

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 out of desperation. It could be a funny experience or a scary one. Share to the group.

Worship

Lead the group in prayer. Suggested worship song: "Like a Fire" by Planetshakers

Word

Read: Mark 5:25-34

In the passage that we have read, the bleeding woman is not the main character of the story. Jesus has an important thing to do that day and that is to heal Jairus' daughter. But then this woman came behind him --- a woman who has been suffering for twelve long years and spent all she had and did everything to get well but only grew worse. She squeezed into the crowd, touched the hem of his cloak and hoped to go unnoticed. But then 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 deemed unclean and is required to distance herself from people and is not even allowed inside the temple. Everything she touches becomes unclean. And even if it's just his cloak, this act of hers is detestable.

Jesus turns to the crowd and kept looking for the one who touched him. The disciples consider this nonsense because of the large crowd surrounding them and too many were touching him. But the woman knew 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 has happened to her. And 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, acted in faith and received more than just the healing she's hoping.

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 spends the whole day by herself in an isolated house staring at its four walls day after day. But then she heard about Jesus and thought He is her last hope. So she sneaked her way to Him in desperation and she succeeds!

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. Jesus didn't have to stop. He could've just go on his way to Jairus' house but He has a plan.

For 12 years she has been isolated. People call her not by her real name. People mock her. People avoid her. 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.

We may never know the real name of the bleeding woman, but it doesn't matter now. She is the king's daughter. That's who she is.

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 that Jesus 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 one way or another. 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've kept silent but she couldn't and 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 long enough for something but God seems to be not listening? What spiritual insight did you get from today's message?

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 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 & 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 and encourage one another until such act is done and eventually becomes a habit.

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