Guest Preacher - Mr Steven Graham (Elder)

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Preacher: Mr. Steven Graham

[0:00] Turn back with me to the passage of Scripture that we read together earlier in the Gospel of Mark and in chapter 5. The Gospel of Mark and in chapter 5.

And taking as our text the words that we find in verse 28, where we find the woman with the issue of blood saying to herself, If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.
If I touch even his garments, I will be made well. Now Mark's Gospel, it's primarily written for a non-Jewish audience.
And it's the shortest and most concise of the four Gospel accounts, just 16 chapters. And it's a Gospel that moves at a fast pace. We see Mark moving quickly from event to event and on to another in quick succession.
And we see how he uses the word immediately, again and again and again, to maintain that pace, as he describes a narrative of events associated with the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ.
[1:13] We took up a reading earlier at the end of Mark chapter 4, where we read of Jesus calming the storm. And the disciples' question at the end of that chapter, where they ask one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

That's the very question that the first half of the Gospel of Mark seeks to answer. Who then is this? Who is this Jesus? And we see, as we read through that Gospel, the first half of the Gospel, that chapter by chapter, bit by bit, that question is answered as Christ reveals himself to the disciples, bit by bit, lesson by lesson, teaching them that which culminates in Peter's great confession at the end of chapter 8, where he responds to the question that the Lord asks them all, Who do you say that I am?
And he says, You are the Christ. Now in Mark chapter 2, Christ reveals himself to be the great physician. And we read there how he responds to the scribes and the Pharisees when they question the company that he was keeping.
He responds by saying to them, Those who are well have no need of a physician, for those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. And in Mark chapter 5, what we see here is this great physician at work.
We see three cases before us, each of which looks completely hopeless, and each of which reminds us that Christ is able and willing to meet us at our point of need, and that he is able to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
[2:53] We see people here in extremity, people in desperation, people in need. We see here lives touched by Christ, lives transformed by Christ, lives changed by Christ.

And what we have in this chapter are three object lessons recorded for us in the Bible that teach us something about who we are, what we need, and what Christ can do for us.
And so I'd like this morning to consider with you one of these cases. And I'd like for us to consider the case that we find in the middle of chapter 5, the case of the woman with the issue of blood.
And we find parallel accounts of this in the Gospel of Matthew and in the Gospel of Luke. And each of these accounts has her story sandwiched in the midst of another case, that case of Jairus, his daughter.
And I'd like for us to consider her experience and her encounter with Jesus, just as it happened, but to do so under four headings. Firstly, I'd like for us to look at her condition.
[4:03] Secondly, her consideration. Thirdly, her confession. And lastly, his commendation. So, condition, consideration, confession, and commendation.

So let's first of all look at her condition. Look with me at verse 25, and we'll see how we're introduced to this woman. Jesus, surrounded by a great crowd, having just crossed the Sea of Galilee.

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He's just been approached by Jairus, whose little girl, this little 12-year-old girl, is on her deathbed. And desperate for Jesus to come with him and lay his hands upon her, we see Jesus going with Jairus as they make their way and journey towards his house.
And in the midst of that great crowd, in the midst of that noise and commotion, we find a woman. We don't know her name. We don't know her age. We don't know where she was from.
We don't know her background. All we know is that this woman had a serious problem. A problem that was with her every moment of every day, and a problem that would not go away. In verse 25, we read, Now this woman, she'd experienced a continual hemorrhage for 12 years.
[5:35] Continual menstrual bleeding for 12 long years. It was embarrassing. It was debilitating. And it bothered her greatly.

And we're not told here, but I can only imagine that this was a condition that caused her great pain and discomfort as well. And it was a condition that had robbed her of many things in life. A problem that had clung to her no matter what she tried.
It was a problem that had driven her into poverty. She'd tried everything and spent everything to rid herself of it. She'd visited all the doctors and physicians in the local area to see if a remedy could be found that would heal her.
And I'm sure that these people promised her plenty, as they only too gladly took her money. But she spent all that she had, and she was no better for it.
Not only was she no better for it, but we see in verse 26 that she was no better, but rather grew worse. And who knows what these people did to her? Who knows what experimental treatment they may have tried out on her?
[6:38] But at the end of the day, she was no worse than she ever was. She was now destitute. Her issue was still there. She couldn't cover it up. She couldn't pretend that it had gone away. She felt it.

