

"Who Touched My Garment?"

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[0 : 00] Very sincere welcome to this service, this short service from Stornoway, from Stornoway Free Church. Wherever you are, whether it's in the town, in the island, in the country, or wherever you are in the world, I trust that God will bless us during this time of worship.

And it will bless the Gospel to you particularly as we come together to hear his word and to learn from it. We're going to begin by reading from Mark's Gospel, the Gospel of Mark, chapter 5, and verses 21 to 43.

The Gospel of Mark at chapter 5 and at verse 21. And he implored him, earnestly saying, My little daughter is at the point of death.

Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live. And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. And there was a woman who had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better, but rather grew worse.

She had heard reports about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.

[1 : 28] And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, Who touched my garments?

And his disciples said to him, You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, Who touched me? And he looked around to see who had done it.

But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well.

Go in peace and be healed of your disease. While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?

But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, Do not fear, only believe. And he allowed no one to follow him, except Peter and James and John, the brother of James.

[2 : 31] They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. And when he had entered, he said to them, Why are you making a commotion and weeping?

The child is not dead, but sleeping. And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in to where the child was.

Came here by the hand, he said, Taluitha kumi, which means, Little girl, I say to you, arise. And immediately, the girl got up and began walking, for she was 12 years of age.

And they were immediately overcome with amazement. And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

And may God bless to us that portion of his word, to his own praise and glory. Now we're going to engage in prayer. Let's join together now, call upon the Lord in prayer.

[3 : 34] Lord, our gracious God, we pray that you would help us to appreciate the privilege that we now have once again, not only of being together under the word of the gospel, but of coming to you to worship you, to speak with you, to pray to you, to sing your praises, and to seek that you would hear us and answer us through your Spirit.

It is our great privilege, Lord, for we know that while you created us in your own image, yet nevertheless we are sinful creatures, having fallen from that condition in which you created us.

Lord, our God, help us, we pray, to appreciate your greatness. We can never measure it. And as we read of it in your word, we acknowledge it is so much greater and above us than we can imagine,

that we can never comprehend.

And we give thanks, O Lord, that you are great, and that all the things you reveal about yourself and your greatness are so true and everlasting and eternal and unchangeable.

And yet we bless you, O Lord, that while we are such a tiny speck, not only in comparison to you, but even in comparison to the universe of which we belong, yet, Lord, we give thanks for your intense interest in us, for the way that that interest is shown even to the provision of salvation for us.

[4 : 59] We have rebelled against you, we sinned against you, we disobeyed your word, and Lord, yet, nevertheless, we come to stand in awe and in admiration and in thanksgiving at how you in grace reached across that great divide that we caused, so that we might be brought to be reconciled to you.

Lord, we come to you tonight to give as well as to receive. We come to give you thanks. We come to give you praise, to worship you, and we seek to do so in the beauty of your holiness.

We seek to do so through your Holy Spirit working in us and bringing to us to our notice those things that not only belong to our need, but also to the provision you have made against it.

We come before you, O Lord, to give thanks to you for your goodness to us on a daily basis. We bless you that you remember us even in the most minute and practical things of life.

Help us, O Lord, as we come to worship you anew this evening, that we may come also with our confession, our confession of sin, our confession of our need of repentance and cleaning, and through your own spirit to be re-established in a right relationship with you.

[6 : 19] We come also, O Lord, to receive and our privilege to receive from you. For every time we come to pray to you, we pray to receive your blessing, to receive that life that you died to procure for your people, and these elements of that life that your word speaks about, that peace with God, that righteousness, that sense of assurance, that wonderful way in which we know that there is an inheritance laid up in heaven for those who trust in you and love you.

And we pray, O Lord, tonight that you would, for all your people everywhere throughout the world, grant to them a further sense of assurance of your blessing and of your acceptance of them and of the provision that you have made for us.

We thank you, O Lord, on this wonderful day of the creation with the sunshine and with the warmth in our own locality and elsewhere. We give thanks for the way in which the warmth of the gospel has come to reach our hearts and for the way in which the warmth of your presence is appreciated by your people as they live from day to day.

