, “Whosoever waits for impressions shall be saved,” but it says, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: for he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

Exercise the personal, voluntary, intentional act of faith, and you shall be saved. Oh, I would to God that some sinner here, deeply conscious of his guilt, might be aroused to perform that act this morning. However little your knowledge, believe in Jesus as far as you know Him. Though you can only come into contact with that part of Christ which you have learned from the Scriptures, that little of Christ is a part of Himself, and you will have touched *Him*.

You may not be acquainted with the deep things of God, nor with the high doctrines which honor our adorable Lord, but what you do know will suffice for faith. If you say, “I will trust the Lamb of God,” and really do so, then you have come into contact with Him, and you are saved. Ay, though it be but a believing prayer, a believing sigh, a believing tear, you have really reached Him, and you are made whole.

But the touch of faith must be your own act and deed. Nobody is saved in His sleep. Nobody may claim to have been transformed into a living soul unless he can prove it by the living act of trust. There must be this appropriating faith—and this the woman had.

And now see her grand success. She no sooner touched than she was healed. In a moment, swift as electricity, the touch was given, the contact was made, the fountain of her blood was dried up, and health beamed in her face immediately.

Immediate salvation! I heard a person say the other day that he had heard of immediate conversion, but he did not know what to make of it. Now, herein is a marvelous thing, for such cases are common enough among us. In every case spiritual quickening must be instantaneous. However long the preparatory process may be, there must be a time in which the dead soul begins to live. There must be a time in which the babe is not born, and a moment in which it is born.

We are pardoned, or else condemned. There must be a moment in which the man is not pardoned, and another in which he is—and that must be an inappreciable period of time. I grant you that many workings of conscience, and so on, may go before and melt into the actual reception of life, so as to make it appear a gradual work.

But the actual birth—the divine quickening by which the man is made to live in Christ—must of necessity be instantaneous in every case. A man is brought by degrees to a deep sense of sin, to the renunciation of self, and so on. But there is no period in which a man lies between death and life—he either is alive unto God or he is dead in sin.

If he is dead, he is dead, and if he is alive, he is alive, but there is no state between the two. A man is either regenerate or unregenerate. There is no borderland or neutral territory between the two conditions. This woman was healed in a moment, and God can save you, my dear hearers, in an instant. May He do it now! If you now believe, it is done.

There may be cases in which a blessing comes to a man and he is scarcely aware of it, but this woman knew that she was saved. She felt in herself that she was whole of her plague. I do not say that I would like to have undergone her twelve years of suffering for the sake of that moment's joy, but I am sure she was quite content to have done so.

The joy of the first hour in which you know you are saved! It is almost too much to live with. It is well that it does not continue in all its vehemence and ecstasy. That flash of light, brighter than the sun! That flush, that flood, that torrent of unutterable bliss, which bears all before it. When at last we can say, "My sins are assuredly removed from me—I am saved, and know it within myself."—that joy, I say, is beyond all description.

Blessed be God if we have known that bliss! Blessed be God, I say, and I would repeat the thanks a thousand times. Oh, touch the Savior, poor sinner. The Lord deliver you from anything of your own, and bring you now to look for all to Jesus, and you shall know in yourself that you are whole of your plague.

She had next the assurance from Christ Himself that it was so, but she did not obtain that assurance till she had made an open confession. She felt in herself that she was whole, but there was more comfort in reserve for her. The Lord Jesus Christ would have those who follow Him come forward and no longer hide in the crowd.

Those who believe ought to be baptized on confession of their faith. He, who in His heart believes, should with His mouth make confession of Him. So Christ turned round and said, "Who touched my clothes?" At the hearing of that inquiry, the newly-kindled flame of her joy began to damp under the fear of losing what she had stolen. Down went her spirits below zero.

Then the officious disciples said, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and pressing thee, and sayest thou, who touched me?" But Jesus said, as He looked around again, "Somebody hath touched *me*." For not his clothes alone, but Himself had been touched by somebody. That poor "somebody" wanted to sink into the earth. I know she did.

