

# In Touch With Jesus

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 19 September 2021

[0:00] In touch with Jesus. That's the message today. Looking at how the Bible says we are to touch! Jesus and he is to touch us. The touch of Jesus. How we need to be in touch with Jesus, with! Him. We can often talk about getting in touch with people, keeping in touch, staying in touch with friends and family and other people. What about keeping in touch with God? What about our contact with him? Have we had that encounter with our Lord? Are we in touch with God? Makes me think of that, you know, the Michelangelo picture of God and Adam sort of half-heartedly reaching out to God.

Have we had that encounter with God? Are we in touch with God? Matthew 14, 34 we read of such an encounter. It says, Matthew 14, verse 34, and when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about and brought unto him all that were diseased. And they besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment. And as many as touched were made perfectly whole. It says this crowd of people, when they recognised the Lord Jesus was there, it says they, the diseased, they kept begging him to let them touch the hem of his garment. And it says as many as touched were made perfectly whole. When we touch Jesus, we're made perfectly whole. We're made perfectly whole. The sense is I've saved thoroughly. When we touch him, we find rescue. We find deliverance and safety and healing, wholeness and salvation. We can reach out by faith and we can touch the Lord Jesus right here, right now. And outside of this place, this place is not necessarily some constraint. It's wherever we are, we can reach out and touch the Lord. We can reach out by faith and touch him wherever we are. And at many times it says that the Lord Jesus touches, he touches people. He reaches us and he touches us. The touch of Jesus is a dramatic difference maker. The Bible tells much about people touching Jesus and about the Lord Jesus touching people. So let's look at some instances of this, the touch of Jesus. We go to Mark 10, Mark 10, 13. We see that the touch of Jesus is a loving touch. Mark 10, verse 13, it says, it says that the people, they brought young children to him that he should touch them and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased and said unto them, suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, he so ever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms and he put his hands upon them and blessed them. It says the Lord Jesus, it says they brought the young children unto him. And it says that he took them up in his arms. It says he put his hands upon them and blessed them. Friends, the touch of Jesus is a loving touch. It's a touch of love. It's a touch of blessing. If we would just come unto his loving care. It says when he took the loaves and fishes in Matthew 14, as he took them in his hands and he blessed them, miracles happened. And when we put our lives into the hands of Jesus, when they're consecrated into his divine use, he can touch our lives. He can touch our lives just like that. When the Lord Jesus touches our life in his love and compassion, he consecrates us for his use. And what a privilege. Think of it, friends, today. If you're a saved man or saved woman, but you have had the Lord Jesus touch your life, something good is going to happen. Blessing will happen. It says he touched them and he blessed them. In Ephesians 1 verse 3, it says, as blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, it says, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. It says the Lord God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings. Now the touch of Jesus means blessing. It says that he put his hands upon the children and he blessed them. When the Lord Jesus reaches us and touches our lives, we can know his blessing.

It says in Mark 1, how the Lord touched the leper. He was moved with compassion, it says, with this inward yearning. We read that in Mark 1 41 and it says, and Jesus moved with compassion, put

forth his hand and touched him and saith unto him, I will be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken immediately, the leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed. Now these were the untouchables. These were lepers.

[4:55] It would have been a fearful thing for people to touch a leper. And there was all kinds of restrictions about touching someone with leprosy. But the Lord Jesus, nevertheless, he reached out and he touched the leper. And it says that immediately he was cleansed. He was healed.

The Lord Jesus touches us and we can know God's love. God's love would touch even the untouchable. And his love is a picture of his care. In Matthew 20 34, it says, of two blind men. Again, he had compassion. It's his love that moved him. He had compassion, it says, and he touched. Matthew 20 34, it says, Jesus had compassion on them and he touched their eyes and immediately their eyes received sight.

And they followed him. Another occasion, Matthew 17, was when our Lord was transfigured in glory on the mount. Peter, James and John were terrified. This is Matthew 17 verse 6. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and they were sore afraid. And Jesus came, it says, and touched them and said, arise, be not afraid. It says they fell on their face, not on their backs, notice, they fell on their faces in worship. They were afraid. And Jesus reached down and he reached out and he touched them and he reassured them. Friends, he touches us and he takes away our fears. And this world where there's a lot of fear right now, Jesus touches us and he takes away our fear. He tells you, don't be afraid.

I'm with you. The Lord Jesus wants to touch you. He wants to touch your life by his love. And he reaches out in different ways. You see some instances where he touched people in different ways. For example, Peter's mother-in-law had a fever in Matthew 8 verse 15. And it says he touched her hand and the fever left her and she arose and ministered unto them. He touched her hand. It says in Matthew 9 where he touched people's eyes. Matthew 9 29, he touched their eyes saying, according to your faith, be it unto you.