Lord, bless us, we pray, tonight as we come in this way. We bring before you those who have particular needs as they are known to us. We think of those who belong to us in the congregation and who are laid aside in illness at the moment, those who are recovering from surgery or treatment, those still receiving treatment or anticipating it in these days to come.

Bless them, we pray. Give them that firmness of mind that would be stayed upon yourself. And the faith to come and place themselves in your hand. We ask that you bless too those who in these past days themselves have lost loved ones.

[8 : 06] Lord, we pray that they may be comforted through your truth and through your spirit. We know, Lord, that the world we live in, in all our localities, in all the nations of the earth, is marked by death.

Death, death sometimes on a great scale. Death, especially in these days, through this virus that has ravaged the world. Lord, our God, we pray that this may bring us more and more to appreciate and to place our trust in the provision you have made for us in Jesus Christ.

We thank you in him that we are made whole. That whatever things affect us in this life by way of disease or limitations, we grant, Lord, that we may appreciate that they will all be gone when you bring your people home.

We thank you that there is a homeland prepared by you. A place where there are no tears. A place where sorrow and crying and death will be no more. And, Lord, we pray that you would impress upon us that this is no human invention or something of our own imagination just to give us some comfort.

It is your truth. And we know that it remains your truth, whatever we or others may make of it. So bless, we pray, those tonight who have lost loved ones throughout the world.

[9 : 29] Bless those who are caring for those in need. We pray, O Lord, that in our districts and communities, as well as throughout the world, that you bless them, especially those who are suffering serious illness, whether it be through COVID or otherwise.

We pray for those countries where the resources are very slight and where people cannot have access to the medical means that we have at our disposal.

Remember every country in the world where that is the case. Or remember these nations of the world, too, where we know that this is compounded by warfare, by strife, by factions that constantly break out against each other in violence.

And, Lord, we pray that you would bring peace to these troubled lands. And we ask that you would be pleased, O Lord, to send the peace of the gospel especially to invade men's hearts so that we and others may come to know more and more of that peace.

Remember our leaders, we pray, in our own nation. Grant them, Lord, during these critical days that they may be taught by you, led by you, used by you.

[10:42] And we ask that you would give them, O Lord, to quit with all that we know none of us has by ourselves. O Lord, deliver them, we pray, from dependence upon mere human wisdom and give them to turn to your truth, to turn to you especially as God, who has promised that you will give wisdom to those who ask, that you will give strength to those who are weak, who come to confess their weakness and their own inability to deal with those issues much greater than themselves.

Help us, Lord, we pray, for we need your help. We cry out to you for help. We pray that you would enable us more and more to see that without you helping us, we are undone.

We cannot extricate ourselves from so many crises in life. We pray that you would help us, O Lord, at this time in your providence. Bless our young people.

Give them, Lord, as they develop and grow up and as they anticipate going back to school shortly. Lord, give them to trust in yourself. Give them the teaching they have received at Sunday school from teachers, from parents, from grandparents.

Lord, help them, we pray, to assimilate that in their lives and to depend upon what you say in your word to be the truth. And to especially look to yourself, the person of the glorious and risen Saviour, who showed his love even for the youngest infants in taking them up in his arms and blessing them.

[12:12] Hear us, we pray now. Continue with us and pardon our many sins. For Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, I want to say a few words to any children that are watching tonight.

I'm sure there are some. And we've been looking at Bible birds and we've come to the end of that list. I was looking through some sources of information about birds in the Bible and I think we've covered pretty much all of them.

So I want to turn tonight to look at animals of the Bible. Some people say, of course, that birds are animals. They are in the sense that they are creatures, but we don't normally associate them with animals such as cattle and cats and dogs and so on.

So animals that we find in the Bible. And I want to begin with one of the smallest and that is the ant. The ant is a number of times referred to in the Bible. Just one of the passages is in Proverbs 6, and verses 6 to 8, where it says, Go to the ant, O sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, without having any chief, officer or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.

A number of things there are very interesting about the ant. You all know what an ant looks like. I'm sure you've seen some ants. They're tiny little insects. They crawl around. They usually go out in groups.

[13:34] And, well, you get some large ants in different parts of the world. Most of the ones here are quite small, but they can still sting you and leave you very itchy if they actually crawl onto your skin.

