



THANKS BE TO GOD
by D.A. Farmer, pastor

Scripture - Mark 5:24-34:

- *5:24 And [Jesus] went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.*
- *5:25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,*
- *5:26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,*
- *5:27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.*
- *5:28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.*
- *5:29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in [her] body that she was healed of that plague.*
- *5:30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?*
- *5:31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?*
- *5:32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.*
- *5:33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.*
- *5:34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.*

You know a cow horn bolted to a piece of wood is not what I would call a great goodbye gift, would you? Yet, this common, good for nothing cow horn is probable my most prize gift I've ever thanked someone for. It sits in my office bookshelf at home. It's displayed in full view for everyone to see. In fact, if you have been in my office chances are you've already heard the story behind this gift.

It doesn't do anything except collect dust. It's not very pretty. But I cherish it. Because of who gave it to me? Not really. No, it was the words that came from the giver that makes it my most precious, most thankful gift.

It came from one of the four men I trained to be a Pastoral Assistant – on our first trip to Russia in 1993. His name is written underneath. The date was May 5, 1993 from Igor Krotkov. We were about to leave Russia and return home to the USA when we were receiving gifts from all our new friends. Some gifts were made like this one. Some bought.

When he handed it to me, all I could say was “thank you” in Russian the best I could. He tried to say something to me but I made the same sign I had to a thousand times (place hand up by my ear) which mean, I don't understand. He motions to me to stand still while he went and grab the arm of our translator and said something in Russian to him.

Then the translator said this to me. Igor says; “*Every shepherd needs a horn to call the flock in.*” And friends, this became priceless to me. He will never know how much those words meant to me. I couldn't thank him enough.

It's somewhat like the woman in our scripture there in Mark 5:25 – 34. We don't know her name, but we do know her story, her situation. She was a poor woman, a woman who for 12 years had suffered from a disease that made her life a struggle. She was physically exhausted and socially forsaken by all others.



It was a condition that would be difficult for any women to live with. But for a Jewish woman, nothing could be worse. She had spent all her money on physicians and remedies only to be pronounced incurable and given up to die. But her hopes are revived when she hears of a Great Healer that has the antidote. He has cured all that have come to Him for help. She believed that if she could come into Jesus' presence, He might take pity and heal her.

Suffering with pain and weakness, she came to Him and tried to press her way through the crowd that was around Jesus. People pushed and shoved her back. Everyone there wanted to touch Him too. But finally the golden opportunity had arrived. She was in the presence of the great Physician! Jesus was within her reach. Because of the crowd of people and the loud noise, He could not hear her cry for mercy. Fearful of losing her one chance of relief from her illness, she pressed forward saying to herself; ***"If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole"*** (Matt 9:21).

So she seized the opportunity as he was passing and reached forward, barely touching the hem of His garment. And in that moment she instantly felt herself healed of her terrible disease. Immediately health and strength took the place of weakness and pain. She had concentrated all the faith of her life in that one touch, and she was made whole. With a thankful heart she tried to back away from Jesus and the crowd without being noticed. But suddenly Jesus stopped! The people stopped too. Jesus turned looking about Him with a penetrating eye, asked in a voice clearly heard by all, ***"Who touched me?"***

I like Peter's response found in Luke 8:45. Recovering from his surprise he says: ***"Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?"*** Jesus answered in verse 46; ***"Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."***

Jesus could distinguish the touch of faith from that of a casual contact from the crowd. He already knew all the circumstances of the frail woman's case. And He address's her with words of comfort that would be to her a wellspring of joy and thankfulness.

Looking toward the woman, knowing full well she had been exposed, she came forward tremblingly and knelt at his feet and in Mark 5:33 we find her telling Jesus everything. Instead of being angered at her presumption, Jesus praised her action by saying, ***"Daughter, be of good comfort. Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."***

It wasn't the act of touching His clothes that cured her! It was her faith in Christ that brought His divine help. Friends, we need to understand the lesson found here in this story. I hope you understand that every story in the Bible is there for a reason and has a lesson for us to learn. So what is the lesson from this story we are to learn?

First, I believe it has a deeper meaning than many of us realize. I believe the story proves that it is possible to be in Christ's presence, even press close to Him, and yet not receive a blessing. Why do I believe this? Look at the crowd of people touching Him yet no one receives the same help as this woman does. No one else is healed.

People then, as well as today, often come into close contact with Jesus with nothing more than a casual touch. An offhand, nonchalant touch the same kind of touch as the multitude has in our story.



Today, there are hundreds and possibly thousands of people who think they have faith in Christ. But they do not touch Him with the same faith displayed by this suffering woman in our story. In fact, this is true in all spiritual things!

We should never talk of religion in a casual way. We must never speak God's name in a careless way. His name is Holy. It must be treated and spoken in a Holy matter. When we come into His sanctuary on Sabbath we are in His presence. We should be in a reverent and respectful state of mind. Our conversions should be done before we enter those doors. When we come in we must understand, we must accept the fact that we are standing in the presence of God Himself. We must believe the fact that our faith has to be strong. We must believe the fact that God hears our prayers when we pray in faith. In fact, praying without living faith will avail nothing. Exercising faith means taking God at His word. It means believing in His power to save all that come to Him.

