

Venturing faith and its prospects (Quality: Very good)

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- [0 : 00] I will ask your attention this evening to the chapter that we read, that is the fifth chapter in the Gospel according to Mark. We will look particularly at the 25th to 28th verses.
- Verses 25 to 28 in the fifth chapter of the Gospel by Mark. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.
- When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind and touched his garment, for she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.
- This narrative, in the record of it, is not confined just to Mark's Gospel, but has its place in other parts of the Gospel record.
- But we will concentrate mainly upon this history here together this evening, as the Lord may help. Now, Jesus was engaged in another interest.
- [1 : 37] The ruler of the synagogue, Jairus, had come to him with a very serious condition prevailing with respect to his daughter.
- My little daughter, my little daughter, lieth at the point of death. I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live.
- Can you not read into those things that he said? In the extremity of the circumstance and the impotency of a father to deliver his child, he comes to the Lord Jesus Christ in the exercise of faith.
- And obviously, there is a positive ring about what he says. And the Lord Jesus Christ was conforming to his desire to go with him.
- And on the way, we have the interjection, if you like, of this situation in regard to the woman with the issue of blood.
- [3 : 04] Another very extreme case, as we consider it in its detail. But, oh, the tendency sometimes when we are under great pressure is to want the concentration to be particularly focused upon our personal need.
- And we could sympathize with Jairus feeling that he didn't want any impediment to the Saviour coming into his home and dealing with that condition, which obviously in faith he believed was a possible deliverance for his daughter, who was at the point of death.
- But Jesus seems to introduce a delaying tactic, doesn't he? I want to use that respectfully. He doesn't just go straight with Jairus to the seat of the problem and exercise his omnipotent capability of rearing that child and restoring that child to its parents.
- He has this other matter to deal with. And my friends, the Lord always works to a plan.
- And one of the things that associates with the mind and will of the Lord in his workings is the glory of his own name.
- [4 : 45] Sometimes it is necessary in the glory of his name for him to act instantly. To attend to something there and then.

But sometimes things seem to come in that bring one to question. I think of Martha and Mary when Lazarus died.

If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But the Lord, warning his disciples of what they were going to do in respect of Lazarus, he obviously appoints a delay.

And the delay seems to make the matter much worse for Mary and Martha because they attributed Lazarus' death to the Lord's delay.

But it was a greater glory for the Lord to bring Lazarus out of the grave than it was as it were to cure him of his mortal disease that obviously was taking his life away from him at that time.

[6 : 05] God's delays are not denials. And God is a sovereign. He is not dictated to. All of the matter is urgent and requires urgent attention.

The Lord never is behind his time. But if there is opportunity as it were to exercise those involved in a deeper way and manner, it seems that the Lord waits to be gracious.

That his glory is more clearly seen in the ultimate deliverance that he appoints and fulfills.

Well now here it is, this woman. She comes into the situation and she obviously is a woman in great distress.

There are things about her complaint. The blood is the life thereof. And here she is for 12 years. She's been troubled with this issue.

[7 : 15] It seems as though life is gradually slipping away. And doubtless through that long period of time, she has been in considerable trouble as to solicit the help of many physicians.

Many physicians. Many physicians. She wasn't a woman that sat back in, as it were, fatalistic attitude and said, well, this has come and there's little can be done for it.

I'll, I'll, oh no. My friends, she obviously was a woman who believed in using the means. And there is wisdom in that, that God uses means.

And as we would pray for the success of those means, it pleases him sometimes to make the means very successful and brings forth a cure.

But physicians and their remedies are limited to the will of God. The success granted deserves praise to God above all the means that are employed in bringing that to pass.

[8 : 44] But here's this woman deeply concerned with a life-threatening problem. And she suffers many things of many physicians.

That sounds very negative as far as the abilities of earthly doctors to do her any good. But my friends, we must see God over all.

We must appreciate that this heavenly physician is in absolute control. And though she's tried the means, and we can't condemn her for that, and we marvel that she was willing, that she might lengthen her days to spend all that she had.

Her assets were, as it were, used to the desirable end that a cure may be granted.

But her resources were to be expended. Her hopes were, as it were, to receive disappointment.

[10 : 06] And we find that she comes, as it were, to the end of things. Listen. And she suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.

What a depressing experience. But, you know, we read in another part of the Word of God, at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God.

And midnight is God's midnight. When everything seems to enclose us in darkness, and, as it were, almost overwhelms us with a despondency.

But, why should we be despondent, when such a God, as our God, reigns, to save and to heal?

Look. This is the scripture. She rather grew worse. When she had heard of Jesus.