He touched their eyes and their eyes were opened. He touched the man's tongue in Mark 7 33. A deaf and dumb man says he touched his tongue and he was healed. It says he touched the ear of the priest's servant, the high priest's servant in Luke 22 51. It says, and he touched his ear and he healed him.

[7:16] He didn't give the man a clip around his ear. He clipped the man's ear back on. You know, he touched the Peter's mother-in-law's hand. He touched the blind man's eyes. He touched the deaf and dumb man's tongue. He touched the high priest's servant's ear. And friends, what's more, he can touch your heart. In 1 Samuel 10 verse 26, it reads that there was some band of men whose hearts God had touched. You know, our hearts can be touched by the living God. Your heart can be touched such that you can be saved. He touches us at every point of need. So the touch of Jesus is a loving touch. Secondly, the touch of Jesus is a loosing touch. God wants to loose people to set them free. We see an example in John 11 44, when our Lord was at the tomb of Lazarus and he said, Lazarus come forth. John 11 44. And he that was dead came forth, bound hands and foot with grave clothes and his face was bound about with a napkin. And Jesus said unto them, loose him and let him go.

Here was Lazarus. He could have hung on to those smelly grave clothes that bound him. But Jesus says, loose him and let him go. Now the Lord Jesus wants to loose people. He wants to loose us. He wants to bring us new life. We don't want to hang on to those old grave clothes anymore of the old life, of that life of death, as it were, the grave clothes. He wants to give us life. He wants us to leave the old grave clothes by his mighty power. Let God loose you and set you free. It's like as you could think of David's sling, that the stone in David's sling only had full impact when he let it go. Otherwise, he would just have been going around and around in circles. It's a bit like that in our spiritual life, isn't it? God wants us to loose us and let us go. He wants to touch us and release us from whatever holds us captive. Just as those grave clothes would have bound up Lazarus, the grave clothes, as it were, our old way of living. He wants us to be loosed and set free and to turn our faith loose.

In Luke 13, we read another account where there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity, 18 years. She was bowed down and could in no wise lift up herself. Verse 12, and it says, And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him and he said, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. It says, The Lord Jesus laid his hands on her and she was loosed and made straight. Friends, Satan doesn't want to let you go. He wants you to be bound up, as it were, in grave clothes. He wants you to be held captive by addiction, by bondage, by the enslavement of his workings. And sometimes that what is the hand that he's holding you with can be your own hand. A hand reaching out can't hold onto sin. Think of that.

Maybe we're our own worst enemy, as the saying goes. We are holding us back. We're sometimes the biggest obstacle to his blessing in our lives. We need to reach out. When we reach out with an extended hand, with an open hand, we drop off that which we're holding onto and we hang onto him.

[10:43] Friends, the Lord Jesus says, Loose him and let him go. And sometimes we are holding us back. We are sometimes the biggest obstacle to his blessing in our lives. So let go and hold onto God. Let loose what's holding you and take hold of his hand. The Lord Jesus is in the business of loosing us, loosing up the bounder. He's in the business of straightening up what the devil has messed up. He's in the business of fixing broken lives, of breaking the chains of sin, sin from our lives. And it's Jesus' touch. It's his touch that we need. That he brings liberty.

He brings release for the devil's captives. The Lord Jesus, he doesn't bind us up with religious bondages, which is the root word of the word religion, which means bondage. Jesus is the opposite of that. He didn't come to bring religion. He's come to break the chains and smash and demolish those chains of man-made religion, but to know that true religion, that true relationship, that setting free that he wants to give. So the Lord Jesus, he wants to loose us and free us up. And his hand brings that saving touch. He brings us deliverance and salvation and safety and he sets us free. And it's the mighty hand of God. God is bigger than any problem that you have.

In Matthew 9, there was another woman diseased with the issue of blood. Twelve years, it says. And in verse 20, in Matthew 9, it says that she touched the hem of his garment. Now think of it, if you can, to touch the hem of his garment, to have that heart today, that you want to touch Jesus today. I think there's a little saying that went along the lines of, you know, when you're hanging by a thread, make sure it's the hem of his garment. You know, just when you feel like you're hanging by a thread, you know, just make sure it's the hem of his garment. Amen. I guess they had little tassels on them or, you know, little stringy bits and that sense of just, just to touch, just to touch the hem of his garment today. And that's what this woman did. She'd had 12 years of this issue of blood. And it says, Matthew 9, 21, for she said within herself, if I may, but touch, but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about. And when he saw her, he said, daughter, be of good comfort. Thy faith has made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. Here was this woman. She'd been bleeding, this 12 year problem, chronic bleeding. In a time of faith, she reached out and she touched the Saviour and she said, I shall be whole. There's a wholeness in touching Jesus today. If we can but touch him, even if it's just the hem of his garment, even if we can just take a little touch, as it were, there's wholeness there. Just reach out and touch him today by faith. Now, loose that power of faith. It's her faith and his garment. It's her faith and his virtue, his power, the power of God. So loose the power of faith in your life. Another account is in Mark 5.

