Reach Out and Touch Someone

INTRODUCTION: Years ago there was a catchy phrase promoted by the Telephone company which went like this, "reach out and touch someone." They were saying make a telephone call to someone and make their day.

Let me take this simple phrase and encourage you to reach out in a very real sense to those around you in this church. Please turn with me to the Gospel of Mark chapter 5 where we read verses 24-34.

“And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. (25) And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, (26) And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, (27) When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. (28) For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. (29) And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. (30) And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? (31) And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? (32) And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. (33) But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. (34) And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”

In this chapter you witness TWO miracles of healing.

First miracle was the healing of Jarius’ daughter in verse 21.

Second miracle was the Lord’s encounter with the woman in our text, as He was on His way to heal Jarius’ daughter.

There are three simple things in this passage I would like to call your attention to.

NUMBER 1: This woman was sick, verses 25-26. You will notice from verse 25 this woman had been sick for 12 years. They no doubt had been 12 long, hard, bitter years. These 12 years had been filled with hopelessness, disappointment, frustration, discouragement and despondency while spending her money on doctors without a cure.

Now for a moment think of all the things that have happened to you in the past 12 years.

Things that you have done,
Places you have visited.
Joys you have experienced, and
Goals that you have seen accomplished.

I dare say you could think of 100’s of things in the past 12 years that brought joy and pleasure to your life. But there are others who haven’t been as fortunate and blessed as you have been. During these past 12 years, an awful lot of people’s lives have been filled with sorrow.
Some have been filled with poverty, as you and I have never experienced,
Some have tasted financial and job failures,
Some have lost loved ones and experienced those moments of loneliness,
Some have had family problems that have just wrecked and destroyed relationships.

Many people have come to this church over those 12 years and have perhaps sat where you now sit. They have sat there with hearts bleeding on the inside, because of multiple experiences that have happened to them.

No doubt there are people still in our church today, who **outwardly are smiling but inwardly they are hurting.** They wish someone would reach out and touch them; reach out and help them relieve their pain and sorrow.

But as much as that concerns me, and believe me it does, there is something else that bothers me more. It is the people within the body of Christ who suffer with sickness of soul. Some have suffered year after year. They are saved, but have never matured in the Christian life. In some cases they had a good start, but something happened.

They fell into sin, or
They started to look at people as they truly are and became disenchanted, or
Their spiritual life was choked off by the things of this world.

Their condition has remained the same week after week, month after month. They are not growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Rather they are still only absorbing sermons that present the milk of the Word of God. They are not yet able to eat solid spiritual food.

They are what the Bible calls carnal Christians.
They are what is known as baby Christians.
They need to be treated with kid gloves because they become offended easily.
They tend to cause divisions because they do not understand spiritual absolutes.
They are not spiritually-minded in actions, attitudes or activities.

In most cases, carnal Christians sit and take it all in without a spiritual reaction. In other cases on the inside they are filled with resentment from a grudge they have held for years against somebody for something said or done years ago. Oh, how devastating that is to the soul. I wonder how people:

I wonder how people who name the name of Christ, who believe in the Bible, who have put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ can continue year after year to tolerate their miserable spiritual condition.

I may be speaking to someone here, who is a faithful member or attender, but deep within you're not right with God…and you know it!

If that is true, let me remind you the church is not a museum to show-off the saints, but rather a hospital to help the spiritually wounded and the hurting.

**I believe it’s a place where you can come and get a breath of fresh spiritual oxygen to be able to go out into the world for the next few days and be able to stand on your feet. It’s a place where you can receive counsel, and help, and hope.**

In many cases the church staff will recognize your need and come to you, but most of the time, you need to come to us. Your pastor, just like a physician, will deal directly with many. However in other cases, it is preferable to connect you to a member who has walked your road in their lives, and through the leading of the Holy Spirit has found healing for their soul.
Let me talk for a moment to those who year after year remain spiritually unhealed.

You are saved; you are born again. You are sure of heaven, but there is a sickness that is devastating to your soul. You remain unchanged and untouched by the hand of God.