Living faith means we will receive His promise when he says; *"If ye ask anything in My name, I will do it."* But then comes the condition. He says in John 14:15 *"If ye love Me, keep My commandments."* The Greek says; *"If you love Me – YOU WILL keep my commandments."*

Do you want to prove to Christ that you love him? Then obey him by keeping all, how many? All his Commandments! Friends they are not ten suggestions! They're not ten requests or ten requirements! They're Ten Commandments!

Nominal faith in Christ will never bring healing to your soul. We must exercise faith! We must have full trust in God before we will receive His blessing. Listen to this quote from my favorite author from DA pg. 347. *"It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him."*

The only faith that will benefit any of us is the faith that embraces Jesus as our personal Saviour! There is too many today, which hold faith as an opinion. The true faith of all Christians is represented in this woman's story. It proves that Jesus has never failed to answer the silent prayer of faith from a hurting soul. Any child of God who simply takes God at His word and reaches out to connect himself with the Savior will receive the Lord's blessing in return.

In fact listen to Hebrews 11:6; *"But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* True faith believes God is real and that God is Good.

Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want, when you want it and how you want it. But faith knows that God will do what is right, when it is right and how is it right for you! Listen to Matt. 5:6; *"Blessed [are] they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."*

Now listen to the New Revised Farmer translation; *"Blessed are the dirt poor, nothing to give, trapped in a corner, destitute, diseased, for Jesus said; they shall be filled."*

If this lady in our story had been healthy she would have never tried to reach Christ the way she did. Why would she need to? Nor would she have been as thankful of His power. She would have never appreciated the authority God has over diseases. Her part in the plot was small. All she was to have was faith. And it is the same with us today. God asks us to trust Him and He will do the rest.



Her healing started the moment she had faith in Christ. Long before she reached the crowd where Jesus was. And friends, our Healing begins the moment we step out in faith in Jesus. Compared to God's part, our part is small – but necessary. We don't have to do much but we do have to do something. Let me explain.

Salvation's comes free - but it will cost you your heart. Redemption was paid in full at the cross – but you have to accept it. Justification comes the moment you accept Jesus – but Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. Complete forgiveness of sin is sure – but you have to ask for it.

Please understand that faith without any effort on our part is not faith at all. God has never rejects a genuine display of faith. No matter how radical it may seem. I mean truthfully, how many of here this morning would have demonstrated our faith in Jesus the same way this woman did? If you think you would have then why aren't you doing it now?

The Bibles teaches that when Temples are built – lives are saved. When soldiers march – walls tumble. When staffs are raised – waters part. When a small lunch is shared – thousands are feed. And when a garment is touched, whether by the hand of a frail woman in Galilee or by the hand of a beggar here in Texarkana. Whatever the case is, where faith is demonstrated, Jesus hears, stops what ever He is doing and answers that prayer of Faith! (Adapted from Max Lucado – He Still Moves Stones – pg. 69).

You want to know what I found simple amazing about this story? This story is the only place I could find in the Bible that Jesus calls any woman "*Daughter*". Listen to Mark 5:34 again; "*And (Jesus) said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.*" The word "*Daughter*" is mentioned 288 times in the Bible and not once, other than in this story, does Jesus call any particular woman "*Daughter*."

Can you imagine how that must have made that woman feel? How thankful to hear the word "*Daughter*". She was an outcast from society! She had no companionship. No one would get close to her. If she was married, because of her disease her husband couldn't touch her. She couldn't bear children. Domestically anything she touched became unclean because she was considered unclean. She couldn't wash dishes or clothes. She couldn't hold anyone's hand or feel the kiss from another person's lips. Spiritual, she could never enter into the temple. And yet, Jesus calls her "*Daughter*."

Now I don't know for sure, but I can't help but believe that Jesus probably leaned over and took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. He may have even hugged her and gave her a Holy Kiss on her cheek.

Max Lucado in his book "He Still Moves Stones" (pg. 70) gives the story about the time a famous Russian writer was walking and passed by a beggar on the street. He reached into his pockets for some change when he discovered he had no money at all on him. The Russian writer turns to the beggar and says, "I'm sorry my brother but I have nothing to give." The beggar's smile brightened and replied; "That's OK, you have already given me more than what I asked for, you called me brother."

To a loved person one small act of affection is but a morsel. But to the love starved person, a word of affection can be a feast. And Jesus gave this woman a banquet! All because of her faith in Him.



Now do you understand now why this old cow horn means so much to me? It wasn't the gift; it was the words that came from the giver that makes it my most precious, most thankful gift. Was it the healing of her disease or being called "*Daughter*" by the Son of God that the woman was most thankful for? Your guess is as good as mine. But whatever the case may be, one thing I'm sure of and that is she was thankful for both.

Friends, what are you thankful for this Thanksgiving season? I hope you will take the time to thank the Lord for His blessings. And above all thank Him for calling you His child. You see Gal. 3:26 says; "*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*"

Additional reading; MH pg. 59, 2SP pg. 319, DA.343.