

*“Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but she grew worse.” (Mark 5:25-26).*

O woman of sorrows – child of unspeakable suffering – victim of a world that has no time for you. “How long O Lord?” These words once owned by the prophets of old belong now to you. You, who has long endured the torture of a broken body and the judgments of a society that has taken everything from you all the while denying your very existence. The blood that has flowed out from your God-imaged body has led you to this place – a place of vulnerability and a place of scorn. “Unclean!” you have heard them shout at you for what seems like an eternity. Whether spoken aloud or implied by the scurrying of people away from you, the world has told you that you have no place here; You are worthless. You are junk. And you are starting to believe it. The sneers and taunts just below the surface affirm these horrible lies. Life on the edge away from the safety of family and friends. Here you are utterly alone with a body that is broken in a world that has long since forgotten its divine mandate to take care of the widow and orphan – to take care of you. Precious nameless child – lovingly created in the image of your maker – the world has let you down. Those entrusted with the sacred privilege of honoring and healing you have let you down. But there is one who has not.

You’ve heard of his healings. The man with the withered hand; the leper; the demon-possessed. All recipients of a new future. Could what you have heard be true? Or are your ears as broken as the rest of your body? Like faint rays of light slicing through the darkness of the early morning sky, the veil is slowly being lifted. And now your eyes have laid sight on him. A man, who looks like so many men who have come before to abuse and deceive you. But he is different. So ordinary in appearance, but extraordinary in deed. “The Kingdom of God has come near” they are saying. “This is the one who will make all things new.”

“All things new.” Words you had almost forgotten. Words that seem so foreign to the world of scorn and abuse you have endured. Words that have stirred one last ounce of strength within you. A touch – just a touch and perhaps all things will be made new for you. Crowds push in around him and here is your chance. In the anonymity of a faceless crowd, you will find the path to touch his cloak. All is gone. Your money – your voice. All you have left is a touch. A voiceless touch birthed from the pain of a broken life. “If only I can touch him” keeps desperately playing in your head.

The soiled and dusty cloak feels like any other fabric you’ve experienced, and yet something has changed. As mighty as God calling light out of darkness at the beginning of time, a new creation is happening within you. A warmth and a peace you’ve never known but accompanied by a fear you’ve known too well over the years. He noticed. He wants to know who touched him? Life experiences have taught you that men will hurt you, especially those you don’t know. “What have I done?” you question. “What price will I pay for touching his garment?”

O precious fearful child, formed in the image of your God, you are standing in a new place. You are standing in the presence of the one who has fought with demons, razed walls of exclusion, and healed the dying with a word. O nameless woman, you are standing in the presence of the Christ – the one who makes all things new. Fear not. The one who has made you well, has also made you whole. O nameless woman, you have stood in the presence of God and lived. O nameless woman, you are nameless no more. He called you “daughter.” You are loved. You are named. You are whole – “Go in peace and be healed.”

Peace and Love,

Pastor Doug