

Broken and in need of a healer
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Caldwell Presbyterian Church
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Text: Luke 8:40-9:2

As we read headlines, and watch the nightly news we are readily faced with many stories of brokenness. When we hear stories from Newtown Connecticut, where twenty little children and six teachers and administrators were slaughtered. We realize that many are broken and in need of a healer

When we hear stories from Los Anglos, California where an Ex-LAPD cop kills two cops and the fiancée of the LAPD cop-turned-lawyer that represented him during his termination proceedings. We realize that many are broken and in need of a healer

When we hear stories from Midland City, Alabama where a 5 year old boy was taken from the school bus and held in an underground bunker for nearly a week. We realize that many are broken and in need of a healer.

When we hear stories from Russia where 1,000 people were injured from a meteor blast, we realize that many are broken and in need of a healer.

When we hear stories of a Carnival Cruise ship that lost power due to a fire and the horrific conditions they endured. We realize that many are broken and in need of a healer.

When we hear stories from family members, friends, church members, colleges and even our personal stories of suffering from an illness, unemployment, financial hardships, death, addiction, abuse, divorce and the list could go on. We realize that many are broken and in need of a healer.

We are in need of a healer to meet us in our brokenness, to provide guidance and direction through the suffering, to provide hope through the unexplainable and strength as we walk through the brokenness to a place of wholeness.

Professor Abigail Evans of Princeton Theological Seminary says, that “woundedness and suffering can take on many forms....but no matter what our pain, we need to pass through it.” It is in realizing and passing through our brokenness that we can be open to the process of healing. Healing then becomes more than curing. Healing includes caring, sustaining, comforting, counseling, and transforming. In times of brokenness scripture points us to God that loves us unconditionally, provides a comforter and counselor to keep and direct us in the midst of trial, and has the power and authority to do the impossible and transform our situations.

From today's scripture reading I would like to focus on three elements that direct us in times of suffering and pain. First, we must seek the healer. In verse 43-44 we find a woman who has had a flow of blood for twelve years. She has spent all she has on physicians and no one could cure her so she sought Jesus for healing.

Leviticus 15 tells us that the woman was impure due to her blood flow therefore anything she touches becomes unclean: her bed, clothes, objects, loved ones. You name it if she touches it, it is unclean. She finds herself socially isolated and financially broke.

Caldwell, If we are honest with ourselves many of us may have felt the same brokenness.

- Social isolation due to a condition you have no control over.
- A daily mental battle to overcome the many racing thoughts that try to overtake you.
- Feelings of depression and fear.
- Use of substances to help mask the pain.
- Financial burdens due to the cost of medical treatments.
- Anxiety, fear, isolation, depression, addiction and financial strains...these things are real.

But in the midst of all of her pain she sought Jesus for healing. The gospel of Mark says it like this, "she heard about Jesus."

She heard about Jesus, who healed the Centurion servant, a paralytic, a man's withered hand, raised a widow's son, calms the storm, cast out demons, healed the sick, and made the lame walk and the blind see. She heard about Jesus and sought Him and so should we.

Our present afflictions do not compare to the power of God. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. In the midst of our brokenness we must Seek Jesus! Scripture therefore teaches us to seek Jesus, and then focus on the will of God.

Often times when we are in the midst of turmoil in our lives we can experience a flood of various thoughts, which may cause us to lose sight of our direction and things may seem as if we are in a fog. During these challenging times, scripture points us to seek the will of God for direction.

In verse 44 the women came up behind Jesus and touched the fringe of Jesus' clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. Here Jesus is presented as a Jew. He wears on his clothing the traditional fringe of Moses in Numbers chapter 15 verses 38-39. The fringes were on the four corners of their garments with a blue cord on the fringe at each corner. The fringe was to remind one of all the commandments of the LORD, to do them, and not follow your own desires. The text then suggests, when the women

touched the fringes the woman was denying herself, to follow the commands of God. She was praying not my will but thy will be done oh Lord.

1 John chapter 5 verses 14-15 say, This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him. Her faith is in the will of God.

- In the will of God that says: We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.
- In the will of God that says: For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart,
- The will of God that says: He himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds we are healed.
- In the will of God that says: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits- who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- In the will of God that says: those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.
- In the will of God that says: for God all things are possible.

In the midst of our brokenness we must seek our healer with prayers of faith saying not my will but thy will be done.

Finally the scripture teaches us to bear our brokenness in community as we witness to the power of God. At the beginning of the text we find the crowd awaiting Jesus' arrival. This is important to note because in Luke's time Christians were awaiting the Messiah's arrival. The waiting in v. 40 isn't neutral as the crowd isn't just a crowd, but should be viewed as an image of the people of God. Thus Luke adds a theological significance to information provided by Mark. The people of God are pressing in on Jesus at the arrival of the woman with blood flow. Here the writer gives us a picture of a woman entering the community of the people of God; carrying her brokenness and seeking Jesus for healing. After being healed and Jesus realizing that someone touched him, she came to Jesus and witnessed to the power of God in the presence of all the people. She told everyone why she touched Jesus and how she was immediately healed. Jesus then said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.

We are called to bear our brokenness among the people of God. As we bear our brokenness in community we witness to a God that is all powerful and able to heal all of our diseases.

Jesus said, daughter your faith has made you well. Faith was not the cause of healing but her faith opened her up to access the power of God which healed her. Healing may look different for each person. You can be miraculously healed, such as the two accounts in this text. You may be healed in phases, such as in Mark chapter 8 when Jesus heals a blind man, but often healing may be a journey; such as the story in this text of Jesus healing the women with blood flow after suffering for 12 years. Even in death we have life eternal through Jesus Christ. Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life." Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.¹ We will all be changed,⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. "Death has been swallowed up in victory." "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

In this season of lent as we continue our journey of prayer, fasting and examination let us journey to the cross and sit at the foot of the cross; gazing at the glory, mercy and love of our savior. It is at the cross that we find Jesus, who was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. Let our prayers be according to the will of God. Let us embrace the commands of God, come together as the body of Christ to care for the sick, bear each other's burdens, weep with those who weep and mourn with those who mourn. As Jesus gives us an image of service to the broken, let us, as his disciples; develop a life of service, sent to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. Let us witness to the power of God in community, pray for all who are broken, lend a hand to those in need, and speak the gospel message of truth, encouragement and hope; because God is able to do the impossible. **Amen**