

Putting Yourself in the Best Position for Divine Interruption

The Gospel of Mark #19

Mark 5:22-34

Bless the Lord, oh my soul. Let all my inmost being praise His holy name. Bless the Lord, oh my soul and forget not all his benefits. For He forgives your sins and heals your diseases. He redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion. He satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagles.

Do you know what a miracle is according to the Bible? It's a divine interruption of what is common and ordinary in the lives of the people of God. The Word of God is full of those divine interruptions – those miracles. When God's people needed a miracle to escape from the sword of Pharaoh, they got one in the form of the Red Sea parting. When Joshua asked the Lord for more daylight, he got it in the form of the sun and the moon standing still. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego needed divine deliverance from a fiery furnace, they got it in form of Jesus himself, who was right there in the furnace with them to see them through it. Flip to the New Testament and you will see that Jesus also had a penchant for divinely interrupting what was common and ordinary. In fact, the Gospel writers record 37 miracles that Jesus performed among God's people and among the Gentiles, many of which you are very familiar with. He turned the water to wine at Cana. He fed the 5000 in Galilee. He cleansed 10 lepers on the way to Jerusalem. And He raised Lazarus from the dead in Bethany.

But, today, you are going to see the most unique miracle – the most unique divine interruption – in the entire Bible. Here's why: Jesus performs no action. No laying on of hands. Nothing. He makes no pronouncement of healing until well after the divine interruption occurs. The only thing he does is stop amid a crowded street while on the way to perform another divine interruption to ask one question: "who touched the hem of my garment?" It's the miracle that happened in the body, spirit, and soul of a woman who had been bleeding for 12 years. She'd asked the doctors for help. They could do nothing about the situation. She'd spent all her money trying to find a cure. It yielded nothing. So left with no other choice, she chose to do what no other unclean woman or man in Israel dared to do. She got close enough to Jesus and grabbed onto his garment in hopes that this carpenter's son from Nazareth might have the power to heal her with just her touch, not his.

But, church, here is why that miracle is in your Bible and why you need to pay attention to it today. We may or may not have a malady like hers that we deal with each day. But we can all learn why her miracle – her divine interruption – happened. It happened because she made the courageous decision to do everything within her power to put herself in the best possible position to be on the receiving end of Jesus' divine interruption. She's the only person in the Bible to do such a thing. And Jesus rewarded her. And he will for you also if you follow her lead. So today, I want to show you how this lady who had bled for 12 years straight put herself in the best possible position to be on the receiving end of Jesus' divine interruption and how she was rewarded. We find her story in Mark 5:22-34. As we read it together, keep in mind that this miracle occurs while Jesus is on the way to perform another one.

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."

How She Put Herself in the Best Possible Position for Divine Interruption

1. An Honest Assessment (25-26)

- **Driving on an Icy Hwy:** (1) We like to think we are in control when we drive. Normally, we are. (2) However, when we drive on an icy bridge or highway, we lose all control. (3) This woman's illness was that icy highway, and her body was the car. She had lost all control.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** This woman tried everything within her power to do something about her situation. When she couldn't, she assessed the hopelessness of her situation and moved towards Jesus to touch the hem of his garment.
- **Losses From Her Illness:** (1) Loss of Control – Before the sickness, her body obeyed her. Now it had its own agenda and acted any way it pleased. (2) Loss of Identity – She was defined by her illness. She's not called by name in the story. She's only referred to as "the woman who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years." (3) Loss of Certainty – Everything became contingent upon her condition. (4) Loss of Place in Society – The losses went beyond her body. It strained vital relationships. (5) Loss of Resources – "She spent all she had." All her money and energy were squandered in her efforts to bring healing. (6) Loss of Hope – She suffered a great deal and yet grew worse. She was at her wit's end and beyond all human hope. She was desperate to try anything.

- **App:** Putting yourself in the best position situation for divine interruption requires assessing how you've tried to solve the problem and how it hasn't worked. And it requires drawing close to the only One who can do something about it.

