



Savior of the Outcast

Key idea:

Even those who are outcasts from society and whose situations are hopeless will receive salvation when they reach out to Christ through faith.

Key text:

Mark 5:21-34

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 rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³ and 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.”

Key points:

1. Mark “sandwiches” the stories of Jairus and the woman with constant bleeding so that we read them together. One of the main reasons to do this is to show us the great contrasts between Jairus and the woman:
 - a. Jairus is a man and she is a woman and thus considered less important
 - b. Jairus leads the synagogue and she can not even go to the synagogue
 - c. Jairus is honored in the community and she is an outcast (like the Gadarene demoniac or a leper)

- d. Jairus is a man of wealth with servants and she is destitute
 - e. Jairus is named and she is not even given a name - a literary device to show she is virtually a non-person in society
2. Like the Gadarene demoniac in Mark 5:2-5, the description of the woman is vivid and pitiful: she has been bleeding for 12 years and is thus considered perpetually unclean and outcast from society, she has consulted doctors to no avail, the expense of the doctors has left her destitute, and the situation is worse than when it began 12 years before.
 3. The woman touches Jesus' garment and is immediately fully healed.
 4. Jesus knows power has gone out from Him to heal and wants to know who touched His cloak, and He does not move on until the woman comes forward.
 5. Jesus tells the woman that through her faith in Him she has been fully healed, saved, and restored.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. Have I ever considered why Mark "sandwiches" these two stories together? What benefit comes from carefully reading them together?
3. What elements link the story of the woman with the bleeding with the story of the man with the legion of demons?
4. Do I share more in common with Jairus or the woman? What do I learn from that person in this story?
5. Why does Jesus stop to discover who touched Him? Since the woman was already physically healed, why was it important for her to come forward and for Jesus to speak to her?
6. What is the relationship between Jesus and the woman's faith in relation to her healing? In what sense was she healed and saved by Jesus? In what sense what she saved and healed through faith?
7. Am I ever tempted to look to something or someone other than Jesus for healing or blessing? Why do humans consistently look to other people, places, or things rather than directly to God?
8. How can I help point someone to Jesus this week?