

TOUCHPOINT - Where Faith Reaches Out to God

Have you ever believed something strongly in your heart, but there came a moment when you had to do something about that belief?

Faith often needs a touchpoint. A touchpoint is a place where something becomes personal and real. It is the point where what we believe in our hearts connects with our actions.

And there is a beautiful story in the Gospels that illustrates this better than almost any other story in Scripture. It is the story of a woman who had been suffering for twelve years and declared her “touchpoint” and acted on it.

The story of the woman with the issue of blood is recorded in the three of the Gospels: Matthew (9:20–22), Mark (5:25–34), and Luke (8:43–48), where it is uniquely intertwined with the account of Jairus requesting Jesus to heal his dying 12 year-old daughter. Mark’s narrative is the most detailed. Luke, writing as a physician, emphasizes that she could not be healed by anyone, while Matthew provides the briefest account, highlighting that Jesus recognized her faith and called her “daughter” before she was fully healed. **Read Mark 5:25-34**

Her Issue:

Mark 5:25 says: “And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years.”

Not only did she bleed for 12 years, and have to deal with all that, but an issue this severe likely left her with a lot of other problems, too: weakness, fatigue, headaches, irritability, brittle hair and nails, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, mouth sores, iron deficiency, and restless leg syndrome are all symptomatic. Then, there was The Law. The Law was very specific (starts at Leviticus 15:25): as long as she was bleeding she was unclean, everything she sat on or touched was unclean. So for twelve years, no one wanted to touch her or be near her, because to do so left you defiled....and the process of cleansing was fairly complicated. Add to that the fact that she’d many Doctors around the country, and, as a result, she was flat broke. Take all this into consideration, and we see a woman barely holding onto a rope of hope. The emotional torment left her embarrassed, distressed, depressed, discouraged, and desperate. Her soul was wracked with a futile combination of fear and frustration. Put yourself in her shoes, how would you feel? Imagine what twelve years of disappointment can do to a person’s faith.

Some of us know what it is like to pray about something for a long time. And sometimes the longer we wait, the easier it becomes to stop expecting anything to change.

That’s where this woman was. She had tried everything she knew. She had spent everything she had. She had gone to doctors. She had endured suffering. And now she was worse.

But there was something inside her that hadn’t died. Hope.

What she heard:

Mark 5:27 says: “When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.”

She heard about Jesus and something happened. **Matt 14:36, Luke 6:19.** Faith was born from what she heard. Imagine living in those days. The rumor mill was on FIRE about a man who would heal.

Romans 10:17 says: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

She heard about Jesus. That hearing produced faith. But her faith didn't stop with hearing. Her faith moved.

Her Obstacles:

She had identified a touchpoint but there were obstacles between her and Jesus. There was a crowd. There were people everywhere. She was weak. Lev 15:19-30 She was unclean, anyone who touched her would be unclean. She could be stoned to death if they discovered she was out and about in a crowd.

Her Touchpoint:

Matthew 9:21 records her thought: "For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole."

Now, the garment itself wasn't magical. Her faith wasn't in clothing, Her faith was in Jesus who she had heard about. The garment was simply the point where her faith reached out to Him.

That's what a touchpoint is. The touchpoint simply gives faith somewhere to reach.

There was a great crowd and many touched Jesus. Only one got healed. You can be close to Jesus without reaching for Jesus. You can be in the crowd and still miss the moment. And yet there is a difference between being around Jesus and reaching out to Jesus.

That Garment:

The Jewish tradition regarding the edges of a prayer shawl, known as a *tallit*, centers on the commandment to attach special fringes (hem) called *tzitzit* to each of its four corners. Exodus 28 & 39. Based on the biblical instructions in Numbers 15:38-40 and Deuteronomy 22:12, these fringes serve as a visual reminder of all 613 commandments in the Torah, encouraging the wearer to observe God's laws and avoid sinful behavior.

The fringes are constructed from four strings (often doubled to make eight) tied in a specific pattern of knots and windings, with the numerical value of the word *tzitzit* (600) plus the strings and knots symbolizing the total number of commandments (613). Traditionally, a single thread of blue dye, known as *tekhelet*, is included in the fringes to remind the wearer of the sea, the sky, and ultimately the Kingdom of Heaven. The shawl itself is rectangular to ensure it has four distinct corners, fulfilling the requirement that these ritual tassels be placed on the "extremities" or "wings" of the garment.

Her Courage:

She was 100% convinced if she could touch Jesus garment, she would be healed as she had heard others were. She had enough faith to move. She simply reached out and touched His garment.

Sometimes we make faith much more complicated than God intended it to be. We think we need to understand everything, need perfect faith, need perfect circumstances, need to have every question answered.

It took great courage for her, in her condition, to fight through the crowd and touch the hem of Jesus' garment. This bold, determined kind of faith is simply declaring. "Jesus, I'm reaching for You." No matter what.

What is YOUR touchpoint?

Here's the question I want us to consider today:

What is your touchpoint?

Where does your faith reach out to God?

For some people, it might be place. You have a chair where you pray, a place where you get alone with God. That place becomes your touchpoint.

For somebody else, it may be opening the Bible every morning. You open God's Word and say: "Lord, speak to me today. Your servant is listening." That becomes a touchpoint.

For somebody else, it might be coming forward during an altar call.

For some, it's James 5:14-15 asking for the Elders to anoint them with oil and pray the prayer of faith over them.

For someone else, it might be lifting your hands during worship.

For someone else, it might be calling somebody and saying: "Will you pray with me?" Two praying in agreement Matt 18:19-20

For someone else, it may be stepping out in obedience. God has been asking you to do something, and you finally say: "Lord, I'm going to trust You." That's a touchpoint.

The touchpoint doesn't create the power. Jesus does.

The touchpoint simply becomes the place where your faith says:

"I believe You enough to reach."

I want to end with Mark 11:23-24