

Jesus and the Outcast  
Mark 5:24-34  
March 7, 2021  
Maple Grove UMC  
Rev. Patricia Wagner

*And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. <sup>25</sup> Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. <sup>26</sup> She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. <sup>27</sup> She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, <sup>28</sup> for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." <sup>29</sup> Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. <sup>30</sup> Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" <sup>31</sup> And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" <sup>32</sup> He looked all around to see who had done it. <sup>33</sup> But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease*

She is alone. Unlike others who ask for Jesus' healing, she does not draw attention to herself or raise her voice to cry out. Apparently women did not do that. Many still do not. And she has no friends to bring her to him as another person in need of healing did.

She and any friends she has know that she is not allowed in public. Her constant hemorrhaging means that she is ritually unclean, to touch her, to be touched by her, would make you unclean, too, especially men on their way to temple; they would have to go home and wash again.

And she's poor- she's spent all she has on physicians who had no cure for her, so, she is absolutely vulnerable and she's hidden, from Jesus, from everyone.

She hears about him, and dares to go outside, into the open where she can be caught and accused.

She makes her way to him, and reaches out to touch him, just the tassels of his garment, and in reaching out, she is made well.

And it says, that she *felt immediately in her body that she was healed.*  
And *immediately, Jesus felt the power go out from him.*

This is the only time in our scripture that we hear how healing felt both to the healed, to Jesus, as the healer.

And Jesus wonders, who has done this; who drew it forth from me?

When he asks that his disciples seem to make fun of him. *How can you ask that, the crowd is pressing in on you, everyone is touching you?*

The others in the crowd surely were desperate for healing, too. How was it that she alone accessed this power? And we ask, ones we loved were desperate for healing, too, why weren't they made well. Why aren't we?

Jesus never wanted us to focus on the physical healing that was available through the power that moved in and through him. He commanded those healed not to talk of it. Remember, too, that that he himself would suffer unto death. He did not heal his own wounds.

This account, a story shared by Matthew and Luke as well speaks even more clearly about those who are outcast those whom we have considered beyond hope, beyond redemption, unclean.

For even beyond her physical healing, which she confesses she took without asking, is his acceptance of her, of her defying the barriers which separated them.

She risked an intimate connection with the Divine. She realized that she could not mend alone. She had to leave her home that was her prison, she had to clear her mind of the warnings that she wasn't worthy, that

she should keep her suffering hidden and go find the holy one who would call her "daughter."

*You are my kin, Jesus is saying, Go in peace and be whole, he says.*

As she is his kin, so are you, and so we are one another's

Val Kobus is here and she understands this story, she has lived it.  
Let us welcome this daughter of Jesus as she brings her mending story.

*(Val spoke extemporaneously, so we have no transcript from her sharing of her life, her addiction, imprisonment, and her transformation through the love of God shared by persons from the EMBARK program, Kindway and Welcome Home. We will be having Val back in April to share more)*