Oh, it is possible that you may come to church, read your Bible, pray and even be faithful in a ministry. But inside you know (no one has to tell you) you are sick in the soul. How long does that have to continue?

From Mark 5:26 you will notice this woman had grown worse. In the spiritual realm you will either grow in the Lord, or you will backslide and grow away from the Lord. You cannot remain in a neutral position and just drift. It doesn't work that way. You are either going forward or you are going backward.

Let me caution you. I have seen this attitude develop much to my sorrow time and time again over the years:

Someone gets saved and becomes on fire for the Lord, but within 3-5 years they think that they have arrived. They know it all because of their superior spiritual knowledge.

Often, they develop an attitude towards people who sin. They think, “That couldn't happen to me. I would never fall into sin like that person, because I know better.” Nevertheless, sometimes they do fall into sin worse than the one whom they were criticizing or having an unforgiving spirit towards.

Satanic oppression is another very powerful problem in many Christian lives. Remember this as a Christian: Satan cannot possess you, but he certainly can oppress you!

Why is it that so many Christians are falling prey to the wicked One’s lies?
Why are we not waging an all-out war against his kingdom?
Why is it that we are, as seen in Galatians 5, “biting and devouring one another?”
Why is it that so many are in the grip of the stronghold of seducing spirits?

The answer is simple. The church has been lulled to sleep by its prosperity.

- We have somehow ignored the teaching of God's Word and accepted a false standard of spiritual progress and blessing.
- We have measured spiritual growth in our churches by our numbers or bigness.
- We have fallen asleep and our level of commitment proves that our belief in a personal warfare with the Devil is nonexistent.

Satan roars like a lion, and we purr like a contented kitten.

- We CAN DO BETTER than this.
- We MUST DO BETTER than this.
- We MUST ATTACK the Strongholds of Satan with the power of prayer.

In Ephesians 6:18 we read, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” LACK OF PRAYER IS OUR WEAKNESS. Prayer makes us strong and weak.

WE HAVE ABANDONED OUR MIGHTIEST WEAPON.
SATAN CAN NOT STAND AGAINST OUR PRAYERS.

Someone said, "Prayer is the first thing, the second thing, and the third thing necessary to victory. Pray, then Pray, my dear brother: pray, pray, pray."

Another key word in our fight against Satan is “resist.” The word “resist” means “to oppose.” In James 4:6-8 we read,
“But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. (7) Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (8) Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”

Here God outlines for us the keys to “resisting” the Devil.

Key #1 - We must "HUMBLE" ourselves.
Key #2 - We must "SUBMIT" ourselves to God.
Key #3 - We must "DRAW NIGH TO GOD."
Key #4 - We must "CLEANSE OUR HANDS."

In I Timothy 2:8 we read, “I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” If we would obtain power from God to put the Devil on the run, we surely must be Christians with “holy hands.” That means we must have clean hands and hearts.

Key #5 - We must "PURIFY OUR HEARTS." To purify means to cleanse your heart from any sin that would defile it.
Key #6 - We must recognize our "DOUBLE-MINDEDNESS."

Can we possibly win this war? YES! Our victory is guaranteed In Hebrews 2:14 where we read, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

May I remind you that we already have the power to win for, "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." We must be vigilant in praying and resisting. We must never give up! Now let us return to Mark 5.

NUMBER 2: This woman had faith in verses 27-28. Let me tell you several things about her faith.

Notice the evidence upon which her faith rested - "When she heard." Faith always rests upon knowledge. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

Notice the effort in her faith - "She came." That's important as she was determined to find Jesus.

Notice the experience of her faith - "She reached out and touched Jesus’ garment."

It didn't matter to her how many people were there. She knew Jesus was the answer to her problem, so she reached out to Him and touched Him. She touched the one who could not only heal the body, but also heal the soul.