She knew it. And carried it with her wherever she went. These doctors, they were nothing but a waste of time and a waste of money. And this issue of blood was more than just something that was embarrassing and debilitating.
And painful. You read Leviticus chapter 15 for yourselves when you get home. And you'll see what this condition meant for this woman. This woman, because of her condition, she was ceremonially unclean.
She was a social outcast. A permanent outcast. For as long as she remained in that condition. Cut off from the temple of God. Cut off from the worshipping people of God.
Separated because of her continual bleeding. Anyone that she touched became unclean. Anything that she touched became unclean. If you sat where she'd been sitting, you were unclean.
[7:41] If you slept where she'd been sleeping, you were unclean. So there she stands before us in scripture. This woman with the issue of blood. Hopeless.

Helpless. Isolated and ill. Broken and broke. And as she stands here before us in scripture, she's a picture. She's a picture for us.
She's a picture of us. As we are by nature in our sin. By nature, we too are unclean. Cut off. And separate from God.
And our sin is our sickness. And it's a sickness unto death. A terminal illness. And in the same way that we see leprosy and blindness used in the Bible to paint a picture of what we are by nature before a holy God.
So she stands, this woman, in her condition as a picture. Unclean. She knew it. She felt it. And she could see it herself.
[8:44] And so the question for you, my unconverted friend, is do you know it? Do you feel it? Do you know your condition? Do you accept the diagnosis that the Bible has for you?

Do you know your condition? The prognosis that the wages of sin is death? And perhaps like this woman, you thought that things would get better over time. Perhaps like this woman, you've tried all sorts of alternative remedies to try and fix your life.
Perhaps you've spent lots of money on stuff that has masked your condition but hasn't actually done anything to deal with the root cause of your own issue. And things are no better for you.
And your problem persists. Now this woman, she had a decision to make. She had to consider what she was going to do next. So now let's look together at her consideration.

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What did she do? Well, we read in verse 27 that she had heard the reports about Jesus. And before we move on, let's just stop here for a minute and ask a couple of questions.
[9:51] Firstly, what had she heard? Well, we don't know the answer to that question. But we do know that whatever she heard, it was enough to draw her in. This woman didn't just happen to be there that day.

She had made a point of purposefully being in that crowd that had surrounded Christ. And she was now part of that crowd that journeyed towards the house of Jairus as he went to heal his daughter.
And another question is, who had told her about Jesus? Who had told her about Jesus? Who had given her that report? And again, we don't know the answer to that question. But we do know that this woman was where she was that day because she had heard the report from somebody else.
And my Christian friend, a question for you. When did you last speak to somebody about Christ? When did you last speak to somebody about their soul?
When did you last invite somebody to come to church with you? And I know that that's not an easy thing to do. And it's not always an easy conversation to have. But we're not called to be silent witnesses.
[11:02] We are all called to prayerfully, gently, wisely seek out opportunities to have these conversations. Because if you don't share that report, and I don't share that report, who is going to share that report?

Who else is going to do it? And you might think, well, I'm not very good at these kind of things. I wouldn't know what to say. Well, it's not about how eloquent we are.
You just say what you can, do what you can, and leave the rest up to the Lord. And be encouraged by what we see here. This woman, she heard from somebody.
And she came to the Lord. Verse 27. She had heard the reports about Jesus. And she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment.
For she said, if I touch even his garments, I will be made well. This woman, she came up to him. She was there in the midst of the hustle and the bustle of the crowd.
[12:07] But she shouldn't have been anywhere near these people. She was ceremonially unclean. But she didn't let that stop her. This woman, she was desperate. She'd spent all her money on other solutions.

And here she was, empty-handed, nothing to offer. She'd heard about Jesus. And she considered him. And she considered him worth coming to. And pushed her way in.
And what she did was, she did what she could. She did what she could. She didn't delay. She didn't put it off to another day. She came to Christ whilst he was there. Now notice that she came up behind him.
Legion, we read earlier in the chapter. He had run towards him and fell down before him. Jairus too. He saw him and fell at his feet. But this woman, she came from behind.
Discreet. Hidden from view. Looking to just come up, slip in, and slip away. And nobody need ever know. Just touch his garment and that will be it.
[13:08] That's all she would have to do. Now why did she do that? Should we point the finger and find fault with her method? And her approach?

