

## Hope Matters

There are two stories presented in our reading today. Both containing the number 12. In the first story, a father of a twelve-year-old sick girl pleads with Jesus for help, and the second, a woman sick for twelve years reaches out to Jesus.

The number 12 is significant in the Bible - Twelve can be found in 187 places in scripture. Revelation alone has 22 occurrences of the number. The meaning of 12, which is considered a perfect number, is that it symbolizes God's power and authority, as well as serving as a perfect governmental foundation. It can also symbolize completeness or the nation of Israel as a whole. For example:

1. Twelve tribes of Israel are a descendant of the patriarch Jacob, from ten sons and two grandsons.
2. Ishmael, who was born to Abraham through Hagar, had twelve princes.
3. Jesus called and choose twelve disciples to bear witness to what he did and to spread the good news of the gospel to the entire world.

There are many more examples of the use of the number 12 in scripture.

**The Old Testament has many aspects of God's law that we don't understand. One of these is found in Leviticus 15**

**19 “When a woman has her regular flow of blood, the impurity of her monthly period will last seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean till evening.**

**25 “When a woman has a discharge of blood for many days at a time other than her monthly period or has a discharge that continues beyond her period, she will be unclean as long as she has the discharge, just as in the days of her period.**

**27 Anyone who touches them will be unclean; they must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be unclean till evening.**

But why am I talking about such an unpleasant thing at the Church? I just want you to understand one of the most amazing miracles performed by Jesus, and we need to read this Scripture first to fully understand the context of what he did for a woman that had an issue of blood.

Of the three gospels that record this healing, Mark 5:24b -29 says:

**... 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.**

WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM WITH THIS WOMAN?

She had continuing problems. "If the issue stops, she must wait seven days to be declared cleansed" (Lev. 15:28 ELT).

"An issue of blood for twelve years" would mean she been ceremonially unclean for 12 years.

Some things to note about her situation:

1. She was financially draining. "Spent all that she had" (Mk. 5:26).
2. She was in pain "She . . . was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse" (Mk. 5:26).
3. She was a social outcast. "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness" (Lev. 15:31).

But imagine having that issue of blood every day of your life for 12 years.

1. Thats 4,383 days.
2. 144 months.
3. 624 weeks.
4. 105, 192 hours

For 12 years, she bore the emotional and psychological baggage of being unclean, untouchable and an outcast:

1. No hugs, kisses, or any type of intimacy with a husband (if she had one)
2. She could not prepare her family's food (if she even had one)
3. She could not do housework;
4. She couldn't be a wife;
5. She couldn't be a mommy;
6. She had sat in an isolated house for 12 years staring at the walls.
7. For all intents and purpose, she was as good as dead.

But then something happens...

she hears about Jesus.

1. The healer
2. The miracle worker
3. The problem solver
4. The way maker
5. The deliverer

He has come to her town. If there is anybody who can heal her and make her well and put 12 years of misery behind her ... its Jesus

But she is thinking ...Jesus should not touch her. She thought Jesus might become unclean if he touched touch.

But this doesn't stop her. She rushes to the center of town breathlessly hoping, hoping, hoping she can still catch Him. But then she stops short when she sees that Jesus is surrounded by a crowd of people making their way away from her and toward the center of town.

But she's desperate.

She must get to Jesus.

And in a moment of inspiration it occurs to her: this man, this Jesus, is a great healer.

Maybe if she could just TOUCH HIM

Maybe if she could quietly make her way through the crowd and touch, yes if she could just touch the hem of his garment then she might be healed.

You see, in those days, Jews wore cloaks with tassels on their four corners. The tassels had a blue cord woven into it which reminded them of God's law and their duty to keep the law. Many people had an almost superstitious

belief that these tassels as sacred objects. Its the only thing that seems to explain the fact that she sought to touch the hem of His garment.

1. So she slowly and methodically makes her way through the crowd.
2. Nobody pays much attention to her.
3. Perhaps she had her shawl pulled down close to her face to avoid being recognized as the "unclean woman".
4. Some are probably annoyed by being pushed aside by one more woman in the crowd.

And at last, she's close.

She hears Jesus and Jairus talking.

Quickly she kneels down and brushes her hand against the tassel and immediately she feels the change in her body. Its like a tingling sensation, a warmth that immediately runs through her body.

And she knows she's been healed

You know, we come closest to God at our lowest moments. Its easiest to hear God when you are stripped of pride and arrogance, when you have nothing to rely on except God. Its pretty painful to get to that point, but when you do, God's there.

Jesus could have done and said anything He wanted to at this point, but HE CHOSE to turn the spotlight on a woman who wanted nothing more than to slip away into the crowd and make her way home.

1. She didn't want the attention.
2. She didn't want to make a public speech.
3. She just wanted to get out of there, go home, and get on with her life.

But Jesus obviously has something else in mind.

Mark 5: 30 says - At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, **"Who touched me"?**

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.**

1. No pretense
2. No Sugar coating
3. No Excuses
4. Only transparency
- 5. The Whole truth**

34 He said to her, "**Daughter**, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

### **Daughter**

- 1. Family**
- 2. Not outcast**
- 3. Identity**
- 4. Person**
- 5. Loved**

She had an issue and she brought that issue to Jesus

### **What is our issue today?**

- 1. Finances**
- 2. Family**
- 3. Relationship**
- 4. Sickness**
- 5. Brokenness**
- 6. Spritual/physical/emotional/**

And when Jesus stopped and publicly exposed her healing, He gave her what she needed most.

1. Everybody knew now she had been healed.



2. They didn't need to hear it 2nd hand
3. They didn't need to buy a newspaper, turn on the radio or TV
4. THEY KNEW she was healed
5. They knew it was safe to touch her now.

It's very important to give glory to God after receiving a miracle!

This woman was healed not because Jesus wanted to heal her or because she was the only one who needed healing, but rather because she had faith.

**The number 12 is about faith as well.** As with previous instances of Jesus healing someone, it ultimately comes back to the quality of their faith and the determination to persist with hope which determines whether it is possible.

This suggests that while there was a crowd of people to see Jesus, maybe they didn't all have faith in him. Perhaps they were just out to see the latest faith healer do a few tricks — not really believing in what was going on, but happy to be entertained nonetheless. The sick woman, however, did have faith and thus was she relieved of her ailments.

Mark 5

34 He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

There was no need to perform sacrifices or rituals or obey complicated laws. In the end, being relieved of her presumed uncleanness was just a matter of having the right sort of faith and persistent hope. This would be a point of contrast between Judaism and Christianity. According to the Jewish law she had to perform a number of sacrificial rituals, but with Jesus, just a word of proclamation of deliverance and she was healed.

May the issues that we wrestle with, we feel hopeful and confident to take it to Jesus. He is the **Way Maker**.

**Amen!**