



OPEN IN PRAYER

THE SET-UP:

Have you ever wondered what faith looks like? Is our faith visible or is it something we keep tucked away and out of sight? In our lesson today we see a great example of someone who exercised extraordinary faith. A faith that moved them into action and resulted in a transformed life.

Galatians 2:20 (ESV) - 20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

BACKGROUND:

Mark chapter 5 shares a story about a woman who battled a terrible disease for over 12 years. We discover that this woman spent all her money trying to find a cure but was unsuccessful. At this point in His ministry, Jesus' reputation had grown so big that crowds gathered everywhere He went. He had just healed someone of demon possession and was on His way to heal a man's daughter. The crowd was so big they were, literally, crushing Jesus from all sides. Having no other hope for a cure, this woman heard about Jesus, turned her attention toward Him and experienced a miracle from the great and mighty physician.

Mark 5:25-34 (ESV) - 25 And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, 26 and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. 27 She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. 28 For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." 29 And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. 30 And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my

garments?” 31 And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, ‘Who touched me?’” 32 And he looked around to see who had done it. 33 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. 34 And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”

TAKE-AWAY:

This woman’s faith moved her to draw closer to Jesus. When she encountered Jesus, everything changed. The same is true for us today because **a faith that is alive is a faith that acts.**

CONTENT:

The Apostle James wrote in *James 2:26 (ESV)*, “... .. *faith apart from works is dead.*” All throughout the Bible we learn that real life change and real life transformation occurred when people acted in faith. Faith without action is a dead faith. The important thing to notice in each of these occurrences is the focus is not on the amount of faith, the focus is on the object of our faith. When the object of our faith is Jesus, only then can we truly possess a faith that is alive.

In our passage today we clearly see what it looks like to act in faith. Our story demonstrates a faith that is vibrant, active and alive. We do not know what the woman actually suffered from other than it was a disease that plagued her to the point where she spent every dime in an attempt to be healed. Jewish law dictated that a person in her condition be labeled unclean. This meant she was not allowed to enter the temple. The woman was probably unmarried, had no children and lived all alone. She was secluded from everyone; no friends, no family, just herself, her disease and the utter feeling of hopelessness. Hopelessness is magnified in our aloneness. This woman was truly alone. However, one day she heard about Jesus.

1) FAITH MOVES US TO ACTION

Have you ever heard the old saying, “*you can talk the talk but can you walk the walk?*” The idea behind the saying is about people who are quick to talk up a big game but have no desire to follow through and put into practice what they are saying. Our culture today is a culture satisfied with seeing and hearing but lacks motive and purpose for doing anything. From the latest social media updates to the trendiest viral video our culture thrives on hearing and seeing but we fail utterly at actually doing anything.

In verse 27 we read that the woman heard about Jesus.

Mark 5:27 (ESV) - 27 She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him

More than likely she heard stories of how He had healed people and accomplished all sorts of miracles. With hope lost in physicians and everything else she heard about Jesus and was moved into action. Notice the way the rest of verse plays out.

Mark 5:27 (ESV) - 27 She had heard reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garments.

The woman did much more than just hear, she acted. She got up and did something. That is what a faith that is alive does, it moves us into action. Because the woman was considered unclean, the law declared that anything or anyone she touched would become unclean as well. The fact that she was in the crowd meant she was risking everything as each person who bumped into her would have become unclean also. This action was a radical move on her part. But, if the faith we claim to possess does not lead us to radical action then our faith is as good as a skydiver without a parachute. Jesus is looking for people who will move, act and come alive in their faith!

2) FAITH FOCUSES ON JESUS

One of the amazing things about faith is what matters is not so much the size of our faith (Jesus only asks that it be the size of a mustard seed) but