[11 : 38] She didn't hear of the Lord in a way that moved her toward Him, or solicited any confidence in Him, before the given time when God had decreed that the news of the fact that there was one who had power in advance, power in advance of all human powers and human agencies, to meet the need.

She'd got to the end of hope in man, and she was there confronted with the Lord Jesus Christ, the hope of Israel.

He tarries off till men are faint, and comes at evening late. Our judgments of things are not necessarily the things that will come to pass.

Our judgment may, as it were, draw pictures in black paints, and we can't see any hope for the future, and we may feel to be, as it were, in a great strait, with no doubt.

As it were, in a great strait, with no real hope of help. It's midnight. At midnight, Paul and Silas pray.

[13 : 17] The prison doors open. Every man's bands will lose. This woman comes. She's spent everything. She's tried the means, and everything's failed.

And she's got worse and worse over a prolonged period. And what was there before her? But despondency, as far as the future.

Then there comes a bow in the cloud. It's a dark cloud that I've tried to paint with these few expressions of human reaction to a progressively deteriorating condition.

And then there comes a bow in the cloud. She hears of Jesus. And my friends, what a wonderful, as it were, bow in the cloud.

What a beautiful revelation was given to her when she was brought to realise, despite all the adversity, there was one who could place underneath her the everlasting arms and lift her right out of the despondent, despondent circumstances that had beset her for so long.

[14 : 36] And raise her up. Not only physically, but spiritually too. What we might term a double-handed blessing.

The blessing of God in providence. And the blessing of God in grace. She heard of Jesus. Jesus. Now, I'm going to ask a question.

Perhaps it focuses more our thoughts and our self-examination. Have we ever come to the end?

End of hope in ourselves. The more I strove against sin's power. I sinned and stumbled, but the more.

Do you know what it is? To resolve, as it were, knowing the solemnity of sin and its consequences. To resolve that you'll be different.

[15 : 42] You'll take a new avenue of approach and you'll, as it were, bypass the terrible circumstances that seem to fuel the temptation.

Self-help is poor help if we're left to it.

Because it centers around the limitations of creature ability. And my friends, our first parents found in the Garden of Eden that they were insufficient to keep themselves free from and out of the temptations of the evil one.

And, oh, how sad is the weakness of fallen flesh. But, oh, how wonderful it is that there is such a name set before us.

A name that is the same yesterday and today and forever. The name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[17 : 03] And here we have him at the extremity of the condition of that dear woman appearing on the scene and drawing near to her.

So that her knowledge of Jesus was sufficient to cause her in her abject weakness to venture.

It seems to me as though she's at the last ounce of her strength. Twelve years she's known this draining away of her blood.

And nobody knows what effect that must have had on the physical condition of that woman.

But, in the purposes of God, appointed and allowed. God was in control.

[18 : 10] God was in control. Now, when she heard of Jesus, she came in the press behind. God was working in her soul in that way that, no doubt, she didn't feel worthy to confront the Lord Jesus.

But she comes from behind. She comes and what is there between her and the Lord?

A press. If unto Jesus thou art bound, a crowd about him will be found attending night and day.

My friends, oh, what an opposition confronts a venturing believer. What crowds of thoughts.

What crowds of reflections upon a misspent past. What a distinction exists between those that are very tender in the fear of God and my own heart.

[19 : 27] How can I expect the Lord to favour me as he has some of those witnesses in his word.

And those witnesses that we come in contact with through the fellowship and communion of the saints now upon the earth. All the disparity, all the negative conclusions that seem to stand in the way of this woman.

Such is the urgency of her case and such is the strength of her God-given faith that she must get to Jesus.

She must get to Jesus. Do you feel sometimes whatever stands between you and the Lord?

Oh, you feel that urgency, that absolute dire necessity of personal contact with the precious Christ.

[20 : 42] She heard of Jesus. She heard of Jesus. And she came in the press behind. She wasn't one of those fired with a kind of Pharisee zeal that is going to make a show.

No, but we sing, don't we, who virtue stole. It seems as though she almost approached Christ in such a way that in her determination to touch him, she stole what she needed to restore her from this long established problem that threatened her death.

Now, when she heard of Jesus, she came in the press behind and touched his garment. And there was something in her that drew her to him.

And there was something in him communicated to her. A needy sinner and a full Christ in contact with one another.

And my friends, such a result is brought before us in the word of God.

[22 : 23] If I may touch. If I may touch. If I may touch. But we're not talking about a contact of brand assembly as if he is a needy sinner being brought before the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in all the glory and show of contact between the King of Kings.