Well, remember who she was. This woman was ceremonially unclean. She shouldn't have been anywhere near that crowd. And she no doubt feared that if she approached him publicly and was upfront about it, that she would have been rejected and hounded out of the way.
If not by Christ, then certainly by the crowd who would have been horrified at her presence in their midst as an unclean woman. And she feared that in touching Christ that she would contaminate him and transfer her state of uncleanness onto him.
And she felt that she was blocked from publicly approaching Christ in the same way that she was blocked from attending the temple worship. Maybe she thought that he was too busy to deal with the likes of her.
Who was she? He had more important things to be doing. Remember that here he was on his way to Jairus' house. Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, whose little girl was on her deathbed. Why would he stop and bother with the likes of her?
[14:16] A social outcast with nothing to offer, nothing to contribute and put before him apart from her own uncleanness. Now, notice her confidence.

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In verse 28, we see that she says, I will be made well. Not I might be made well. Not I hope to be made well. But I will be made well.
This woman, she was persuaded that that would be the case. She considers him to be a great physician. And she moves towards him, reaches out and touches his garment.
And it's easy for us to find fault with her approach, the way she went about it, looking to sneak in, touch the hem of his garment and then sneak away again.
But notice this. Whatever report she had heard, whatever she knew about Christ, limited and incomplete as her knowledge may have been, she acted upon what she knew and did something about it.
[15:18] She heard him. She heard about him. She considered what she heard. And she did something about it. She didn't let it wash over her. It wasn't a case of in one ear and out the other.

She came to him. She reached out to him. She knew she had a problem. She knew that here she had an opportunity. And she did something about it. And so how is any of this relevant to me and to you today?
Well, this woman, she's a picture, isn't she? She's a picture of somebody in great need, hopeless and helpless and unclean. And she hears about Christ and she does something about it. She comes to him that she might be made well.
Fearful and trembling, she comes to him. With limited knowledge, she comes to him. With empty hands, she comes to him. Without delay, she comes to him. So what about you, my friend? You've heard it preached countless times from this very pulpit.
That we too need a great physician. You know in your heart of hearts that we too are sick. And you know that our sinful condition means that we are unclean. And that we are heading towards a hopeless end.
[16:25] Unless we close in with Christ. This woman, she moved because of what she heard. She didn't just stay where she was and wait. She moved. She went where he was to be found.

She followed him. She reached out. She touched him. She didn't wait. She didn't put it off for another day. And perhaps you've been aware of your own need for 12 years or more.
And you still haven't come. Well, the message of the Bible to you is to come. Do not put it off. To come today. For today is the day of salvation.
You know a lot more about Jesus Christ than this woman knew. You've been taught from your youth. The majority of you have been exposed to the gospel from your earliest days. You've got Bibles in your home. You know the gospel.
But she came knowing what she knew. And she considered him to be sufficient to meet her needs. So the question for you, my friend, is will you do the same? Will you consider him?
[17:27] And will you come to him knowing what you know? Verse 29. She had made contact with Christ.

And contact with Christ had transformed her life. Her disease, her plague, her condition had been healed. Immediately she felt it. She now felt something that she hadn't felt in 12 years. Perhaps it was the absence of pain.
Perhaps it was renewed strength and vigor. It had cost her nothing. She didn't have to pay anything. She didn't have to do anything. Just reach out and touch him. And rather than her touch contaminating Christ, her touch has transformed her life.
And she's now clean and whole. Now let's look at her confession. We read in verse 30. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, Who touched my garments?
Who touched my garments? Now all sorts of people were in the crowd that day. All sorts of people were jostling and pressing up against him. We see that in verse 31.
[18:46] But there was something different about this woman's touch. There was something intentional about this woman's touch. It wasn't superficial. There was something about it that marked it out as different. And we see that in how Christ reacted.

He stopped. He turned around. He asks, Who touched my garments? This woman's touch, it was a believing touch. She had said to herself, If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.
I will be made well. Power had gone out from him. This woman had been healed. Her life was changed. Her condition transformed. So why did he ask the question, Who touched me?

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The disciples thought it was a ridiculous question. Here he was, Hemmed in, People pressing around him, Surrounded, As he went on his way to Jairus' house.
All sorts of people were touching him. So why ask the question, Who touched my garments? Was it that he didn't know Who had touched him? Was it that he didn't know who had been healed? [19:48] Or was it something else? Now Jesus Christ in his humanity, He didn't know everything. But here he did know that someone had touched him.