But one or two things about the ant, we're told here, are interesting. First of all, it says, Without having any chief, officer or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.

In other words, the first thing, the ant acts for itself. There's nobody there to tell it what to do, and yet goes out and does this very important work in preparing for the future.

For the wintertime that comes, she prepares in the summer. The ant prepares in the summer. It gathers up a lot of food, stores that food, so there'll be food when it's not available during the winter months.

And that's how we should be as well because the Bible actually tells us many things that are important for us to do, such as trusting in Jesus, coming out to serve Jesus, telling other people about Jesus, loving God, obeying God, all of these things.

[14 : 41] And we shouldn't have to be prompted, myself as well, we shouldn't have to be prompted by other people to say, go and do that, go and read your Bible, go and do your prayers. Just like the ant, that should be something that we do ourselves knowing its importance, knowing that by doing so, we're actually preparing our souls, our hearts for that day and also for the future too, as God makes us strong.

So the ant is really here used in Proverbs to address or to speak to the one that the writer calls the sluggard. And the sluggard is just a word, a sluggard is a lazy person. Whereas a he or a she, a sluggard is a lazy person. That's why it goes on in verse nine to say, how long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? In other words, it's saying to us, as many other parts of the Bible says, don't be lazy, don't be a sluggard. When it comes to the things of your soul, especially, don't be a sluggard. And in fact, we shouldn't be lazy really about anything. It should always give us delight to do things to help parents or grandparents or brothers, sisters, whoever. And this teaching is against laziness. [15 : 54] But you see, it's preparing for the future as well, as we said, that the ant is doing this. Now, it doesn't mean that the ant has a brain. It doesn't mean that the ant, every day, says, well, I know winter is coming, so I better go and store up my food.

But it does that. It just does that because that's by instinct what it does. And we too should always be doing that, preparing for the future.

The more you pray, the more you read your Bible, the more you have a living relationship with God, the more you're preparing for the future. So that whatever things happen in the future, whether they're happy things or sad things, by storing up the truth of God in your soul, you're more prepared for the future by doing that than you would be if you neglected that.

You see, that's why the ant is for us such an example. It's not just a contrast to laziness. It's an example of wisdom to store up truth in our hearts for the future, whatever that future may be. And the other thing about the ant I want to mention is its size. It's a tiny wee insect, hundreds of times smaller than ourselves as human beings. Just imagine that insect, the size of that tiny wee insect in comparison to the whole world or the whole creation.

[17 : 18] It's such a tiny thing. And yet it's important even to God because he created it. And although it's that tiny and that small, for its size, it is very, very strong.

You might have seen ants, actually, if you've seen them crawling around in groups, especially if they're near their nest. They go out usually in lines. And you'll find them sometimes carrying back like some large pieces of bread or bits of a leaf or something like that back to the nest. And if you look at them carrying them, you can see they're actually huge compared to themselves. And if you measured that by the size of the load compared to the ant and compared it to yourself, it would be like just carry a car on your back.

They're really, really strong, although they're so small. And that really reminds us that however insignificant and small we might be in the opinion of people.

God makes us strong. Even if people think that what we believe and how we live is not worth really taking in at all. It's really not worth bothering with.

[18 : 29] It's just tiny. That's insignificant. You just brush it aside like people do with an ant. But God makes us strong. And through trusting in him, he gives us spiritual strength to carry out everything we need to do for Jesus every day.

So remember the ant. Remember that it acts in a way that shows an example against laziness. Remember that it prepares for the future. And remember that though it's very tiny compared to the world around it, it's nevertheless very, very strong.

And these are important things for ourselves as human beings as well. Now we're going to say the Lord's Prayer. Let's think of the words as we go through it. Instead of just, sometimes we may be guilty of just doing it and knowing the words and reading them through or speaking them through. Let's think about the words as we go through it slowly and just apply to ourselves as we go through it what it's saying and why they're important. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors.

[19 : 48] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

We're going to turn now for a short time to Mark chapter 5. Mark 5. I'm going to look at verses 24 to 35.

Sorry, 25 to 34. Beginning at verse 25 down to verse 34. This is the account we have of this woman that had this discharge or this hemorrhage of blood for 12 years and came to Jesus and Jesus healed her the moment she touched him.

