

DEEPER FAITH

A LESSON SERIES ON GOING DEEP WITH GOD

Lesson 1 Desperate Faith

Lesson 2 Deeper Longing

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Lesson 1

DESPERATE FAITH

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” (Mark 5:25-34)

WELCOME

Recall a moment in your life that you have done something you didn't expect you could do out of desperation. It could be a funny experience or a scary one. Share to the group.

WORSHIP

Lead the group in prayer. The group may also listen to the song "Like a Fire" by Planetshakers.

WORD

Read: Mark 5:25-34

The bleeding woman is not the main character of the story. Jesus has an important thing to do that day: to heal Jairus' daughter. But a woman came behind him --- a woman who has been suffering for twelve long years. She did everything to get well but she only grew worse. She squeezed into the crowd, touched the hem of Jesus' cloak and hoped to go unnoticed. But Jesus stopped and asked "*Who touched me?*".

Can you imagine how scared she must have been? For twelve years, she has been an outcast. Jewish custom says a woman having a discharge is unclean and is required to distance herself from people. She is not even allowed inside the temple. Everything she touches becomes unclean. In the eyes of the law, even if it's just someone's cloak, her act is still detestable.

The woman knew that Jesus was referring to her. She felt it. She experienced a miracle. She couldn't contain it any longer. Despite the punishment and humiliation that awaits, she came trembling at his feet testifying to what happened to her. Jesus' response was not as she had imagined.

One act of desperate faith can alter your life for good. This woman had her now-or-never chance and out of desperation, she acted in faith and received more than just the healing she hoped for.

1. The woman is set free from her suffering

Bleeding for twelve years is no joke. Even a regular menstruation of 3-5 days gets the best of you. (Shout out to all the ladies!) So just imagine this woman's suffering! But aside from the physical torment itself, she's got more burden to carry. With no friends, how lonely can she be? With no money, how does she go about her daily needs? She longs for physical touch, for company. She probably spends the whole day by herself in an isolated house staring at its four walls day after day. When she heard about Jesus, she thought He is her last hope. So she sneaked her way to Him in desperation and she succeeded!

We may not be physically sick, but we may be bleeding inside; an open wound that we've left unattended for a very long time. We may be suffering because of spiritual dryness, a hidden sin or unforgiveness. Some people may have been carrying a resentment long enough to turn their hearts bitter. No matter what we do to cover it, it won't get better, it will only get

worse. There are some wounds that only Jesus can heal so let Him. True healing can only come from a God who is an expert in restoring the broken. God says, “It’s time to let go, child. Let me take away that pain.”

2. The woman was given a new identity

The woman was identified by her sickness, by her status, gender, and called by her flaw. She was another nameless woman in the Bible who has a story to tell. Nobody knows her, nobody wants to be with her. Her long time misery might have caused her to even hate herself. For 12 years she has been isolated. People may have called her not by her real name. She could have been mocked and avoided. Jesus freed her from all of these. With eyes full of love, he called her “*Daughter*”. And from that day on, that’s who she will be.

We all have a past. We all have our share of mistakes and failures. All of us have sinned and might still be haunted until today. People call you names based on your past. People call you names because of your imperfection. You call yourself names based on your weakness. It’s time to let go and hear what Jesus calls you. You are his child and no matter what you’ve done or how far you’ve gone astray, you will remain his beloved child.

You are more than your mistakes. You are more than your sins, failures and wrong decisions. Stop living in the past. Stop thinking so little about yourself. You might be a nobody in this world, but to God, you are worth his precious Son’s blood. That’s who you are.

3. The woman was given a chance to testify

Jesus asked the crowd, “Who touched me?” When Jesus asks, it doesn’t mean he doesn’t know. He does so for us to find out something about ourselves. Take note that the question was addressed to the crowd. Surely, many of them touched him. Some of them might have received healing too. But it is the woman who came trembling at his feet testifying to what Jesus has done to her. She knows it is her he is referring to, because she felt his power! She experienced a miracle and though afraid, she couldn’t contain it so she spoke up.

All of us have our own miracle to share, big or small. All of us have a unique and wonderful encounter with the Lord. But not all of us have the boldness and courage to witness for Him. You are not alone. Jesus knows we can’t do it on our own. That’s why he made a way for the woman. Jesus created an opportunity for the woman to speak up and testify for Him. And just like her, we need not rely on our own strength. When Jesus opens up opportunities for us to share, He sends wisdom, courage and strength along with it.

The woman could have kept silent but she didn’t. And that made all the difference. Her story was written, heard by many and was included in the Bible.

LOOK: Have you been praying for something but God seems to be not listening? What spiritual insight did you get from today’s lesson?

