

Sermon by Nicholas White  
Youth Sunday 2021

“It’s your own fault your parents got divorced, they just didn’t want you!” These harsh words, flung at me by a young 4th grader, still echo through my mind today. I had no idea what to say in response, all I could do was look down and try not to cry. At that moment, I felt alone and hurt beyond repair. Then, at my lowest moment, a good friend of mine came to the rescue. He just looked my aggressor dead in the eyes and told him in complete deadpan, “That just isn’t called for. That’s not how we act.” That was all. No snide comeback, no hurtful words directed, just that’s not how we should act.

To this day, I have no idea what drove my friend to stand up for me. He risked his reputation and a possible negative reaction from others in the area just because he saw something he knew was wrong. He believed in himself and in the power of goodness. To me, this story emulates this passage perfectly. The fact that God’s healing power and potential for good, found in Jesus, is actually accessible to us all if we just searched for it.

This passage found in the Gospel of Mark, has always left me with a myriad of questions. Upon closer examination, two ponderings seem to attract my curiosity the most: **Why** was the woman with the hemorrhages healed? And **how** had Jesus not been in control of it? I have no doubt that this woman, who I chose to focus on for my sermon, was healed by the power of God, having suffered from “bleeding” throughout a grand portion of her life; she was healed by touching his cloak. This woman had tremendous faith that divine power saves; furthermore, she **knew** that if she only touched the clothes of Jesus she would be healed. This woman did nothing more than what God asks of us, to take a leap of faith.

But how did Jesus heal this woman without even knowing who he had healed? For me, this question can only be answered by looking deeper into Jesus’ true nature of duality, the Christian doctrine that Jesus is not only fully divine, but also fully human. One of the reasons the Word became flesh was to show us how we should strive to act, and how as human beings we could most fully align with love. Jesus himself was a vessel for God’s compassion and mercy, the most perfect vessel to ever exist, and fully believed that his father could and **would** do anything to help His people to the fullest. All this woman did was believe the same thing, that God’s power, through Jesus in this case, would heal her where all others had failed.

This woman did not heal herself, nor, interestingly, did the **human** vessel of Jesus actively heal her. What healed her was the **divine** power of God **beyond Jesus** that was accessed merely through Jesus by the woman’s thriving, headstrong faith. Here, I see what is a fraction of Jesus’ power alive in this world, power that exists beyond the human person of Jesus. Jesus was caught unaware, because even though he healed in the name of God and had the fullness of God within him, this story is about God’s healing power not just in Jesus, but in all of us. What Jesus’ unknowingness shows me is that God’s healing power can extend beyond Jesus, and that means it can extend into our lives as well. We too can be human vessels of God’s love just as Jesus perfectly was. In John 14:12, Jesus expresses that his disciples can and will do similar and greater acts of love in their own lives, and to me, what this passage points to is the way healing is still available to use through faith even though Jesus has long been ruling in heaven.

In my life, I see small acts every day that shine with Jesus’ love. Everything from seeing my teammate help someone off the ground after a grueling workout during Newman football training, to seeing people comforting a loved one after a loss, to just asking someone how their day has been. Even these small acts of compassion can change the flow of someone’s day, year, or even life. I thank that one friend who saved me all the way back in fourth grade, because he started me on my journey of noticing that God’s healing love didn’t stop with Jesus, but continues on in all of us.