Here he did know that power had gone out from him. And here he did know what lay behind that touch. So I don't think he was asking that question Because he didn't know who had touched him. It wasn't being asked out of ignorance.
I believe he asked this question In order to draw out a confession. To draw this woman out of the crowd To encourage her.
To come out from the shadows And publicly acknowledge What had taken place in her life And give God the glory For that transformation. Who touched my garments?
He knew what he was doing. He had consciously healed her. And he was asking that he had to openly say yes, That indeed, yes, she had indeed reached out And touched him. The good physician.
[20:48] He knew that she had touched him. And he wanted others to know That she had touched him as well. She knew it. He knew it. But others did not. Christ here, he encourages her.

The good physician. He wants to see his patient. He wants to hear his patient. He didn't ask the questions That he might chastise her Or blame her publicly. He asks the questions That he might commend her And encourage her And confirm that the very thing That she felt in her heart Was true.
And that she had indeed Been cured. So how did she respond To this question? Well, she didn't hide herself away. She didn't draw back into the crowd.
She broke cover. She came. She confessed. She knew what had happened. She knew that she was no longer What she used to be.
And we see in verse 33 That she came. She came in fear and trembling. And fell down before him. And told him the whole truth.
[21:53] We read in Romans chapter 10. Believe with your heart And confess with your mouth That Jesus is Lord And you will be saved. That's what we're all called to do.

To believe And to confess. So what did she say? What did she confess? Well, she told him the whole truth. She was scared. She was shaking.
But she came forward And she confessed To having been the one Who had reached out And touched him. And she fell down before him. Just like Legion had. Just like Jairus had.
And she told him And everyone else Who was around That she had been the one Who had touched him. And so my friend Have you touched Christ?
Have you reached out? In your own condition Of uncleanness Lostness Sinfulness Have you reached out To the Lord And Saviour As good physician That you might be saved From your sins?
[22:53] Have you done it secretly? Privately? Then keeping quiet And not seen anything More about it Perhaps you're A secret disciple Perhaps you're Somebody that watches Online Week by week A couch Christian That thinks that Your Christianity Can be something Between you and the Lord Well move beyond that Move beyond that Christ challenges you And challenges me With this question That he asks this woman Saying Who touched my garments?

And so then If that is you Come forward Come out Of the shadows And break cover Come out into the open And confess your faith Show yourself To be a child of God Show yourself To be a Christian And let your light So shine Before men We've looked this morning At the woman's condition We've looked at her Consideration We've looked at her Confession Let's lastly look At Christ's commendation If this woman Had not confessed She would have missed out She would have missed out On the assurance And the comfort That we find In the words Of verse 34 Where we read Daughter Your faith Has made you well Go in peace And be healed Of your disease We see here That blessing Follows obedience Blessing follows obedience Had the woman Not come and confessed She would not have
Heard these words She would not have Heard the good physician Giving her The all clear So let's look at What he says to her He says a number Of things to her But firstly How does he address her He doesn't rebuke her He doesn't chastise her He doesn't address her As the unclean woman He

