

“A Woman Healed”

Luke 8:40-48

At the end of Luke 8 we have two accounts that are intertwined. In Luke 8:40-56 we read about the raising of Jarius’ daughter and an unnamed woman who was healed. In both of these accounts we see vastly different circumstances for the people involved, but the same faith. This morning we are just going to look at verses 40-48 and the healing of this unnamed woman. Next week, Lord willing, we will look at the raising of Jarius’ daughter. As we look at both of these accounts we are going to focus on faith: The exercise of faith, the trial of faith, and the triumph of faith.

I. The Exercise of Faith (v. 40-44)

At the beginning of our text this morning we have a couple verses that give us the context for the miracle we will be looking at today. In verse 40 we are told that these events took place upon Jesus’ return from the country of the Gadarenes, on the other side of the Sea of Galilee. You remember that Jesus had crossed the lake earlier in Luke 8. As Jesus and the disciples were crossing a terrible storm had come upon them and Jesus had demonstrated His power over the natural world by commanding the wind and the water to be still, and they obeyed him. The

disciples, who had feared for their life because of the storm, were then terrified and said amongst themselves, “What manner of man is this?”

When they arrived the other side of the lake, Jesus demonstrated his power over the spiritual world when he delivered a demon possessed man. Like the disciples, the people of that region were terrified at this display of God’s power and in verse 37 they asked Jesus to leave.

Look at how the people of Galilee received Jesus in verse 40. When Jesus returned to Galilee the people gladly received him. They were waiting for him. Their attitude toward Jesus appeared very promising at this point. Certainly a group of people who were so eager to have Jesus among them would benefit greatly from His presence. Yet in the end, the people of Galilee were no better off than the people of Gadara.

Remember the parable of the soils at the beginning of chapter 8. Some seed fell on the hard path and was immediately carried away by birds. This is like the people of Gadara. When the gospel came to them in the person of Jesus Christ their hearts were hard. The devil snatched away from their hearts whatever revelation they had received before it had any opportunity to take root.

Some seed fell on the rocky ground where it sprang up quickly, but withered just as quickly because it had no root. This is like the people of Galilee. When Jesus preached and worked miracles among them they received Him with gladness.

But as soon as Jesus began to teach difficult things, they fell away because there was no true root of faith in them. In the end, both groups were unprofitable.

Take warning from this verse. It is not enough to gladly receive Jesus when the message is pleasant and there are benefits and blessings that come with following Him. If that is the sole basis of your relationship with Jesus, as soon as temptations come you will fade away as did these crowds in Galilee.

In verses 41 and 42 we are introduced to Jarius and his plight. We will return to these verses and look at them more closely next week. For this morning, just notice that his daughter was very sick and he asked Jesus to come to his house to help. Jesus went with him as requested.

The end of verse 42 tells us that as Jesus went the people thronged him. They were packed around Jesus. He would have had to push His way through this crowd. That's the setting for the miracle in our text this morning.

In verse 43 we are introduced to the woman who sought out Jesus to be healed. First, we are told that she had an issue of blood. It is important for us to understand what this meant for this woman in the time and place in which she lived. The Mosaic Law specifically addresses issues like this in Leviticus 15.

I'm going to read two verses that are pertinent to our text: Leviticus 15:19 and 25L "And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even . . . And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time

of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation: she shall be unclean.”

Because of her condition this woman was considered unclean under the Mosaic Law. Anyone who touched her was also considered unclean the rest of the day. This mark of uncleanness would have separated this woman from the religious as well as many of the social aspects of her society.

If you have ever been in a situation like that you know it is a very difficult way to live. Whenever I would go to visit Mrs. Carole Templeton one thing she always told me was how much she missed being here, at church, on Sunday mornings. For the past several several years she was not been able to attend because of her health. She missed being able to gather with her church family. Any of us who have been in a situation like that know how difficult it can be. That was the situation for this woman.

Verse 43 goes on and tells us that this woman had been dealing with this issue for 12 years. This was not a short-term problem for her. She had not been dealing with this issue for a few weeks or months or a year. She had been dealing with this for 12 years. That’s a long time.