2. A Courageous Decision (27-28)

- **The Law of the Shy Dog and the Bone** — (1) Put a bone or a toy in front of a shy dog and watch what happens; (2) You can see the tension between courage and fear on full display; (3) The dog will eventually gravitate to the bone or the toy. (4) But only when he can grab it and quickly disappear.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** This woman figured the best thing to do about her situation was trying to steal a blessing. It was courage and fear on full display.
- **Why She Tried to Steal a Blessing** - She had heard about Jesus' healing — He had already (1) Healed Peter's mother-in-law near death (1:29-34); Healed a paralyzed man (2:1-12); Healed a man with a withered hand (3:1-6). Just the possibility that he could heal her was enough to motivate her to do something about her situation.
- **How She Arrived at Her Decision** - She spent considerable amount of time thinking of the best way to go about it — (1) The text tells us she came up behind him to touch his cloak; (2) Bleeding made you unclean in that world. If you touched someone else, they were too. So, grabbing Jesus' hand was not an option. (3) If you touched someone in public view while unclean, you would have made a spectacle and caused all kinds of panic. So, stopping Jesus as he journeyed through a crowd wasn't an option either.
- **What She Did** - (1) She wanted to remain anonymous; (2) So she reasoned that she would just touch his garment and disappear back into the crowd. (3) Just the touching of the hem of His robe was enough for her.
- **App** — Putting yourself in the best situation for divine interruption will always involve a decision where courage and fear are both present. But courage must conquer it at some point to see provident rewards.

How She Was Rewarded:

3. A Unique Interruption (29-33)

- **Snowflakes** — (1) If ever you question the existence of the Almighty's design, consider the snowflake. (2) There are millions of them, not one of them is alike. (3) God's divine interruption in this lady's life was truly unique as well.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** God interrupted her situation with healing because she had the courage to interrupt his walk. That makes her miracle unique.
- **When the Healing Occurred:** The touch of Jesus' garment coincides with her healing: (1) The bleeding stops immediately upon her touch, not Jesus'. It's what makes the miracle unique. (2) As if to say, healing can be found when you dare to move towards Jesus and reach out to him. (3) It wouldn't have happened otherwise.
- **What Her Touch Did:** But what is also interesting is that this bold move stops Jesus in his tracks: (1) He asks "who touched my garment" because he didn't see her. (2) She did not want to be found. (3) Finally, she comes forward on her own, trembling and probably expecting judgment.
- **Who Noticed:** No one noticed what she did except Jesus: (1) The disciples didn't. (2) The crowd didn't. (3) But Jesus did.
- **App:** Jesus noticed what she did. And Jesus stopped after she touched his robe to bless her. How many divine interruptions do we miss because we lack the courage to put ourselves in the best possible situation for divine disruption?

4. A Unique Story (34)

- **Have I Got a Story for You** — (1) When someone opens a story with those lines, it's usually the beginning of a tall tale that's told mighty well. (2) She could open her story with those lines, but not as the beginning of a tall tale; (3) But as a testimony.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** Her touch of His robe not only brought healing. It also brought her a new story.
- **It was unique in its location** — (1) It didn't occur in a church, a synagogue, or any other house of worship; (2) She met him in the street.
- **It was unique in its situation** — (1) This lady had no private audience, unlike Jairus and his daughter who we are introduced to in the first part of the story; (2) All she had was Jesus' walking through a crowd
- **It was unique in its display** — (1) The touch of one woman who was desperate for healing halted the steps of Jesus in all his glory. (2) Her touch had the power to stop Jesus in his tracks; (3) it had the power to make him aware of her problems and needs. (4) Ours also
- **Unique in its results** - Her healing brought restoration that was complete: (1) her body regained control; (2) she regained her identity; (3) She now had a certain future; (4) She regained her place in society; (5) She was restored and (6) Had hope for the first time in 12 years.
- **App:** (1) Give the Lord a chance — Tell him about it just like he didn't know a thing about it, just like this woman; (2) Believe the Lord will answer — Believe that he cares what happens to you. She sure did.