

# Faith In the Person of Jesus Is Not Misplaced

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[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you very much. I am so thankful for each one of you.

It truly is really good to see you all.! It's good to see you.

It's good to be here. Thanks for making it out. Thanks for dragging your body out of bed this morning. Whatever challenges you faced to be here. What a good thing it is.

If you have a Bible, please turn to Mark chapter 6. We're going to continue in Mark. If you're using a pew Bible, that's page 791.

If you're not using a pew Bible, I'm sorry I can't help you. Turn to Matthew and then turn right. Mark chapter 6. We're looking at just the last few verses of Mark chapter 6.

[ 1 : 24 ] God is so kind through these people to give us his word. His word is living. It's not just an ancient account, but his word is living.

And by his spirit, he speaks to us through his word. When we encounter the words of Jesus, and when we encounter the word of God, we encounter God.

Heavenly Father, as we open your word, we remember that these things were true.

That these things were inspired by your spirit to be written down for our sake. And that your word is living.

So would you speak to us now as we open your word? Would you open our hearts and minds as your word is open to us?

[ 2 : 20 ] And would you show us something of the glory of Jesus, your son? Amen. Mark chapter 6 from verse 53.

When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and moored to the shore.

And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was.

And whenever he came in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment.

And as many as touched it were made well. Amen. One day, as people are going about their daily business, Jesus will suddenly arrive on the shores of this world again for a second time.

[ 3 : 39 ] One day. And when he appears, everyone's priorities will suddenly change. Things that seemed important in this world will immediately fade away.

At his arrival. Are you ready? Verse 53 records Jesus arriving on the shores of Gennesaret.

There wasn't an event schedule published beforehand on the town bulletin. The locals didn't start the day expecting Jesus to come to their town. Whatever they had going on that day suddenly changed.

Not that our daily tasks are not important. But there will be a moment when suddenly these things will fade away. When they heard that Jesus was in town, I imagine the folks of Gennesaret didn't just put Jesus on their to-do list.

Somewhere between pressing olives and going to the marketplace. Oh, Jesus is in town. I don't think they were in town. I don't think they were in town. I don't think that Jesus just made the top spot of their priority list by a small margin.

[ 4 : 48 ] I don't think they simply factored him into their day while still thinking about all the other usual tasks. It's not a time to start trying to make adjustments.

It's time for carpe diem. Seize the day. Make the most of this opportunity. It's not every day Jesus comes into town. And for many of them, there was no other solution to their problem.

Many of them faced a problem where there was no cure, no solution, no hope. Prior to Jesus showing up, there would have been people in Gennesaret without a solution and without hope.

Verse 54 says, when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him. Now, I don't know how that works 2,000 years ago.

It's not like they had news channels or the internet to circulate photos of Jesus. It's not like they had posters around town. What was it about Jesus that made them recognize him?

[ 5 : 55 ] As well as his fame going before him, he had previously had an impactful ministry in and around Capernaum. So it's likely that the people that saw the boat arrive, maybe one or two of them had seen Jesus sometime before, and they knew what he could do.

And their response was faith. Now, consider, if you've been around, consider the difference between the start of chapter 6 and the end of chapter 6.

At the start of the chapter, Jesus comes to Nazareth, his hometown, to his own people, but they cannot accept him as anything more than a humble carpenter and the son of Mary.

And as such, his own people do not believe, but they reject him. And this is like a small picture of what largely happened, as John wrote later on.

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

[ 7 : 06 ] That's what we saw at the start of chapter 6 in Nazareth. We see an example of that rejection, that lack of recognition in chapter 6 at the start.

Yet, in our passage at the end of chapter 6, it's like a small picture of his second coming. If chapter 6 at the start was a picture of his first coming, where he came into the world, but the world didn't know him, and they didn't receive him, then at the end of our chapter, in our passage, it's like a small picture of his second coming.

As it says in Revelation 1-7, Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him. At the end of our chapter, they recognize Jesus, and they are in no doubt about his power.

Likewise, he is coming again, and when he appears, every eye will see who he really is, and there will be no question about his power. It will not be in humility like his first coming, when he came in the form of a servant, but the world will see that he is the King of Heaven and the Lord of Glory.

He's not just a carpenter and the Son of Mary. He is the Christ, the Son of God. And so, this chapter ends very differently to how it began.