In Mark’s account of these events, we learn that Jarius’ daughter was 12 years old (Mark 5:42). This woman had been sick for as long as Jarius’ daughter had been alive. Think of the first 12 years of a child’s life. Think of all the things

that change. All the milestones. 12 years is a long time. Now think of this poor woman, who had been dealing with her condition for 12 long years.

Finally, verse 43 tells us that this woman had sought for a cure. She had gone to the physicians of her day. She had spared no expense. We are not told what this woman's financial situation had been. But whatever she had 12 years before was now gone. She had spent everything looking for a cure that she never found. She "spend all her living" on physicians. But it was no use. They were not able to help her. This issue had consumed 12 years of her life and all her finances.

Now look at what this woman did in verse 44. She "came behind him [that is, Jesus], and touched the border of his garment." This is departure from the pattern we have seen so far in Luke's gospel. Usually people approached Jesus and asked to be healed. But this woman came up behind Him. She didn't say anything to Jesus, but she reached out her hand. And notice what she did next. But she didn't touch Jesus. Rather, she touched just the hem of his garment. This is unusual behavior. Why did she do this?

Remember, she is ceremonially unclean because of her condition. Anyone who touched her became unclean. Anything she touched became unclean. She had to push through this crowd that thronged Jesus. And once she reached Jesus she touched his garment which also became unclean.

This must have been difficult for her. She may have been afraid that someone in the crowd would recognize her and point her out as unclean. Maybe

the crowd would turn upon her and drive her away before she could get to Jesus. Maybe Jesus would stop her and turn her away because of her condition. Maybe He would refuse to touch her lest He become ceremonially unclean. Yet this woman in her desperation and out of her conviction that Jesus could heal her, she was not deterred by the crowd or the potential of rejection.

Mark's gospel tells us what she was thinking. In Mark 5:28 we read, "For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole."

What all she knew or understood or believed about Jesus at this point is not clear, but she had faith in him. She believed that Jesus could heal her. She believed that Jesus would heal her. She believed that if she could just touch the hem of His garment, she would be made whole.

And that's what happened. The end of verse 44 tells us that when she touched the hem of Jesus' garment, "immediately her issue of blood stanching." It stopped. She was healed. She was made whole.

This woman exercised her faith. She believed that Jesus could heal her and she acted upon that faith. There were obstacles between her and Jesus. She could have easily found a reason or an excuse not to approach him. But her only hope was Jesus. She had suffered with this incurable issue for 12 years. Her money had all gone to the doctors. She had nowhere else to go. She did not allow her condition, the crowd, her uncleanness, or any other obstacle keep her from Jesus.

What a picture this is of salvation. We have an issue: an incurable, insurmountable issue. We are sinners. Sin consumes our lives and it ends in death. The second death. Eternal death. Sin makes us unclean and separates us from God. We were created to glorify Him, to worship and adore him. But we cannot because of sin. There's no cure. No medical doctor can help us. Untold fortunes have been spent to no avail.

But there is hope. We could not reach up to God, but God came down to us. Jesus Christ dealt with the issue of sin at the cross. In Jesus Christ there is hope, redemption, restoration, you can be clean, you can be restored to fellowship with God. Come to Christ and you can be made whole.

You ask, "How do I know if I can come to Jesus?" Just come. Jesus has never turned a repentant sinner away, and He never will. Jesus said in John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The unnamed woman in our text acted on her faith. Next, we see her faith put to the test.

II. The Trial of Faith (v. 45-47)

Verse 45 tells us that immediately after this woman touched him, Jesus stopped and asked, "Who touched me?" Why did Jesus ask this question? Jesus knew what had just happened. The woman knew what had just happened. But no-

one else was aware that a miracle had just taken place. I believe Jesus asked this question so that the woman would make a free and public confession of her faith.

Look at what happened next.

Verse 45 goes on to tell us that “all denied” touching him. No one confessed. No one said, “Jesus, it was I who touched you.” This woman was still there. She heard this question from Jesus, but she remained silent.