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calls her daughter No longer ostracized And cut off And alone This woman Having reached out And touched him She has a new identity A new status A new standing She's brought into A new relationship And she's been called Daughter Christ recognises her As his own He speaks to her As a father Using the very same word That Jairus had used About his own wee girl Just shortly before this In the chapter He calls her daughter Now we might call What this woman did A number of different things We might say That she was presumptuous We might say
That she was superstitious But the Lord here Calls what she did Faith And he commends her for it Her touch Was a touch of faith He says Your faith Has made you well He doesn't say Your touch Has made you well He doesn't say Your own efforts Have made you well He doesn't say My garments Have made you well He says Your faith Has made you well He singles out Her faith Weak faith Trembling faith Though it may have been He singles out Her faith Now faith is something That is commended Throughout Mark's gospel We see in chapter 2 That the paralytic Who was healed That he had faith The disciples That we went off In the storm At the end of chapter 4 They lacked faith Blind Bartimaeus In chapter 10 When he receives his sight He hears from Christ The very same words That we have here Where he is told Your faith Has made you well
And Jairus Having witnessed All of this And what happened With this woman Having then received The news That his own daughter Had died Look at what Christ Says to him In verse 36 He says Do not fear Jairus Do not fear Only have faith The woman With the issue Of blood She's a picture Of faith Now what is Faith Well you may Be aware And you may be Familiar with The acrostic F-A-I-T-H Forsaking all I trust him Forsaking all I trust him The shorter Catechism Puts it like this Faith in Jesus Christ Is a saving grace Whereby we receive And vest upon him Alone For salvation As he is offered To us In the gospel So faith is to Receive Christ And to vest upon him It is to believe In his word And trust in his promises It's to believe
[27:29] And to trust Not just to believe But to trust in him With all your heart To respond positively To his word To respond positively To Christ As he is offered To us in the gospel It's a work of the spirit But an activity of man And we are saved by grace Through faith We're not saved by faith It's all of God But faith must be there It's the instrument It's the means It's the channel Through which God's power Is brought to bear On our need And I want you to note Is that it's her faith It's her faith That has made her well It's not somebody else's faith It's her So faith Faith is personal Nobody else can do it for you And if you're here today Welying on something else Or someone else Or someone else's faith Then I want you to Read your Bible And see that the call Of the gospel to you To believe and trust

It's addressed to you As an individual No one else can do it for you Faith Faith Is personal Your faith Has made you well We read In verse 34 She was healed Of her disease She was Her issue of blood Has dried up She's been made well She's been made whole Now this The Greek word That lies Behind the concept Of being made well It's found Throughout the New Testament And more often than not That word is translated As being saved Your faith has made you well So we could read this as Daughter your faith Has made you well Daughter your faith Has saved you Go in peace And be healed Of your disease We said earlier That the first half Of the gospel of Mark That it's dealing
With the question Asked At the end of chapter 4 Who then is this Who then is this Jesus Well my friend This Jesus Is one who saves He is a saviour A saviour of sinners And he crossed the path Of this woman Two thousand years ago And he is crossing Your path Here today Calling you to put Your trust in him Whilst there is still time So that you too Might hear the words Daughter Or son Your faith Has made you well Go in peace And be healed Of your disease So know what you are Know what you need Know what Christ Can do for you See the empty promises Of this world And go to Christ As you are Go empty handed Go in faith Reach out Trust in him Trust him with all your heart Trust in him For time And for eternity Because my friend
Just like we were saying To the children Earlier on You are never too young To be a Christian You are never too old You are never too good You are never too bad You are never too early But you may Be too late Don't be too late Lay hold upon him While he is to be found As he calls To you To believe To put your trust in him For time And for eternity May the Lord have his blessing To these thoughts Let us now pray O Lord our gracious God We bless thee That thou art the author And the finisher of faith And we pray that faith Would be found In every heart here today A real and a living And a genuine faith In Christ That would be a saving faith

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Lord grant that we would know him As Lord and Saviour That we would lay hold Of the promises That are found in thy word For ourselves That we would believe And trust That we would reach out And touch And that we would wait upon him Ah for all of our days Lord bless thy word to us Uphold and guide us Sustain and keep us And pardon our sin we pray For Christ's sake Amen We'll now sing in conclusion In Psalm 62 Psalm 62 in the Scottish Psalter On page 294 Of the Blue Psalm books Psalm 62 On page 294 And we'll sing together The verses marked 5 Through to the end of the verse Marked 8 Psalm 62 And verse 5 On page 294 My soul Wait thou with patience Upon thy God alone
[32:36] On him dependeth All my hope And expectation He only my salvation is And my strong walk is he He only is my sure defence I shall not move it be We'll sing it From the beginning of verse 5 Down to the end of the verse Marked 8 My soul Wait thou with patience Upon thy God alone My soul Wait thou with patience Upon thy God alone On him dependeth On him dependeth O my hope And expectation He only my salvation He only my salvation

Is And my strong walk is he He only is My sure defence I shall not move and be In God my glory place And my salvation
Ye people Be people Place Your confidence In him Continually Before him Be out Be out Your heart God is Our Refuge Let's now conclude With a word of prayer Lord Help us To find Ourselves With our confidence Placed alone In thee Help us To know thee As our God As our shepherd As our king And as our good physician Take us home
In safety Bless us We pray Guide and keep us Pardon our sins We pray For Christ's sake Amen To know thee Thank you.

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