[ 8 : 30 ] Christ will be recognized. Whatever you feel like the world is like, as a Christian, as a believer, as someone who follows Jesus, however your experience is, remember this.

Christ will be recognized. He will. If you follow Jesus right now, one day the world will recognize what you currently know about him.

So, don't be dismayed, and certainly do not be ashamed of the name of Jesus, because in the end, Christ will be recognized. Verse 55 then tells us that when they recognized him, the people ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever he was, wherever they heard he was.

Again, there's a big contrast to when he was in Nazareth. He came to them in Nazareth, but they refused to come to him.

Yet, here in Gennesaret, people are literally running about the whole region to bring people to Jesus. There's a kind of urgency, a desperation.

[ 9 : 43 ] This is not time to delay. It's not time to debate whether or not you should go or whether or not you should respond to Jesus. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 6, Behold now, now is the favorable time.

Now is the day of salvation. When Jesus shows up in your life, it's not a time to sit on the fence. It's not a time to wonder if he is worth considering.

There is a window for the entire world. There is a window to respond to Jesus, and that window will not be open forever. And these people in Gennesaret understood that.

Here is a small window to get to Jesus. So the people not only run about the region to get their sick people, but they bring them to wherever they heard he was.

Wherever they heard he was. It's not just when and where is convenient for the people. If he happens to pass by our town, then we'll go out and see him. But they go to wherever they heard Jesus was.

[ 10 : 48 ] There's a kind of lack of faith in Nazareth at the start of the chapter when Jesus goes to them in his own town. People think they know everything about Jesus.

They wouldn't even consider him when he was on their own doorstep. They wouldn't accept him when he was on their own doorstep. But here in Gennesaret, at the end of the chapter, people are willing to go wherever they hear Jesus is.

They will make sure they get to him. They are so full of faith that he can help them. What lengths will you go to to be wherever Jesus is?

Or like these people that we read about, how much are we running about the whole region to bring people to Jesus who need saving? Isn't that interesting?

What kind friends are in Gennesaret that they're willing to run about the whole region and bring people on their beds to Jesus wherever he is? The world needs friends like these who are willing to run, get them on their sickbeds, and bring them to wherever they hear Jesus is.

[ 12 : 08 ] The world needs people running about the region bringing people to Jesus. If we know the truth about our condition, we know that prior to Jesus coming, there was no solution, no cure, no hope.

This problem of sin and humanity, the world has not been able to solve. Death has a perfect record. What is the solution?

Prior to Jesus, there was no solution. Yeah, there were sacrifices, but the blood of bulls and goats can never cover sin.

The truth is, we cannot get ourselves to where Jesus is, but he has come to our region. He came to us in the first place, and he gave his life for us, and for those who have faith in him, who have come to him to be healed of our sinful condition, when he comes back, when he returns to the shores of this world, he will take those who belong to him, as it says in John 14, I will come again, and I will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

What glorious hope there is in Jesus. Verse 56 says, And whenever he came, whenever Jesus came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment.

[ 13 : 48 ] And as many as touched it were made well. Isn't it encouraging to see that Jesus is not limiting his ministry to only the big cities? It would be easy for someone of great fame to only go where it was worth their while.

To only go where they would get the best accommodation. Where they would be given a fancy green room backstage. To only go and turn up wherever there was a sell-out stadium.

Jesus came not just for the rich. Yet neither did he come just for the poor. He didn't come as the saviour of just some people in some places.

He is the saviour of the world. 1 John 2 says he's the propitiation for our sins. And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

What good news that is for the world. And yet, although he is the saviour of the world, he did not come for the crowds. He came for you. He came for me.

[ 14 : 53 ] There is not a single person who is outside the scope of his love and grace. There's not a person who he wouldn't come for and who he did not come for. There is not a person he wouldn't save.

There is not a person he would turn away if they came to him in faith to be saved. How good is Jesus? This is one of the big features of the passage that compared with the folks in Nazareth, these people in our passage have faith.

Yet the people of this region weren't exclusively Jewish. It was a mix of Jews and non-Jews. Gennesaret, it was a Jewish place but only marginally.

It was a mixing pot. We get this growing picture in the Gospels that faith was often found in surprising places.

The ones that you would expect to recognize Jesus may end up having no faith at all. And the ones you would expect not to respond to Jesus may end up having great faith.