And the Lord of Lords in all the Lord and a needy poor perishing woman.

Oh no, no, no, no friends. We have it here. It's simple. It's beautifully simple. What does she have to do?

She has to press through the crest and touch. And as she touched in the touch of faith upon the garments of the Saviour, virtue flowed to her from him.

Isn't this so typical of the exercise of faith as the Lord gives a sufficiency of understanding and venturing faith.

[23 : 51] If I may but touch the hem of his clothes in one of the other gospels. I shall be made whole. I, it's contact with Christ that is the wonderful God appointed manner of the healing that is so necessary to those that are under sentence of death in themselves.

By reason of the consequence of sin and its sicknesses. You know, there were a lot of people that had more of the company of Christ in a general sense.

There were multitudes that thronged him. But it's not recorded that they, by reason of their numerical superiority, solicited from him a great flow of virtue that put matters right between them and him and him and them.

Oh, but here is a poor soul. A poor soul with a great distress and a threatening ailment who ventures and receives and receives.

A poor soul with a great distress and receives and receives and receives and says, And the Lord Jesus Christ so ministered to her according to her faith, and straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

[25 : 51] Contact with Christ. Contact with Christ. Delivering her from a long process of circumstances through twelve years.

Twelve years. She waited twelve years before she was in contact with the deliverer.

And my friend, let me put this to you, for your encouragement, in venturing with your condition and need to the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was worth every moment of the 12 years when she found deliverance. She didn't regret that he delayed so long.

She didn't have any quarrel with the circumstances associating. She rejoiced in the deliverance. She knew in herself that she was healed of that play.

[26 : 57] Now you, perhaps, someone here tonight has been wrestling with a problem for a long time. And you seem to get no further. In fact, things appear to grow worse.

And, well, is it, are you knocking on the door of despondency by reason of the multiplied difficulties and fears that invade your mind and spirit?

My friend, thou art coming to a king. Large petitions with thee bring. For his grace and power are such.

None can ever ask too much. She was healed.

She knew in herself that she was healed of that play. Now, question about a recurrence was there.

[28 : 04] Such was the influence of the intervention and blessing of the Lord to her that she knew in herself that she was cured.

What a wonderful thing when the Lord communicates to a poor, helpless, perishing sinner that his mind is to bring them out of trouble.

That his mind is to set things in order in such a way that there is a future not of despair but of hope confirmed by the sufficiency of the Lord not only immediately to heal but to give such a healing that is of lasting consequence.

And I could go on and say thinking about sin and its influences and the gender of sin toward despondency under a sense of our weakness and the tremendous requirements of God's law it presses us down and presses us down to the point where sometimes we feel that there's no hope for us.

And how wonderful when the door of hope is opened and the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed to us in such a way and manner and applied in such a personal application of the truth as it is in Jesus that we don't see our sins as the herald of our eternal death we rather see by shame and repentance that our sins laid upon the Son of God have been the cause of his sufferings and we can weep for him that he must need need suffer so much as was essential to our freedom and deliverance from our own deservings but she was healed of that plague the assurance of sin forgiven is a blessing and in that sense an unforgettable blessing because the power was so great the influence so tremendous and it's delivering consequences that we go back sometimes to the time and place and realise that yes it was of the Lord it was of the Lord and the devil seems to do all in his power to wrest from us the foundation of hope that God has placed within us but my friends there are some things that the devil tries but he can't take away he can't take away because of the magnitude of the problem and then the superior magnitude of the deliverance that came on the back of the problem and brought peace and hope there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in

[31 : 56] Christ Jesus oh to know that we are the subjects of a cure through the virtuous person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and let us remember the hem of his clothes she wasn't called upon to rise as it were to any great height in herself one feels that she spent her energies in making contact with Christ and but however low however small however kind of near to the earth it was to have that contact in the hem of his clothes there was virtue flowed through him and his clothes to her condition that was a perfect cure as for

God his way is perfect as for God his way is perfect although we know the power of sin and the awful weakness that is in us that we sin again and again after knowing the sweetness and power of pardon in our own souls and felt as it were the fulfilment of that good word I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste but nevertheless nevertheless we pray for a continuing visit from the Lord assuring us reassuring us of that assurance which we felt years ago that things were right between God and our souls for

Jesus sake there was a dear old minister used to come to Coventry years ago and I benefited under his ministry he was an old miner from Yorkshire 40 years at the coalface he was a man very very nervous very very nervous oh grace he was pastor at Osset before our friend Norman Rowe ever went to Osset oh grace he said he said to me when I was launching out into the ministry he said Harold he said never put your congregations down short of assurance in in other words preach Christ as a perfect saviour who's able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him you may say in your fearing with the malady of spirit that is upon your heart at the present time surely there's no hope for me my friend there's hope in the gospel for coming sinners their situation may be dark and difficult as this woman's was gendering to as it were despair but at midnight