She trembled as Jesus looked for her. Those blessed eyes looked around, and by and by they lighted upon her. And as she gazed upon them she did not feel so much alarmed as before, but still afraid and trembling, she came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth. Then He gently raised her up, and said, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

Now she knew her cure from Christ's lips as well as from her own consciousness. She had now the divine witness bearing witness with her spirit that she was indeed a healed one. Mark then, that those of you who desire to obtain the witness of the Spirit should come forward, and confess your faith, and tell what the Lord has done for you—then shall you receive the sealing witness of the Spirit with your spirit that you are indeed born of God.

God help you tremblers who have at last touched my Master's hem to acknowledge it bravely before all, and specially before Himself.

Brethren, the wine which comes out of these grapes is this—the slightest connection with Jesus will bless us. I desire to send you away with this one truth upon your minds. Whether you are a child of God or not a child of God, hear this weighty doctrine. This woman believed the matchless truth that the least touch of Christ will cure. "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be made whole." Believe this, I pray you, each one for himself.

If you, dear child of God, feel very depressed this morning—coldhearted, dead, sluggish—if you touch but his clothes you shall become warm-hearted again. You shall get all your life and vigor and enthusiasm back again if you only draw near to your Lord.

Do I hear you say "I seem so full of doubts, so depressed in spirits, so unhappy. I trust I am converted, but I cannot rejoice." Then, brother, get a fresh hold of your Lord, for if you touch but his clothes you shall be made whole of the plague of doubting. Only draw near to Jesus, your risen Lord, by a prayer, or a believing thought, and it is done. Be it ever so slight a touch, you shall be made whole.

Perhaps you say, "I feel so discouraged in my Christian work, and even feel as if I must give it up. I have seen no conversions lately, and therefore I cannot go about my work with the spirit I once had." Brother, you are falling into a spiritual lethargy, but if you do but touch your Lord again you shall be made whole.

Did not the Lord Jesus heal you at the first? He can heal still. He loses no virtue when He gives forth His power. If a master takes a scholar and fills him full of wisdom, the master is just as wise afterwards as he was at first. And when our Lord grants us a fullness of grace, He remains just as full of grace as He was originally.

Come to Him, then, you downcast saints. Come now. Come always. If any of you have backslidden, if you have become altogether wrong and out of sorts, if your spiritual digestion is bad, if your spiritual eyes are dim, so that you cannot see afar off, if your knees are weak and if your hands hang down, if your whole head is sick and your heart faint, yet still if you touch but your Lord's garments you shall be made whole.

This wonderful medicine has boundless power to restore from relapses as well as to heal the first disease. I cannot help reminding you of the church at Laodicea, which was in so horrible a state that our Lord Himself said He must spit it out of His mouth, and yet He added, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Communion is the cure for lukewarmness. When you have fallen so low that even Christ Himself is sick of you—and it must be a very bad case when He becomes sick of a church—yet even then if you but sup with Him and He with you, all will be well. Only get into communion with Him who has life in Himself, and your own life shall become full of vigor.

Oh, dear children of God, if you have fallen into an unhappy state, put in practice the example of the woman, and see whether Jesus is not still the same. A touch is a very simple matter, but do not, therefore, doubt its value.

As for you who fear that you are not His children, behold, I set before you an open door this morning, and I pray God that you may be enabled to enter into it. If you touch but the Redeemer's clothes you shall be made whole. Whatever the transgression, the iniquity, the sin of which you have been guilty, come into contact with the bleeding Lamb, and you shall be forgiven.

You need not even so much as touch, for there is life in a *look*. A look will set up sufficient contact to bring salvation. “Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.” “They looked unto him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed.” Do but look. Do but get out of yourself to Him somehow or other, and it is done.

Though a glance will not carry a thread as thin as a spider’s cobweb, yet it will establish a connection. The ray of light which comes from Jesus’ wounds to your eye will be link enough, and along it eternal salvation will come to you.

Get to Christ, sinner, get to Christ at once. Have you come to Him? Then you are saved. Confess your faith, and give Jesus honor. Love Him with all your heart, and while angels are rejoicing over you, do you be glad also. Christ has saved you. Praise Him forever and ever.

May the Lord add His blessing for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—MATTHEW 9:9-31

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—174, 415, 603

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.