Verse 47 tells us she was “trembling.” Was she afraid? Was she embarrassed? Why didn’t she answer?

When no one confessed, Peter spoke up. Sometimes Peter said good and wonderful things. But other times Peter would have been better served if he had just stayed quiet, and this is one of those times. Peter said to Jesus, “Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?”

Jesus, what kind of question is this? What do you mean, “Who touched me?” Look at this crowd. Many, many, many people have touched you. You would be better off asking, “Who hasn’t touched me.”

Jesus answered Peter very graciously in verse 46, “Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.”

Jesus was aware every time power went out of him to heal or perform other miracles. And the miracles of Jesus were not performed in a haphazard, slipshod way. Every miracle Jesus worked served a purpose: they demonstrated the power of God upon Him which authenticated His message. On this occasion God saw fit

to work a miracle when this woman touched the hem of Christ's garment. This didn't just happen. God knew this would happen, He planned for it, and Jesus was aware: "I perceive virtue has gone out of me."

In verse 47 the woman came forward and confessed. The woman saw that she was not hid. Again, Jesus knew what had happened. I believe Jesus could have picked this woman out of the crowd. He could have called upon her directly to explain what had happened. But again, He had graciously allowed her to confess on her own. Learn from this example how gently God deals with His children. He does not drive us before Him, but like a shepherd He gently leads in the paths he has set for us.

Look at this woman's condition when she came forward. She was trembling. Why?

Maybe she was afraid of the crowd because she was still ceremonially unclean. Her bleeding had stopped, but there was still a period of time that needed to pass according to the Mosaic Law for ritual purification. She may have been afraid of how the crowd would respond to her presence.

She may have been afraid of Jesus. What would He say to her? How would He respond after what had just happened?

She had touched Him while she was unclean. Would He treat that as inexcusable presumption?

She had not answered when he first asked, “Who touched me?” Would He be angry because of her fear or timidity?

She had not asked Him to heal her. Would He take away her healing?

She was trembling, yet she went forward. This is a very simple action, yet it is a demonstration of genuine faith. In the parable of the soils Jesus had warned of false faith that falls away as soon as temptation comes, as soon as faith costs the person something, as soon as there is a trial, as soon as they are afraid they fall away.

This timid woman, fearful and trembling, could have shrunk back further into the crowd. She could have turned and run away instead of face the crowd and face Jesus. But she did not shrink back. Though she was trembling, yet she went forward. True faith does not always look bold and triumphant, but it does continue to press forward. Come what may, true faith will not be dissuaded from following Jesus Christ.

When she reached Jesus, she fell down before Him. As she had demonstrated humility when she had secretly approached Jesus, only touching the hem of His garment, so again she demonstrated humility when she approached Jesus openly. She did not come with pride or presumption. She did not come assured of her faith, even though she had just been healed. She did not come confident that Jesus would be only too glad to receive her. She came with great humility and fell down before him.

That may have been very difficult for her, but harder still must have been the confession she went on to make. Before this great throng of people she told Jesus why she had touched Him. All her needs and weaknesses were laid bare. She was in a vulnerable place here. Exposed to the crowd. At the mercy of Jesus.

Again, this must have been very difficult for her to do, but her example is one for us all to follow. There is no better place for us to be than at the mercy of Jesus in faith and humility. There is no greater friend of sinners than Jesus. Come to Him in the day of grace and you will know His mercy. If you refuse, you will be brought before Him in the day of judgment and you will only know Him in His wrath.

And after telling Jesus about her need she also told him how her need was met. When she touched him, she was immediately healed. Just as Jesus was aware that virtue had gone out of him, this woman was aware that a miracle had taken place within her. She immediately knew that she had been healed.

When we read this passage we have an advantage. We know how this account ends. There is no tension here for us. We read verse 47 and then immediately read verse 48 and move on. No big deal. Just another account in the gospel record.

