

Radical Encounters – The Desperate Woman

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Mark 5:21-34

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Reflection & Discussion Questions

The woman was desperate for the healing of her body

Read and discuss Mark 5:21-34 (NIV)

²¹ When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. ²³ He pleaded earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” ²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

³¹ “You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’ ”

³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

*What is surprising or interesting about this encounter?

*What were the consequences of this woman’s illness for her?

*Is there something you are desperate for? What are the consequences of your desperation?

Jesus does not mistake her desperation

He sees her grasping as a definitive act of faith.

*How do you see faith in the woman’s actions?

*What is Jesus’ response?

*What does this radical encounter teach us? Can you find hope for your desperation in this encounter?

Jesus didn’t come just to make people ‘better’. He came to make them ‘closer’

Healings were a grand restoration of those on the outside looking in.

*How did the healing of the woman do more than help her physically?

*What does this encounter show us about the way we label, categorize or ignore people?

*What would it look like if our desperation was for loving Jesus’ way?

*What do you sense the Spirit is telling you?