She was healed of that disease that she'd had to live with for all of those years. Now, this is an interesting chapter because even the passage we read from verse 21 through to the end of the chapter, you really have two events combined into one almost.

Such is the way that Mark tells us about the ministry of Jesus, the traveling of Jesus, so that as Jesus was on the way to the house of Jairus, whose little daughter was ill, very near death, he was then met by this situation with this woman.

[21 : 05] He couldn't go to Jairus' house until he had dealt with her first and when he had dealt with her, then he carried on to go to Jairus' house and he healed. He brought back the little girl from the dead there.

So you can see from that and it's interesting that Mark's gospel, if you go through it, you can see this word immediately occurring so many times. It's one of Mark's most commonly used words, immediately.

You find it in this passage as well, immediately, immediately. She was made whole immediately, verse 29. She felt in her body that she was healed. So Mark is really telling us in the ministry of Jesus that things were moving on quickly and it's so humbling really for you and I to see how little time Jesus had to himself.

The bustle that surrounded him, this great crowd here is an example of that and you find all of that just as it were pushing him along although he's never out of control of the situation but there is all of this busyness, all of this bustle, all this noise, all of these things, these needs that are cramming in upon his attention and yet he goes on with his ministry in a way that nobody else could.

And you can see even here that as he's moving on here these two very different needs are pressed upon him. This little daughter of Jairus near the point of death when he was first informed of it and when he reached the home she had died and he took her back from the dead and then this woman who was very different to that, a very different need and yet you can see how brilliantly and perfectly and successfully Jesus dealt with both.

[22 : 53] Whatever your situation is tonight, however different your circumstances, your situation, however different your thoughts may be about yourself and your situation to anybody else in the world, supposing nobody else has the situation that you've got, I can guarantee you from the word of God it will never be out with the ability of Jesus to master it and to deal with it and to bring you that answer to your problem and to your need and to your question that you need to have dealt with by him.

I want to deal with four things, four words really that we can say arise from the passage, condition, contact, confession and comfort. Maybe that will help us just to remember the passage a little bit more.

for the woman's condition and then the woman's contact with Jesus and then the woman's confession that she had been indeed healed and then the woman's comfort as Jesus comforted her with these words with which you find the passage ending in verse 34.

Let's look at her condition and the wonderful thing about the Gospels and this passage is no exception is that many of the things that apply here in the ordinary sense if you like or in the physical sense have a corresponding spiritual meaning and value but it's always important not to stress these things or stretch them out too far but I think you'll find from this passage that there are things that are very obviously meant spiritually as well as physically as we'll see such as the woman's touching of Jesus there's far more to that than just a touch with her hand of the hem of his garment because she was exercising faith as Jesus himself acknowledges and so the touch of faith is a spiritual thing which is really symbolized if you like by reaching out a hand physically to touch his garment so we'll see a few of these as we go through it first of all then her condition now this was very difficult for this woman physically because she had this 12 year long discharge of blood whatever the cause of it was we're not told but it's very difficult to live with a hemorrhage of blood wherever it's coming from and find that however it's brought to doctors we read here she had suffered much under many doctors many physicians and she had spent all that she had all her savings had gone trying to find a cure for this hemorrhage and what we're told by Mark is that

having spent everything she had with all these doctors she was no better but in fact grew worse the condition was actually getting worse as time went on not only were the doctors unable to treat it effectively but it actually was getting worse day by day now not only was that difficult physically as if that were not enough this would obviously also be difficult for her in terms of the ceremonial laws that were in place at the time because anyone with that constant discharge of blood like this couldn't come into the temple couldn't engage in many of the spiritual activities that other people could so she was marginalized this woman was actually kept if you like by these ceremonial laws which came over from the Old Testament and are still in place during this time this woman imagined the difficulty the agony indeed of this woman not only physically having to carry this disease about and not finding an answer having spent all her savings and getting worse all the time but along with that she's marginalized she's not allowed to take part in such things as entering the temple and taking part in worship there and so on so that's the difficulty the condition very briefly that the woman had actually had to live with and all of these different remedies all of these different physicians that she tried it's a reminder for us that when we have the problem of our sin as we all have and when we actually seek to find an answer to that and try and deal with that whether it's a guilty conscience or something that we know is wrong in our relationship with God even if we are converted there are some times we try and just manage it ourselves don't we or we maybe try things that close out the pain of a guilty conscience some people sadly will turn to to drink to drugs to just somehow ever try and close out this sense of guilt and this sense of lack this want this terrible emptiness that they feel in life and yet there is only one thing there is only one person only one physician that can really deal with that and that is

