



Hymns: 282 Depth of Mercy! Can There Be 278 How Can It Be?

Bible Reading Mark 5:25-34

This story of the woman healed of her long-term disease seems very rushed. Her coming to Jesus for healing was crammed into the middle of the healing of Jairus' daughter.

The event is a seeming interruption to the vital ministry of Christ.

Due to the hustle of the hour, we would not be shocked to see this woman cast aside and totally ignored. She herself was timid, a picture of weakness and sorrow. Poverty was written all over her since those money-grabbing doctors robbed her of everything including her hope.

The way by which this woman came to Jesus for healing is very different.

There were no words. She was timid, she was fixated on the Lord's garment, but not on the Lord Himself.

Her faith was very weak. She is not a model of faith. She is an exception to the normal evidence of faith in many ways, **Yet it serves to highlight the Lord's sympathy.** Right in the midst of the throng and on the way to Jairus' home, while the Lord was on a mission of mercy to another, she was healed by a simple touch of the garment and the Lord pronounced her healing. She became a paragon of the Lord's mercies.

Study: The Lord's acceptance of weak faith.

1. SHE CAME TIMIDLY.

This woman was in decline. Her health was getting worse and her life was draining away. She did not look the Lord in the eye. In fact, there is much to suggest that she came with fear and shame. She approached the Lord from behind, while he was pushing his way through the crowd.

She may have hoped to be totally unnoticed by the Lord or the people. Her faith therefore was not at all bold, or courageous.

For these reasons, she represents many who first believe on the Lord. There is a lot of the fear of man. She did not boldly declare her faith in the Lord - many people's conversions are a just like that - a quiet affair.

Yet, the Lord did not turn her away. Note in v 33 "But the woman fearing and trembling..."

Our evangelism does not need to be the public, loud and bombastic method of calling people to trust in the Lord. We can deal with the timid and the fearful giving them assurance of acceptance.

2. SHE CAME OUTWARDLY

We are all skeptical of outward forms as acts of faith. We teach against icons, idols and visual aides, but this hem of Christ's garment was significant to this woman and the Lord allowed it to be the point of true contact with his healing power.

This woman looked beyond the clothes to the person. It seemed that her faith was in the form of religion and not in the person of salvation.

We too fear that. They see the pastor the church or the the Bible, but do they really get their hearts fixed upon the Lord?

Yet, here is a case of weak faith which the Lord received and used to the healing of this woman. It was enough to draw forth the power of the Lord. This again shows the great sympathy of the Lord.

When we were first converted how clearly we see the sole mediatorial work of Christ, and how pure was our thinking on these means of receiving the grace of Christ?

All we know is that we came, we cried out, and we were received. Later our understanding developed. Our doctrine got sorted out and in finer points is still getting more established.

3. SHE CAME SELFISHLY

To be healed - This was her great need. None else could heal her. The Lord was a last resort. She had tried all the doctors in town. She was desperate.

To be healed secretly

To avoid attention

To give nothing of honour to Christ.

There seemed to be no gratitude shown to the Lord. She might have hidden it all from view. Still she was received. Her disease was cured. She received power from the Lord to heal her sickly body.

It is a marvel that the Lord is merciful to work with our selfishness - out desperate cries for pity, while we had no thought for God's glory.

We cannot expect a depraved sinner to have a heart to give glory to God. That is the work of grace. The question is, Does such grace precede faith or does it follow faith?

We may never know. All we know is that while we were unworthy the Lord took us in and saved our souls.

4. SHE CAME WORDLESSLY

She heard, she came from behind, she touched, but not a word (v27).

In so many cases the Lord heard the cries of sinners - like Bartimeaus.

Yet the Lord accepted the faith unexpressed in the heart.

What exact words did you use when you trusted the Lord? Probably none that we can recall. Maybe a particular verse was before us, but how did we use it?

The Lord in grace, reads the heart. He saves us by reading our spiritual need.

If I was preaching to an unsaved crowd I would preach that they are to call on the Lord. They are to take words and ask definite prayers for salvation. But we cannot script it, as long as the cry for mercy must be from the heart it will be heard.

5. SHE CAME HOPEFULLY. v28

Her real faith, is seen in the statement, **"I shall be whole."** She fully expected healing from the Lord.

There was faith at work to give that certainty as a personal conviction from the heart.

The Lord did not dash that hope. This is a great lesson on the readiness of the Lord to receive even by the weakest faith.

2. THE CORRECTIONS WHICH THE LORD MADE TO THIS WOMAN'S FAITH

[1] He called her to confess His Power and Mercy to her. v33

He made a fuss about **"who touched me."** All this was to have the woman brought to a public confession. **"fell down and told him all the truth" (32).**

[2] He called her to enjoy the peace of her cure. v34

She was not to hide her blessings. She was to be a living testimony to the power of the Lord. From that day, none could doubt the source of the miracle in this woman's soul.

These corrections were necessary so that all may not hide in the crowd and not confess the Lord. It is the will of the Lord that our faith should tell forth the worth and work of the Lord in our lives.

Have we grown too timid?

Where is your faith? - Let it shine forth.

How to pray on the lessons of this event:

- a. Thank the Lord for his infinite mercy toward all who look to him for salvation.
- b. Tell forth how ready the Saviour is to save.
- c. Be gracious with those who express their faith differently.
- d. Pray for souls to be brought to Jesus by all means.