[ 16 : 00 ] And we have seen that probably in our own lives as well. The people you would expect to respond more seem to lack faith. The people that you might not expect to respond to Jesus present great faith.

So, this little story that we have this morning is set between two groups of people who should demonstrate the most faith. Think about the faith of these people in Gennesaret.

and it's a little bit unexpected running about the whole region bringing the sick people laying them down in marketplaces reaching out just for the fringes of his garment and yet before this account there was a group of twelve people I don't know if you know them called the disciples in a boat with Jesus they should have had faith.

You would expect them among everyone else you would expect them to have faith. And yet they do not understand. And in our next passage in chapter 7 we'll look at next week we see the Pharisees and scribes from no other place than Jerusalem experts of the religion you would expect them to have faith and yet they don't.

They lack faith and understanding. And right in the middle Mark has shown us a group of people that have faith in Jesus. And the and so in this story Mark is beginning to show us what it is to have faith in Jesus and that anyone anyone can have faith in Jesus.

[ 17 : 41 ] It's not limited to one people group. It's not limited to one social class. It's not limited to how smart or clever you are. Anyone can have faith in Jesus.

Do you remember the last time we saw someone reaching out for the fringe of his garment with such faith? Back in chapter five this woman who had this issue of flowing blood and she said if only I can reach if I touch even his garment I will be made well.

She reaches out without Jesus knowing touches his garment with such faith and Jesus said to her daughter your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed of your disease.

So Mark has already highlighted an account of faith. How much more in this account highlighting faith when there are countless people doing that very same thing with the same kind of faith?

As it said in verse 56 as many as touched it were made well. And so building on that earlier account of that woman these people have great faith and as many as touched the fringe of his garment were made well.

[ 19 : 02 ] Can you imagine what that would have been like? I want you to picture for a moment because you've probably I think probably every single person in here at some point in their life has sat in A&E; or sat in a doctor's office or something.

Now can you imagine seeing people in a marketplace reaching out touching the fringe of someone's clothes and suddenly they're made well.

Unbelievable. Who knows how long these people had been suffering? Who knows what variety of illnesses were represented? Who knows how many other things they had tried?

Remember the women? The women had suffered under many physicians. she had tried just about everything and there was no solution. And I imagine there are people in this account that have tried everything.

Who knows? Who knows how hopeless their outlook would have been? We know that at least it was pretty bad because they had to be brought on beds.

[ 20 : 08 ] They were bedbound and they were laid in the marketplace. So how many of us have sat in the waiting room of doctor's surgeries or in waiting rooms of A&E; for countless hours?

How many of us have picked up a prescription and hoped that finally the issue would be solved and hopefully without too many side effects? Can you imagine rushing into the hospital?

How good would this be? Imagine rushing into the hospital to visit your loved one who is in a bed who has no solution and you start wheeling them out of the hospital and you get stopped by the staff and they're like, what are you doing?

We need to discharge them, they're not ready to be discharged. He says, no, it's okay, it's okay, I've found a solution. And they're like, really? Is that a specialized doctor somewhere? Well, you could say that.

I'm going to take them to the marketplace, you see, and there's a guy going to come through and they just need to touch his clothes. Excuse me? They just need to touch his clothes. Fringe of some guy's clothing, that's your prescription.

[ 21 : 22 ] It's actually crazy, isn't it? If you saw someone doing that, you would think you're out of your mind. Maybe you need to be in hospital. Someone's clothes, you think someone's clothes is going to make you well?

And so what we need to understand about this passage is that the only thing that makes sense of how crazy it seems and how ridiculous it sounds, the only thing that makes sense is the person of Jesus.

Without Jesus at the center of this account, you would definitely think that these people are crazy and that their faith is foolish. How ridiculous.

What, you're going to go and touch somebody's clothes and you're suddenly going to be cured of this incurable, incurable illness? Well, yeah, the only thing that makes sense is that the person you're talking about is Jesus, the great healer, the Christ, the Son of God.

That's who we're talking about. The only person that makes sense of this account. Because it is not that Jesus' clothes are particularly special. It's not that with enough belief anything is possible regardless of what it is.

[ 22 : 39 ] It's all about the object of their faith, the person of Jesus. Because you can have a lot of faith in the wrong thing and it won't end well.