Jesus and you see this woman's condition was such that when she heard about Jesus she tried all of these alternatives and you know maybe you're listening to that tonight as I myself was for a while coming through life and knowing something of what the gospel says knowing some other people who had come to turn to Jesus and come to give their lives to him knowing that he was their saviour and they were commending him to myself and to others and yet hard as we would try hard as I would try and manage on my own I would say well if I live like this for a day I'll try and do the same tomorrow and then maybe I'll just progress into being a Christian and of course that didn't work because you cannot come to obey the law of God by yourself however hard you try you can't come and manage your own life and put everything into place however hard you try the only way it can be done is for the power of Christ to live and work in your heart for your life to be taken over by Jesus himself for him to sit on the throne of your heart thus us will see what this woman actually found out but you know verse 28 here you can see what she came to conclude she had heard reports about Jesus she said even if I touch his garment

[29 : 09] I will be made well every alternative to Jesus himself will leave us getting worse because you know sin is not a neutral thing our sin is not something that lies there dormant if you like and doesn't develop our lives as sinners don't just lie still if we don't have our sins forgiven they keep multiplying the thing keeps getting worse in terms of our relationship with God and how God sees things this woman's condition reminds us that there is only one answer to our plaintiff sinners we don't have to look for an answer anywhere else this is the great thing about the gospel however hard it is for us to accept it however hard it is for us to actually say well I know God is true and this must be true this friend is how it is this saviour this Jesus is the one who is the answer to all our needs as fallen sinners there is our condition how it shows really our own condition when you put it into spiritual terms secondly there is the woman's contact as we said it began really in a sense with her hearing about

Jesus when she heard reports about Jesus in verse 27 she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment you see she heard about Jesus so that really gave her some element of hope something that she maybe thought well surely that's going to be the answer I've tried everything else so I hear about this person he's cured other people I'm hearing that he's able to do the kind of thing that I need so I'll go and see him I'll go and touch him because her conviction was even if I this must have been from what she heard about him because this was in her mind because she said even if I just touch the hem of his garment I shall be made whole I shall be made well she must have heard reports of him about his ability and even how he had cured people of illnesses and so on so this was how she accepted that word now the two things that follow from that I think first of all how important it is that we ourselves spread the news about

Jesus I know the children do this even for Sunday school when they tell the children along with them classes in school or whatever else about Jesus and how about how good it is to learn about him in Sunday school or whatever and as adults we have the same responsibility same privilege indeed and it doesn't really need that you go out into the street and start preaching in the street some people do that I couldn't do that myself very easily but it does mean this that in the ordinary things of life if I may put it that way the everyday day to day things that we have to go through in life and the people that we meet in these day to day issues of life it's there that we have opportunities to tell them about this Jesus when somebody comes and tells you about what they're worried about when somebody comes and tells you something that's affecting their lives negatively when somebody says I'm really worried you know I have to go to hospital next week all of these and many many other ways besides are ordinary if you like daily events and providence into which we can introduce this person this

Jesus and tell these people look I can tell you what he has done for me I can tell you how I found things once I brought them to him and once he had actually changed my life and so you feed that into your everyday conversation and our everyday interaction with people but the other point is this that there are many people sadly who know the truth about Jesus and never do what this woman did they know the truth about Jesus from the gospel maybe you're one of them tonight as you're listening to this you know the gospel you know why Jesus came into the world you know what he did you know that he died on the cross you know that he rose from the dead you believe all of these things but have you touched him have you actually gone to him handed over your life to him touched him in that sense as we'll see in a minute this woman did you see she came and she'd heard about this Jesus so she came behind him and said with conviction of heart if I just touched the hem of his garment