But take a moment to pause and place yourself in the position of this woman. You are surrounded by a crowd of people. You are trembling. You have just told Jesus what you have done and why. Jesus asked, "Who touched me." You

knew you needed to confess. So before this crowd and to Jesus you have made this public confession of your faith.

What will Jesus say? How will He respond? What will He do with you? You don't know.

So far this morning from our text we have looked at the exercise of faith and the trial of faith. Finally, in verse 48 we see the triumph of faith.

III. The Triumph of Faith (v. 48)

Jesus called her "Daughter." What assurance and peace must have come with this word: "Daughter." He did not say, "Unclean." He did not drive her away. He looked at this woman, trembling before him and He called her, "Daughter."

So it is every time Jesus receives a sinner. We deserve wrath. We deserve damnation. We could not even hope to be the lowest of servants in God's house. Yet Jesus not only receives repentant sinners, but He adopts us into the family of God. He calls us sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, joint heirs with Christ. The salvation that God has brought is incredible and for all eternity we will worship and glorify God for His power, mercy, and love demonstrated in salvation. He calls us sons and daughters.

Jesus continued, "Daughter, be of good comfort." If there remained any doubt in the mind of this woman, if any fear still lingered, how good, how sweet, how comforting these words must have been: "Be of good comfort."

We can comfort ourselves in this world. We can seek out those things which please us. We may can make our lives as smooth and as easy as possible. We may delight in doing good for others and be comforted in those good works. But in the end, none of those things hold any true comfort. When we are brought to our last, desperate extremity like the woman in this text, when some disease or infirmity has consumed our lives, when we are cut off from people we love, and when our fortunes are exhausted, then we find that all the comforts of this world are passing away.

Turn from this world and turn to Christ. In Him is true comfort. In Him is a lasting peace and assurance. In Him is hope and joy that will not fade. Come to him as this woman came, in true faith and humility, trembling but believing, and hear from Christ these blessed words, “Son, Daughter, be of good comfort.”

Then Jesus said to this woman, “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” Through faith in Jesus Christ she had been healed. Her act of faith did not earn her healing. Nor did her act of faith bring about her healing. Her healing was accomplished by Jesus Christ, who was the object of her faith.

Faith by itself has no intrinsic value. Virtue did not go out of her faith and heal her. Virtue went out from Jesus Christ. This woman’s faith was merely the avenue or conduit through which Christ’s virtue passed. Because of her faith in Jesus Christ, she was made whole. And this is another evidence of genuine faith.

Again, I would remind you of the parable of the soils. What was evidence of the good soil? It brought forth fruit. Genuine faith bears fruit.

And finally, Jesus said to this woman, “Go in peace.” She had come to Jesus secretly, trembling, fearful, unclean, with a great need, out of desperation. She left openly, comforted, clean, healed, and at peace. This was the triumph of her faith.

From our text this morning we have seen faith exercised, faith tried, and faith triumphant.

The woman in our text exercised faith in Jesus Christ. She believed Jesus could make her whole and she acted upon that faith.

Her faith was tried. She had come to Jesus secretly, but she confessed Him openly. She publicly confessed her faith in Jesus Christ. She testified of what Jesus had done for her.

And in the end, we saw the triumph of her faith. Jesus said to her, “Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.”

We are going to sing a hymn and then prepare to receive the Lord’s Supper. As we move to that part of the worship service, reflect on these things. The exercise of faith, the trial of faith, and the triumph of faith.

Can you look back to a time in your life when you exercised faith in Jesus Christ for salvation? He is our only hope in life and death. He is the only worthy object of our faith. He now commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Have you exercised faith in Him?

As a Christian, can you look back at a time when your faith was tried. Maybe tried by persecution or ridicule. Maybe tried by difficult circumstances you have faced in life. Genuine faith stands under trial. Praise God for faith that stands up under trial.

And finally, as a Christian, rejoice in faith triumphant. Like the woman in our text, we came to Jesus trembling, fearful, unclean, and with a great need. But now we stand in Jesus Christ, with the promises of God's Word as our warrant: confronted, clean, healed, redeemed, and at peace.