Paul and Silas prayed at the midnight of this woman's experience when she spent everything and tried every avenue to find a cure she didn't find anything outside of Christ but she found everything in Christ and the assurance of sin forgiven is in Christ pour not on thyself too long lest it sink thee lower look to Jesus kind of strong pity joined with power I'm going to say this sometimes the days in which we live are very dark and difficult and we don't hear much of gospel liberty we don't hear a great deal of those souls that have taken their their harps down from the willows and are striking the notes of praise to the

Lord for the great and glorious deliverance he has given them through the gospel those things seem yes they're written in autobiographies and biographies of saints that are past and of course we have records in the scripture of characters who were sinners such as us and they received salvation through Jesus Christ and they were liberated and they praised the Lord for his goodness for his wonderful works to the children of men we don't hear much of that today but the Lord has power on earth to forgive sins you haven't got to wait till you get to heaven to know that your sin is forgiven the Lord has power upon earth to forgive sins and my friends there's no experience that can equal a sense of sin forgiven because the load is lifted off our shoulders and the assurance of an interest in

[37 : 53] Christ is the prospect for time and for eternity and I'm going to quote another hymn he that hath made my heaven secure will hear all good provide while Christ is rich I can't be poor what can I want beside I've said this recently here I think and I've said it elsewhere the richest people upon the face of the earth are those that have had personal dealings with the saviour and the saviour has witnessed to them in themselves that he is their good physician and will cure every disorder of their souls well now this dear woman what a wonderful change she had in her experience

Jesus immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him no virtues ever goes from Christ without Christ knowing all about it's a covenant it's a covenant arrangement it's a covenant decree that at certain times certain places virtue will go out of Christ into a sinner's heart never without the Lord knowing he knew in himself that virtue had gone out of him and he turned about in the press and said who touched my clothes and the disciples and it seems quite reasonable his disciples said unto him thou seest the multitude thronging thee and sayest who touched me and he looked round about to see her that had done this thing and she fearing and trembling knowing what was done in her came and fell down before him and told him all the truth she opened her heart to him didn't she she told him about a long standing problem she told him about the uprisings and down sittings that she had experienced in those 12 years and the failure to find any deliverance from any human agency yes she told him all the truth i don't doubt she made clear to him her unworthiness by reason of the unbelief that had beset her on the journey through those 12 years what an awful thought from time to time had entered into her heart and troubled her mind and made a question all manner of things yes but now she found him who was the perfect physician to cure every disease whatsoever and he said unto her daughter thy faith hath made thee whole go in peace and be whole of thy plague and what more could she want than that from the lips of

Jesus Christ to her own ear and heart daughter daughter she got a father in heaven she got a brother born for adversity who was there amidst the throng but still Jesus Emmanuel God with us still as it were within the reach of a needy sinner troubled and distressed but venturing in the exercise of God given faith to reach the hem of his clothes saying if I may but touch the hem of his clothes I shall be made perfectly whole yes she the woman fearing and trembling knowing what was done in her came and fell down before him and told him all the truth and he said unto her daughter thy faith has made thee whole go in peace and behold of thy plague and she went to heaven didn't she she went to heaven when she died the gift of

God through Jesus Christ is not something that is just applicable to the prevailing circumstance when he said daughter it shows she belongs to the family when he says go in peace that peace is not just a transitory experience of relief from a certain ailment that had troubled her oh when he speaks peace to our souls it's the peace of God that passes all understanding we do pray it may keep our hearts and minds by Christ Jesus then I must come to the conclusion when he yet spake they came from the ruler of the synagogue goes on to deal with another case and my friends he was always dealing with cases and needs when he was employed here in that crowded three years of public ministry when he went about doing good when he healed all manner of sicknesses and diseases among the people never never a case as it were came to him in the exercise of

God given faith but he was absolutely suitable to meet the need and set the soul on the way rejoicing now this is Jesus this is Jesus the same yesterday and today and forever are you a sinner in need are you at the threshold of despondency because you are as you are and what you are and if you look this way and that way for help and you've been perhaps much more discouraged than encouraged I say there's no discouragement in Jesus Christ it's the door of encouragement whoso liveth and believeth in me shall never die what a note to finish one's poor ministry upon yet what a wonderful wonderful note speaking of the love of

[45 : 38] God in Jesus Christ and deliverance forever more forever more Amen