She touched the Jehovah-Rapha, "The Lord that healeth."
She touched the Jehovah-Salom, "The Lord our peace."
She touched the Jehovah-Raah, "The Lord my Shepherd."
She touched the Jehovah-Jireh, "The Lord will provide."
She touched the Jehovah-Shammah, "The Lord is ever-present."

The important thing was she touched Jesus. Someone said, "many thronged around Him but only one touched him."

The Bible indicates the crowd pressed Him on all sides so as almost to suffocate Him. But only one touched Him in faith for healing. Dr. J Vernon McGee in his book on Mark said,

"The situation is the same today. I think we have a lot of folks around who use the name of Jesus freely. They are running around saying that it is Jesus this, and
Jesus that, and people think they certainly know Him. Surely they know Him, but they have not touched Him like this woman did in faith."

I agree, we can throng Jesus and rub shoulders with Jesus.

We can be with God's people in church.
We can hear one Bible message after another until we become cold to God's truths.
We can read Christian literature until it is coming out of our ears.
We can listen to all kinds of Christian radio programs or watch all kinds of Christian TV...

AND NEVER, NEVER REALLY HAVE ANYTHING HAPPEN in our lives that counts for Jesus or the Glory of God because we have been in the crowd, but not like this woman who reached out and touched the Lord by faith.

NUMBER 3: This woman was made whole in verses 29-34. Please notice again verse 30. Immediately Jesus knew someone had touched Him. How great to know there is a "...balm in Gilead that breaks the sin-sick soul," that can heal the bitterness and anger, or whatsoever the need is. It's all by grace.

In verse 29 this woman knew a miracle had taken place. You'll know it too. When Jesus comes in and the Holy Spirit takes over, you will know it.

Oh, how we need to reach out and touch Jesus. I hope that's why you are here. Not just out of curiosity or because of habit or because someone made you come. But because you wanted God to do something in your heart and life.

Now in closing, let me list 5 things to think about and put into practice this week.

First: Perhaps you need to reach out and touch Jesus by faith in HOLINESS. God's desire is that we walk in the way of holiness. Remember, He is more concerned about our holy walk of life than about our happiness. For when we are holy in life, we will be happy in life.

Second: Perhaps you need to reach out and touch Jesus by faith in Faithfulness.
You need again to feel the blessings of God upon your life.
You need again to fall in love with the Lord Jesus Christ.
You need what David spoke of when he said "I shall be anointed with fresh oil."

In prayer you need to say, “Holy Spirit of the living God I yield myself to you, renew within me a right spirit and use me again for the sake of the gospel and the glory of God."

Third: Perhaps you need to reach out and touch Jesus by faith in Hope.
Don't lose hope, for the Psalmist said in Psalm 46:1-3, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (2) Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; (3) Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

Fourth: Perhaps you need to reach out and touch Jesus by faith in Salvation. Are you here without the hope of heaven? Why not reach out by faith and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour? Romans 10:13 says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 16:31 says, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved..." Those scriptures cannot be any more clear.
Fifth: Perhaps you need to reach out and touch someone this week. Look around you.

Do you see someone who needs to be touched with some encouragement?  
Do you see someone who needs to be touched in counsel?  
Do you see someone who needs a visit, a call, or a card?

Over the years those who have reached out to me, especially when they did not even know my need, have been such a blessing with:

a phone call just at the right time saying, “Pastor, let me encourage you. God bless you today, praying for you” or a little note of thanks and a word of encouragement.

Find someone today, reach out and touch them for Jesus sake.

Remember this, Jesus was followed by the masses, but He was never too busy to care for individuals. And what is more surprising, Jesus reached out not to the well to do or spiritually sound, but rather to those who were in sin and to those who had a spiritual need. He reached out to the little guy, the simple girl. Let’s be like Jesus and do the same.

How many lives shall I touch today?  
How many neighbors will pass my way?  
I can bless so many and help so much,  
If I meet each one with a Christ-like touch.

S/He who is too big to help an individual is too small to serve the masses.

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If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon “Reach Out and Touch Someone” right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, “...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...”  
Romans 10:13, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: “I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.”

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to pdmikBBM@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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