



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

November 14, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

CLING TO JESUS

She said to herself, "If I only touch [Jesus'] cloak, I will be healed.

Matthew 9:21

READ Matthew 9:18-22

Dizziness struck me in the stairwell of the office building. Overwhelmed, I gripped the banister because the stairs seemed to spin. As my heart pounded and my legs buckled, I clung onto the banister, thankful for its strength. Medical tests showed I had anemia. Although its cause wasn't serious and my condition was resolved, I'll never forget how weak I felt that day.

That's why I admire the woman who touched Jesus. She not only moved through the crowd in her weakened state, but she also showed faith in venturing out to approach Him (Matthew 9:20–22). She had good reason to be afraid: Jewish law defined her as unclean and by exposing others to her uncleanness, she could face serious consequences (Leviticus 15:25–27). But the thought *If I only touch His cloak* kept her going. The Greek word that's translated as "touch" in Matthew 9:21 is not mere touching but has the stronger meaning of "to hold on to" or "to attach oneself." The woman tightly held on to Jesus. She believed He could heal her.

Jesus saw, in the midst of a crowd, the desperate faith of one woman. When we too venture out in faith and cling to Christ in our need, He welcomes us and comes to our aid. We can tell Him our story without fear of rejection or punishment. Jesus tells us today, "Cling to Me."

By **Karen Huang**

PRAY & REFLECT

Dear God, thank You for Your love. I don't have to feel ashamed and afraid. You accept me and call me Your child. Amen

What's caused you suffering and fear? To what or whom have you turned for help and healing? How can you cling to Jesus today?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The account of the woman suffering from bleeding for twelve years is told in all three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 9, Mark 5, and Luke 8). Matthew's telling is the briefest of the three. Despite the differing details, one element shared by all three is the essence of Jesus' parting words to the woman: "your faith has healed you" (Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48). It's important to note that this faith wasn't simply the *belief* that Christ could heal her (although that belief is also stated in all three gospels). Her faith caused her to *act*. It propelled her through the crowd to reach out and touch Jesus' cloak. This is how James talks about faith. Faith is demonstrated by what it *does*, not what it claims *to believe* (see James 2:14-26). – By **J.R. Hudberg**

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