I know that I'll be made well and you know that that's true but if you touch this Jesus by your hand of faith if you stop trying to control your own life as we all have to that's when the change really takes place that's what makes the difference so let's look at the act of touching the woman's contact with Jesus verses 27 and 28 it wasn't enough that she had this conviction in her mind that she'd heard about him and that she came to near to wait it wasn't enough for her that she came near him that she'd be in his vicinity that she would part of the crowd that way following she needed to touch him it wasn't going to cure that she came along with many many other people and could see him at a distance or could see other people that had been cured by him she needed to touch him and she was convinced that even the slightest touch touching even the hem of his garment would bring into her life the cure the change that she needed and so for me and for you that's what it must be about you have to touch him

[35 : 10] I feel so when we come you see to read the bible make it your prayer lord make me through this help me to touch you help me to really have contact with you believingly savingly when you come to pray before you begin to pray or at the beginning of your prayer ask the lord lord make this a real contact with you for me give me in my heart to experience that I have indeed spoken with you that you have spoken back to me that I have touched you and when you're listening to the gospel as it's preached as you are tonight help ask God to help you listen in such a way as you will reach out and touch Jesus don't leave it so that you're listening as it were at a distance and just being part of the crowd that you know are taking part in the service online or wherever you have to touch him your faith has to make contact with him your life has to have a living connection with him and that's what this woman represents and you see you have an instant response you have an instant benefit because you read there in verse 29 as soon as she had done this she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease now that doesn't mean that when you reach out by faith and touch Jesus you immediately have a hundred percent assurance that you are now saved that everything is all right sometimes it's not like that very often it's not like that assurance is something that very often has to grow in our experience we have to grow in assurance I should say it doesn't come to many people just flooding in like that all of a sudden as soon as you come to give your life to Jesus but it is the case as soon as you touched him as soon as you contact him as soon as your faith makes contact with him you are instantly saved instantly forgiven you instantly have righteousness the righteousness of

Jesus himself is ours by faith you instantly have the Holy Spirit in your heart it's through the Holy Spirit that we come to touch him but he doesn't just go away then he takes up residence in your heart what a fantastic privilege that is to carry about with you in your life the third person of the

Godhead and through the third person of the Godhead the Trinity that God is to have Jesus and to have the Father living in your life how does that come about through touching him through making living contact with him through believing his word and coming to give your life over to him by his grace by his enabling grace and you know the moment you touch Jesus you have by faith an inheritance in heaven God doesn't say to you the moment you touch Jesus by faith you're preparing for the time that I will give you that inheritance but you have to go through to the end of your life and you have to live a good life and when you come at the end of that good life to leave this world and to die and to go to heaven then you will have the right to your inheritance then

I will give you the inheritance it's not like that thankfully you have your inheritance the moment you touch Jesus don't let the devil take that from you don't let the devil persuade you that because your life is not as it should be at least from time to time that because you'd like to be better than you are you can't possibly have heaven as your inheritance yet you do to as many as believed him said John he gave them the right the authority to become children of God and you cannot be a child of God without an inheritance attached to it think about that how do you come to have heaven as your inheritance through reaching out and touching Christ by faith to actually have your life taken over by him willingly on your part and on his and to have that inheritance you have it from that moment onwards but of course you won't have the full enjoyment of it and you won't have it in that full sense until you come to occupy heaven itself the woman's contact began with what she heard the woman's contact was by her reaching out and touching his garments exercising faith by which she said even the very hem of his garment if I touch just that