You can have faith much larger than a mustard seed. Faith the size of a mountain and the wrong thing and nothing will happen. but you can have a little faith.

Faith the size of a mustard seed and the right thing. And it works out well because it's the object of our faith. You ever feel like your faith in Jesus isn't very strong?

Well, here's the good news. It's not about the strength of your faith. It's about who your faith is in. There's something amazing about the connection with the fringe of his garment.

I'll explain that in a moment but I want to just make the point that Jesus clothes didn't have special healing properties in and of themselves. The point is that their faith in Jesus is not misplaced.

[ 23 : 47 ] The people in Nazareth would say your faith in Jesus is misplaced. Don't be so foolish that you think you can touch his clothes. The point of this is that faith in Jesus is not misplaced.

Even if they can only reach out and touch the fringe of his clothes, the healing doesn't suggest that a particular part of his clothes had power.

The healing proves that their faith in the person of Jesus is not misplaced. Imagine the people from Nazareth witnessing the people from Gennesaret running about and bringing their sick people to the market places, touching the fringe of Jesus clothes, and the people of Nazareth thinking, don't you know that he's just a carpenter?

What do you think the son of Mary's going to do? I'm sure the people of Nazareth would have looked at the people in Gennesaret like they were the greatest fools on earth.

Folks, sometimes it might feel like your faith in Jesus makes you look like the greatest fool in this world, like you are laying in the marketplace trusting in the fringe of some person's garment to save you.

[ 25 : 06 ] Your faith in Jesus might look foolish to this world, but one day soon it will be evident first to you, first to us for our assurance, and then to everyone that your faith in the person of Jesus was not misplaced.

Be encouraged. This passage is showing us that faith in Jesus is never misplaced. Now in the flow of Mark's gospel, it's helpful to see this because we started in chapter 6 in Nazareth with people rejecting Jesus, and as we saw, just prior to this, the disciples of Jesus were lacking faith and understanding, and just after this, in chapter 7, the Pharisees and scribes are also lacking faith and understanding.

But this isn't just about faith, and it isn't just about healing. One question that I was asking myself when I was studying this passage was, why does Mark include this story?

He has already spent a lot of time writing about a very similar situation in chapter 5. We've already seen the woman who reached out in faith in Jesus to touch even the fringe of his garment.

But I think one of the developments in this account compared with chapter 5 is that it begins to point towards Gentiles being included as well. Not just as having faith, but there is something of a transfer with Jesus through touch.

[ 26 : 35 ] Something about touching Jesus causes a transfer. And this is going to set up a very big discussion in chapter 7 about what it means to be clean or unclean.

And yet another feature of this is that it comes on the heels of two very big Exodus like miracles with the bread and the water, the bread and the sea.

So think about what comes next in chapter 7, a discussion about what is clean and what is unclean. And in our passage we have Jesus in a very sketchy situation for a Jewish person because he's among Jews and Gentiles.

he's in marketplaces which were notorious for unclean things. And finally he is being touched by sick people which would normally make you unclean.

These things are generally not recommended for a Jew who wants to remain clean and holy. And in chapter 7 we'll discuss this at length but there are some underlying connections to Exodus that give us a greater insight to the person of Jesus in relation to these things in our passage.

[ 27 : 52 ] Firstly when it talks about the fringe of his garment it's talking about a very specific thing that Jewish people had. They were like little tassels.

They were called tzitzit. Am I saying that right? Looking for help? Yep. Tzitzit. These little fringes of blue and white that were sewn into the corners of their garments.

When we think about the person of Jesus as a Jewish man who had these tassels in his garments have a listen to what these tassels are for.

Okay? And in the Exodus story in Numbers chapter 15 this is what it says. The Lord said to Moses speak to the people of Israel and tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner.

And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes which you're inclined to hear after.

[ 29 : 04 ] So you shall remember and do all my commandments and be holy to your God. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God.

I am the Lord your God. These tassels were to remind the Jews of God's commands so that they would do them and so that they would be holy to God.

To the God who rescued them out of Egypt. So I want you I don't know, you don't need to put your hand up, but have you ever seen someone else with maybe a Christian bumper sticker or a sticker on their car that just says to the world, I am a Christian and so you can judge my driving.

I think it's a very dangerous thing. I mean, I have a responsibility as a pastor. I remember there was a situation that happened at our old house, a very serious and violent!