It's the same instance. In fact, it's in all the synoptic gospels, I believe. Mark 5, it tells how the Lord is surrounded by a large crowd. And verse 30, immediately knowing in himself that virtue has gone out of him, he turned him about in the press, in the crowd and he said, who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, thou seest the multitude thronging thee and sayest thou, who touched me? The Lord Jesus knew who touched him. He knew virtue had gone out of him. He knew the power of faith. He knew that the one who touched him had extended her hand in faith and she had touched him with that hand and power had gone out of him. Get hold of God today. Get hold of him today. Touch him. Touch him by faith.

Put aside the distractions and touch Jesus this morning. Turn your faith loose. Exercise your faith. Release it. Nothing is too big for God. Nothing is too difficult for him. His power can loose you and

set you free. So reach out an extended hand unto him. And when you reach out, as you stretch out that extended hand, things are going to drop out of it that you're holding on to, right? Sometimes what we need to do, isn't it? What we're holding on to, what we're clutching hold of, when we reach out our hand to him, they'll drop out. So the touch of Jesus is a loving touch. The touch of Jesus is a loosing touch. And thirdly, the touch of Jesus is a lifting touch. We see Mark 9.27. The Lord Jesus touched a demoniac, this demon-possessed man. It says Mark 9.27. But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up and he arose.

[16:05] When Jesus touches us, he lifts us up. And here it says the man, this man possessed by the devil, was transformed. I like to say that God is not in the business of putting people down, but in lifting them up. Amen? And we should be the same, shouldn't we? Not putting people down, but extending our hand, lifting people up. He lifts up the downtrodden. It's like how Peter and John acted when they encountered the lame man. This is Acts 3. Peter followed the Lord's example and it says he took him by the hand and he lifted him up. And we all need a hand up, don't we? A hand up. Acts 3.7 it says, and he took him by the right hand. Peter took him by the right hand and it says, and he lifted him up. And immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. The hand of Jesus lifts us up. If you're feeling down, reach up your hand to him. Reach up your hand to him. He'll lift you up. That's what he does. Who can touch him? Anybody can. Sinners touched him.

Luke 8.47. Some would have been discounted. They'd be excluded. They'd have been thought too sinful, too far, far away that God would not want to get anywhere near them. In Luke 8.47 it says, the woman saw that she was not hid. She came trembling and falling down before him. She declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him and how she was healed immediately.

Here was this woman coming, unworthy, trembling. That's how we should come unto him, isn't it? Come unto him conscious of your need, conscious you're unworthy, trembling. Like the woman in Luke 7.

We don't know her name. We just know she was a sinner. That was her name. A woman in the city, which was a sinner. Luke 7.37. She was so marked by sin that that was who people knew her. To be. That woman. That sinful woman. That sinner woman. The woman in the city, who's a sinner. Imagine having such a reputation. Having such a label. Here she was, this woman, it says, and behold a woman in the city, which was a sinner. They knew who she was. She was shut out.

[18:50] A hopeless case. No one wanted her. No one would give her the time of day. She was a lost cause.

And when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster box of ointment. You know the story. She poured it out. And verse 39. Now when the Pharisee had bitten him, saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, Jesus, if he were a prophet, he would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, for she is a sinner.

Imagine the hostility. Imagine the snarl and the kind of tone you can imagine. He's touching her. She's touching him. She's a sinner.

Thank God sinners can touch him. Amen. You can feel like you're just like the woman in the city that was a sinner. Thank God you can touch Jesus. You can touch him right now, right here.

His touch can come. Friends, no one's too far, far away from God that they cannot reach out and touch him.

[20:05] You can cry out for him to touch you, to reach out and touch you. And he will. He will. Think about what is maybe stopping us from touching Jesus.

What's stopping us? Some would make some pretense of some other belief or philosophy or science, so-called, as if that would deny a creator God.

But really it doesn't. There's no excuse. We can cry out to him for him to touch us. We can. And he will. What's stopping us receiving his touch?

Luke 18, 15, it says, They brought unto him also infants that he would touch them, but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. Now these disciples, these were his main men.

This was the church in Prospect. The disciples here were trying to block people, trying to be his bodyguard. And they were actually hindering his ministry here.

[21:11] You know, it's sad, isn't it, really, to reflect how the ones who should have been doing his work were actually stopping people touching him. You know, we don't want to be like that, do we?