I'll be made whole and you know that reminds us too I think the point that just comes to mind is now there's not just great faith that benefits from touching Christ you may tonight say I wish I had the faith of so and so I know so and so and I know that their faith is so much stronger than mine I wish I had the kind of faith that some of these people in the Bible had or some of the Christians down through history had let me say this to you if your faith is sincere and needs to grow a whole lot more it still connects with Jesus and it still leaves you in possession of this forgiveness this righteousness the Holy Spirit this inheritance everything else that Jesus died to achieve which you have perfectly in heaven but which is yours now by the gift of God that's the instant benefit of touching Jesus have you done that are you still stopping short reaching out with that hand of faith and touching even the hem of his garment not so that you may be made prominent you don't want to be perhaps prominent at all in the church that's absolutely fine Jesus is not really giving us this opportunity so that we'll become famous after all this woman doesn't even have a name and that's quite deliberate on the part of the gospel writers and the biblical writers of these books in the Bible sometimes they don't name people there are many people in the gospels that are named there are many people in epistles of Paul that are named and their name is all we have you see this is not to make us spiritual celebrities but it's to make us children of God is to bring us into possession of eternal life and that's not about being important in the eyes of people or having prominence in the church so that may come to be the case by God's own appointment the important thing is that [42 : 05] Christ is yours that you are his and that you have this wonderful benefit of all that contact with him brings and then before we leave the woman's contact I need to move on because time is moving on but it's such an interesting passage before we leave the woman's contact look at what Jesus himself experienced in verse 30 he asks this question this is really the question that we're having as the basis of our study tonight Jesus perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him immediately turned about in the crowd and said who touched my garments you see the way it's put she touched and Jesus turned as soon as she touched Jesus knew something significant had happened because being the person he is he felt and he knew that power had gone out of himself to a particular touch from someone in that crowd and he knew that that touch was different to all the rest you see the disciples were amazed of course they were amazed they just couldn't understand why he's asking this question look the crowd is pressing in around you look at everybody's touching you you're being jostled as you're moving along in this crowd and yet you're asking who touched me surely all of these people touch you why are you asking who touched me but Jesus knew there was one touch out of all the rest at that moment that he knew it's a different touch a touch that meant to him somebody had drawn life from him power from him salvation from him a cure from him he knew that that touch was different to all the rest and you know tonight your touch of

Jesus registers with him precisely doesn't matter who you are doesn't matter what your background is this is not about some celebrity that comes to stand before you and you actually take

photographs on you see the celebrities from time to time doing this they whether it's red carpet time or whatever and they gather and they just pause for a few moments and people take photos of them and then they're off to the posh hotel or whatever or maybe if you write to them you get a signed photograph back with their signature on they have the clue who you are they've done that whether it's just allowing you to take a photo or sending a signed photo to you or whatever there's nothing wrong with that i'm not criticizing that what i'm saying is making this point they have absolutely no idea who you are and the thing is gone as soon as they've done the signature or had the photo taken that's the end of it not with this person because from the moment you touch him he never forgets he never forgets who you are your name is known to him your needs are known to him the details of your life are known to him he puts a face to you the moment you touch him and indeed before that he knows you anyway as god but what i'm saying is this wonderful touch of faith as it touches and reaches out and touches jesus it registers with him out of the whole of this crowd a big massive crowd and yet this one woman's touch registered so much with jesus that he turned around to see who had done it isn't that comforting isn't that reassuring whatever you think of yourself however you and i must might say tonight i'm not worthy that i should touch jesus i want to do this secretly i want to do this so that nobody else i can just do it quickly and then get away jesus won't let you off for that you see because the moment you come to touch him he knows that power goes out of him he knows who you are he knows that he has dealt with you saving me what a wonderful comforting truth it is that from that moment living in that relationship with jesus that faith brings into your possession it goes on all the way through into eternity he'll never forget you he'll never forget your touch we'll always register with him he'll always be able to say i know the moment you touched me i know the moment you reached out and threw power from me and isn't it staggering that jesus assured us i will never forget that i will never forget you i will always look after you he puts her face to the touch the woman's condition then her contact with jesus and then her confession because you see this this question that jesus put has a purpose and the purpose is not to make the woman feel awkward although this was actually going to be very difficult for her who touched me he turned round to face her and she knew that she was found out and this is when he looked around the woman knowing what had happened came in fear and trembling held down before him and told him the whole truth jesus is not being unkind you see because what he's doing really has its own spiritual equivalent for us as well the moment he touches you touch his life and he turns round then what is his purpose in putting this question who touched me it's so that you will come and be reassured but so that you will come publicly to say he's changed my life yes there's difficulty this woman came in fear and trembling she was afraid she was afraid what people would make of this she was afraid knowing her background knowing that people would say she had this discharge of blood who gave her the right to come into this crowd and especially to come and touch jesus and she fell down before him she was afraid and told him the whole truth well there's an element of fear small or great always accompanying our testimony to what jesus has done there's a fear in coming to go further with your spiritual life the fear that you might somehow fail the fear that people will see you in such a way that will question what right of you to do this the fear that you maybe won't be able to answer people who come to say certain things to you or accuse you there's all kinds of fear fear that you'll be asked to pray publicly fear that you'll be asked to do something that you feel uncomfortable with but really you know this however much we may be afraid to make our confession that jesus has saved us you'll feel a lot more uneasy if you don't do it you'll feel a lot more uneasy if you don't do it because it will always be something in your mind and in your conscience gnawing away at you and you know i see so many people coming before the eldership to say that they would like to take communion for the first time and so many of them when you it's not a question of being inquisitorial or a great examination in that sense anyway it's what we try to do there is to be very encouraging but just to discern that people know what they're doing and going to take communion that's basically what's at the bottom of it but i find so many people saying i should have done this years ago because i don't have anything now any more than i had five or ten or whatever years ago but i was afraid i was afraid of what people might think afraid of what i might be asked to do friends if you're saved listen to this question of jesus who touched me who has benefit from me this time and why did he ask it so that she would come and make her confession and that people would see that she was indeed now cured there was no question about it she had every right now to go to the temple to be involved in what she couldn't be involved with up to now that was her confession that was christ's own purpose and finally let me finish with this the

