

3 Instructions on How to Touch the Hem of His Garment

Today is the day to come to Jesus and touch the hem of His garment. Isolation, from others or from God, due to negative emotions such as shame or grief, often leave us enduring a kind of perpetual anxiety. We need contact with God and with others to feel safe and loved. The story of the woman with the issue of blood is a case in point. She was 'unclean' due to the physical issue she suffered. Ritual impurity is not something we identify with in our society, but the aspect of shame and isolation is. Our negative emotions flow from us, defiling others.

In those days, no one could go near her without having to go through a purity ritual. Just like her, if we are caught up in fear or guilt or some other powerfully destructive emotion, we drive others away. The loneliness alone can lead to some severe depression. So, she must take a huge leap of faith as we must do. She stealthily goes up to Jesus and touches the hem of his garment.

Many of us try to stealthily avail ourselves of God's healing.

We hide our pain. We pray silently in church; we castigate ourselves for our uncleanness, whether from our own sins or sins that were committed against us. How fortunate we are that we have a God that will heal us even in our fear. She touches the hem of his garment, and Jesus, unlike the rest of the world, is not rendered unclean by her touch. Instead, she is made clean.

In the Old Testament, people are made unclean by the things they come into contact with. What a turnaround that in the New Testament, Jesus touches the leper, the woman with the issue of blood, even the dead. He is never made unclean, rather, they are made clean by contact with Him! We too are made clean because of our contact with Him. In fact, as salt and light, we then go out into a fallen world and bring light to the darkness, and cleanse what is impure.

In this exercise, we are going to seek after that touch, that power that flows from Jesus into our hearts, stopping the flow of grief, shame, fear, regret, and whatever else has kept us from wholeness and community. **We are going to touch the hem of his garment and hang on.**

As you focus your attention on these verses, imagine how difficult it must be to sneak up on someone in a crowd and touch them. It would require some determination and focus to push your way through and then casually kneel down and grab hold of the hem of Jesus' long robe. For a woman to touch a man in this culture was unseemly at best. But look in your heart. Are you not desperate for a touch from the Savior?

⁴³ *Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians,^[a] no one could cure her.*

⁴⁴ *She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped.*

⁴⁵ *Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter^[b] said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you."*

⁴⁶ *But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me."*

⁴⁷ *When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed.*

⁴⁸ *He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."* Luke 8:43-48 NRSVCE

1. In our times with Him, we must always push through the multitudes in our own mind.

So, first push through the emotions and thoughts that crowd around your heart and mind as you move towards Jesus...Our families, our work, the chores ahead of us, the long sheaf of bills; these are the throngs that press around us, keeping Jesus out of reach. Use determination and focus and move through these distractions.

2. Imagine you are now near enough to Jesus to touch Him.

My guess is to avoid detection, she came up behind Him. Reach out your hand, physically or in your mind, it does not matter. Reach out and touch the hem of his rough, homespun garment. It is soft from use and many washings. As you grab hold, welcome the power of God into your body, mind, and spirit. Feel the power come in through your hand, your arm, and into your heart.

Grasp hold of the wholeness of Christ, letting him stop the flow of complaint, of bitterness, of grief, and of fear from your heart.

3. Now imagine Him turning around. He sees you.

He is glad to see you and He gives you His hand and helps you rise.

"Your faith has made you well," He says, for He knows that to still your mind and heart in order to seek Him out is an act of faith.

Touching His garment is an act of faith. And God is a rewarder of those who believe that He is and seek him with a diligent heart. Ask Him to fill you with every blessing. Receive His joy and His peace. Throughout the day, close your hand, grabbing onto the hem of his robe, wrap yourself in His love, and receive anew the peace of God that passes all understanding.