TOOK: Is there a particular aspect in your life that you think needs healing? Share to the group.

WORKS

If your desire is to have more of Jesus in your life, think of one *desperate act of faith* you want to start to do in order to achieve it (e.g. *waking up earlier than usual to start my day with a devotion, a once a week fasting on social media so I can spend more time in prayer and devotion, commit to attend your small group meetings no matter what, join a local mission, obey what the Lord has been telling you to do for some time now*). Pray about it. Find someone you can be accountable with.

Take note of your members answers and make sure to follow them up on a daily/weekly basis.

Lesson 2

DEEPER LONGING

*“How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty!
My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
Even the sparrow has found a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may have her young—
a place near your altar,
Lord Almighty, my King and my God”
(Psalm 84:1-3)*

WELCOME

Ask each of your members to share what Scripture verse made a huge impact in their lives this week.

WORSHIP

Lead the group in prayer.

WORD

HOOK: What is your most recent “WOW” moment? Share to the group (e.g. *reaching a summit, went diving for the first time, tried a new food, etc.*).

BOOK: Read Psalm 84:1-3

There are a lot of things in this world that amaze us. It can be that beautiful place that you’ve visit this week or a brilliant performance by your favorite music artist. Browsing the internet gives us a variety of news and articles that we find extraordinary. We see a lot of good looking people and tourist spots in social media that make us wonder if they are for real. But may we all be like David, who in the splendor of his kingdom and riches, find wonder and satisfaction in his God alone.

Ask yourself, *how much do I long for God? How do I cultivate my spiritual appetite?* We learned last week the deeper we go, the deeper we grow. So don’t dip, get deep. Stay hungry. Keep eating! The Christian life is a continuous hunger for the presence of God.

1. Wonder

“How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty!” (v.1)

We often take time to appreciate the beauty of God’s creation. We go hiking or mountain climbing to get a great view of nature. We patiently wait for the day to end to catch a glimpse

of sunset. These marvelous moments cause us to worship the Creator of these wonders.

But in our everyday life, God does not cease to amaze us. There is always something praiseworthy about him. Think about it, we experience the supernatural every day. From the moment we open our eyes, the brand new day and the breath we take are miracles in itself already. Think about the strength God is lending you to go to work or school and accomplish all your tasks for the day. Think about the challenges and trials you've overcome by his grace. Think about those moments of weaknesses where you experienced his power.

Christians should never lose the wonder of what God has done and is continuously doing in our lives. The message of the Gospel should never lose its power in us. Keep in mind that you will never run out of something new to discover about him because we have a big and limitless God.

“Many, LORD my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare” (Psalm 40:5)

“We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders” (Psalm 78:4)

What makes worship amazing is the Object of our worship. As Francis Chan said, “The very fact that a holy, eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, merciful, fair and just God loves you and

me is nothing short of astonishing.” There would be less wandering from God if there were more wondering of God.

2. Desire

“My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God” (v.2)

John Piper, in his book *A Hunger for God* said, “The more deeply you walk with Christ, the hungrier you get for Christ . . . the more homesick you get for heaven . . . the more you want the fullness of God . . . the more you want to be done with sin . . . the more you want the Bridegroom to come again . . . the more you want the Church revived and purified with the beauty of Jesus.”

When we are so full of Christ, he becomes our desire. Coming to church will not be a burden because all you want is to be in the house of God and soak in his presence. Doing your devotion will not be a boring duty because you want to spend time with him and hear his voice. But if you don’t come hungry, how will you be filled? Don’t stuff your soul with this world that you no longer have space for His Word. God wants to satisfy your innermost being with His Presence and His Word—but this can only happen as you hunger for and seek after Him.

“As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for Thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?” (Psalm 42:1-2)

3. Resider

“Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you” (v.3-4).

We are all familiar with the saying “There is no place like home.” But for us Christians, home is in God’s loving arms. God’s desire is for us to walk with him, stay with him and live for him. If we allow God to draw us closer to him until we are so full of him and his desire becomes our desire, then and only then will we be truly satisfied.

Maturity takes time. Just take that first step and let God lead you all the way.

“Do not be content till you taste and see that the Lord is good — so good that you realize he not only is the best thing in this life, he is better than this life” (Psalm 34:8)

LOOK: What are the wonders that cause you to worship God? Can you say that God is your greatest desire right now? Explain your answer.

TOOK: How do you plan to improve your spiritual appetite?

WORKS

Take note of your members' answers from 'Took'. Follow up on them throughout the week and encourage them in the process. Close the group in prayer.

(This lesson is based from Rev. Jordan Escusa's sermon at Generation Congregation service on 22 July 2018).