woman's comfort her condition her contact with Jesus her confession and now her comfort you see what Jesus said to her now that she was out in the open and made this confession before him and before the whole crowd daughter your faith has made you well go in peace and be healed of your disease now there's something significant about that word daughter it's the only place in the gospels where you find Jesus using this word in addressing a woman it's a wonderful it's a word of wonderful tenderness and compassion and so that's this is how he begins addressing it daughter loved one your faith has made you well now you see there's first of all the confession now the confirmation that's the pattern faith is confirmed after it's confessed our growth our assurance does not come by hiding our light by hiding the fact that Christ has changed our life and she comes to benefit now from having come to make this confession by Christ's own comfort of her daughter your faith has made you well and I haven't got time to go into it but it's interesting the word that's used there in Greek is the word for saved you or the Greek word for being saved daughter your faith has saved you some of the older translations will have that and it brings in the whole idea of wholeness and that's really what God is doing in his salvation in putting our lives right because sin has really devastated our lives what we've done basically is just vandalised our own hearts our own souls in our rebellion against God and God in his grace in his kindness is actually putting that right and what he's doing putting that right is putting it together again the way it should be our mind our conscience our understanding all of these things and this is what the word means your faith has made you whole through faith in Christ his power comes to put together what sin has broken and shattered personally in relationships in families in nations it doesn't matter grace mends sin breaks and then finally just this go and be healed of your disease go and remain healed of your disease he's assuring us it's gone he's assuring her it's gone and sometimes we have difficulty just reckoning with the fact that once our sin is forgiven it's forgiven for good it doesn't come back to stand against us accusingly anymore even though at times we know we sin every day we have sin to confess every day but sin in the sense in which it brings condemnation to us is gone we have Christ's righteousness in its place and so this is what he's saying the moment you touch in the moment that touch brings you this salvation go and remain healed of your disease go and keep well because that's what salvation really is about well what a contrast what a contrast to the way she began that day the way she ends it what a contrast to the way that she set out that morning to what she now is as she goes back home in peace and healed of her disease that's the difference that Jesus makes to our lives may he bless this word to us we're going to conclude now by singing in Psalm 146 [55 : 12] Psalm 146 is from Sing Psalms and we're singing to the tune Sussex the verses are verses 6 to 10 that's on page 191 if you're using the usual Psalm books he who made the earth and heaven and the seas with all their store he who keeps his every promise who is faithful ever more from verse 6 to the end of the Psalm Psalm 146 he who made the earth and heaven and the seas with all their store he who keeps his every promise who is faithful ever more he delivers from oppression and relieves the hungry's plight he releases those in prison to the blind the Lord gives sight those who are bowed down he raises

God delights in righteousness he protects and cares for strangers widows and the fatherless he frustrates the wicked's purpose so the Lord through endless days reigns to every generation praise your God oh Zion praise now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore Amen let me thank you once again for joining us this evening I hope you've had a blessed day and I trust that God's word will remain with us and this week we've now entered and I pray that God will keep you all safe and well in these days to come thank you