We want everyone to touch Jesus. We want him to touch everyone. Let's not block the hand of God from touching our life or the lives of others. If that's the case, get out of the way.

Let's not be like that. You know, he rebuked them. I know one of the accounts, it's a very, very strong rebuke. It's quite a strong telling off they got for stopping his reaching out to the children. He wanted to bless them. We need to get out of the way. Stop people, stop blocking people from coming to Jesus. Rather, let's facilitate them coming to him. So are we failing to touch God for ourselves?

Sometimes we can. You know, it's, as I say, what we're holding on to. Come with empty hands. Then you can touch him. Let it drop off, the sin, the obstacle, the barrier.

[22:16] What's stopping you? Let it go and reach out with an open hand. Lay hold of God. Hold on to him. Cling to him. Fasten on to him. And expect him to touch your life today.

There's not a person here today who doesn't need more of God than when they first entered this place. We can all get closer to God.

We can all draw closer. And we can choose to refuse his touch. Some people, I know there's someone I used to know who was very touchy.

And she would say, don't touch me. Something must have happened. And I'm not making slight of that because maybe there was a reason that she felt like that. All right? But some people can say, don't touch me.

And they like that with God too. They put up a wall. They don't want God to enter their little microcosm. Their, what's it called?

[23:14] Their echo chamber. They don't want God in there. They say, don't touch me, God. We can be like that too. We can put up a wall. But you can pull that wall down, brick by brick.

Because if we're putting up a wall before God, if we're saying, don't touch me, God, we're missing out on his blessing, on the comfort he can give, his reassurance, his love, his care, his wholeness. How is our contact with God? Is there a blockage? Is there some kind of blockage to our fellowship? What's caused us to lose touch? Maybe we were once in touch with God and then other things have crowded him out.

Have you lost touch with him? You can regain that touch, that fellowship with God. By faith you can receive his touch on your life.

Let him touch your heart, your home. He can heal and save. It says in Matthew 9.29, Then he touched their eyes, saying, according to your faith be it unto you. This is a faith thing.

[24:18] This is a faith thing. Touch him by faith. Put aside the doubt and all the barriers, the walls, and touch him by faith.

Receive his touch. And he can meet you at your point of need. According to your faith. Reach out with a touch of faith today. Does your marriage need his touch? Does your faith need his touch to be strengthened?

Do you have a need of surrender in some area of your life? It's his touch that makes all the difference. Have you been striving and resisting the conviction of the Holy Spirit? Come with an open hand.

Do you need God to intervene in your life, in your family? Do you want your faith to grow? It's his touch. And it's according to your faith be it unto you. You can touch him today, right here, right now. Touch him with that hand outstretched in faith. Touch him with the yearning of a surrendered heart. Touch him with a repentant will. Touch him with a renewed dedication within. Touch him with a new commitment of prayer and faith.

[25:24] He will not turn you aside. Friends, it says in the book, this man receiveth sinners. And that's not changed. Amen. This man receiveth sinners.

You might say, look, I'm so bad. God doesn't want, God's given up on me. I've got no chance. This man receiveth sinners. You're exactly who he wants to receive.

By faith, come to him. You can touch him today. This man receiveth sinners. And he will receive you today.

Think of that. Even you. Even me. Even me. This man receiveth sinners. He will receive you today. And he will bless your life. He will love you, loose you, and lift you up.

When he touches you, as you touch him. And he will loose you with his great love. Love you. With his soul-saving power, he'll lift you up.

[26:21] In his everlasting arms. Think of it today. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that your hand is not shortened, that it counts save. Lord, that we can know your wonderful love.

And Lord, for the grace you give. And keep on giving. Lord, we thank you for mercies so tender. Your compassionate heart. Lord, as you touch the blind, the leper, the lame.

The ones with infirmity and demonic attack. Lord, the woman that was a sinner. The man that was a sinner.

Lord, your heart is such that you still want to touch us. You wanted to touch and bless the children.

You want to bless our lives, Lord. Pray that each one might know your touch.

To know by faith they can extend their hand and say, Lord, I want you. I'm going to stop saying, don't touch me. I want you to touch me, Lord. And touch my life.

[27:24] Touch my need. Minister to my heart. Pray if there's any yet to trust you, Lord, for the first time. That they might say, Lord Jesus, save me. I reach out by faith.

I receive your love. I receive that forgiveness you've made possible because of the cross. Lord, that I can know you personally. And, Lord, for each one that trusts you, Lord, help us to have a more tender appreciation of who you are and to draw closer each new day that will not lose touch but will refresh that touch, that faith touch, that faith hold, that we can know your wonderful saving and securing power.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.