And I remember thinking, if I get involved in this, I don't want to be in the newspaper. I don't want to damage the name of Christ by getting involved in a situation.

[ 30 : 22 ] But I mean, okay, a bumper sticker on your car. I'm not sure I even trust myself with one of those. Because in a moment of weakness, I might be involved in some sort of road rage, or I might do some sort of imperfect driving.

I know it's unbelievable to think of, but I might do some imperfect kind of driving. These tassels on the Jews' garments was like a bumper sticker.

It said, remember the commandments of the Lord and do them and be holy. And so you had to live up to these tassels. Jings!

When we read about these tassels, and given in the setting of Exodus, and then we see Jesus doing these major Exodus-like miracles, and then we see these people touching his clothes and being healed, what does it tell us about Jesus?

When we consider Jesus more than any other Jew, he truly lives up to what these tassels were given for. He truly keeps the whole law perfectly.

[ 31 : 27 ] He was truly righteous, fully righteous, never sinned once, fully righteous, and he was truly holy.

And so when these people are reaching out for the fringe of his clothes, consider this, the people are touching something of the righteousness and holiness of Jesus.

That's what they're doing. And unlike anyone else who wore these tassels, the righteousness and holiness of Jesus is perfect and powerful and completely unaffected by the sinfulness and uncleanness of other people when they touched him.

Because when they touched him, they were made well. So what are you holding on to? What is it that you're holding on to? I love David's got this little saying, hanging on to the Lord's coattails.

I mean, if we're not doing that, there's no hope. hope. There's another amazing connection to Exodus because normally there was a danger if a thing that was unholy came in contact with a thing that was holy, the holy thing could now be made unholy by the unclean thing.

[ 32 : 46 ] Just like if a person has a disease and they touch someone who didn't have a disease, the transfer went in one direction. That's why they were so afraid to go near a leper.

Keep them out of the camp. Don't be touching anyone. A big deal that this woman in chapter 5 touched Jesus because normally that would have made him unclean.

But not Jesus. No, his righteousness and holiness is perfect. I remember when I was reading through Exodus, if you remember we were going through Exodus and we went through all those painstaking details about the tabernacle, there was a little surprising detail that seemed to buck the trend of this transfer.

In Exodus 29 it says this, when it's going through all the different things, Exodus 29 says, the altar, when you're making the altar, the altar shall be most holy and whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

Isn't that interesting? Normally it went the other way about, but the altar is most holy and whatever touches that, because it's most holy, the thing that touches it will become holy.

[ 34 : 00 ] The altar is the most holy place of sacrifice and atonement, so anything touching it would become holy to God. And we see the same thing in our passage with Jesus.

Remember, he's among Jews and Gentiles. He's in the marketplaces with countless unholy things. He has been touched by people who are sick.

For any other Jew, they would be affected, and it wouldn't make any difference to these people, but the person being touched would be affected and made unclean.

But not for Jesus. Jesus is not affected. Instead, whoever is touching him is becoming clean. As many as touched, the tassels on his clothes became well.

They are touching something of his righteousness and holiness. And their faith in him is proven not to be misplaced. Jesus is like a walking altar.

[ 35 : 04 ] He is the most holy place of God's presence. He is God's solution. He is the sacrifice and atonement for our sins. He is the place where an offering is made to God.

An offering that is most holy. By his stripes we are healed. By his holiness we are made clean. As it says in 2 Corinthians 5, for our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

You see, by holding on to Jesus, he takes away your unholiness, your sin, your uncleanness, and he gives you his righteousness and his holiness.

No matter who you are, faith in Jesus will never be misplaced. We cannot rely on our own righteousness because we have none. We cannot rely on our own holiness because we are unclean.



So make sure that you're reaching out to Jesus in faith and that you're holding on to his righteousness and holiness and then we will see that we will be made well. Let me pray.

[ 36 : 31 ] Lord, we thank you so much for how good Jesus is. And we thank you that it wasn't just for the people in Gennesaret that Jesus came, but he came for every one of us.

That if anyone would believe in him, if anyone would reach out and hold on to his righteousness and his holiness, to trust in his person, our faith will be proven not to be misplaced.

Because it is through his righteousness and holiness, through his sacrifice and atonement, that we are made well. And so, Lord, we thank you for Jesus.

may we hold on to him and nothing else. In his name we pray. Amen.