

RADICAL ELECTION SPECIAL

JESUS CHRIST

THE DOCTOR WE ALL NEED

The Story of a Sick Woman

JESUS said, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

(Mark 5: 34)

1. OUR DREADFUL DISEASE

While Jesus was responding to another cry for help, a sad, sick woman joined the crowd of His enthusiastic followers (see *Mk. 5: 21-7*). She had been haemorrhaging continuously for twelve years (see *v. 25*), possibly since the birth of a child. She was in a desperate condition when she heard about Jesus. She illustrates the state of the entire human race, helplessly ruined by **SIN** for a long time, in fact ever since mankind’s disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Indeed, who can deny that sin and its symptoms indicate a spiritual disease on an epidemic scale? Even the ‘Black Death’ or bubonic plague of 14th century Europe or the modern HIV crisis don’t compare with this.

No one is exempt from guilt or free from sin’s deadly influence and morally crippling effects (see *Rom. 3: 10, 23*). The myth of evolutionary progress flies in the face of the facts. The human patient is as sick as ever (see *Mk. 7: 20-3; Rom. 1: 28-32*). The tragedy is that many foolishly believe the false diagnosis of the 18th century Rousseau, “Man is born free, yet everywhere he is in chains” (*The Social Contract*).

The truth, as taught by Christ, is that “Man is born in sin, therefore he is in chains” (see *Jn. 8: 34*). **SIN IS ROOTED IN OUR HEARTS. SO WE NEED A RADICAL SOLUTION.** However, this condition is the very slavery Christ came to liberate us from (see *Jn. 8: 32, 36*) by dying for our sins and paying our spiritual debts, then rising again in victory before pouring out His renewing Holy Spirit upon us (see *Rom. 4: 25*).

2. THE DECEITFUL DOCTORS

What did the woman do about her haemorrhage? What has the human race done about the problem? Where have people turned for help? We are told that the woman spent all her money trying to get help from ‘many physicians’ but was *worse off*, physically as well as financially (see *v. 26*). Likewise, human beings have tried many remedies without success. Consider the ‘doctors’ we often turn to:

‘**Dr Brains**’ prescribes more education, including access to computers and information technology. However, more knowledge leads to more confusion and self-destruct capability (see *2 Tim. 3: 7*).

'Dr Darwin' prescribes a scientific and religion-free course of medication. Apart from deceiving patients with pseudo-scientific propaganda, his quasi-religious hype is a threat to human health. Tragically, his secular opiate inspired communism and fascism.

'Dr Politics' insists he can cure us but, despite his promises of social improvement, the cancer of sin remains untouched by his remedies (see *Isa. 1: 21-3*). Sadly, he too is unwell, a fact which undermines his credibility.

'Dr Cash' prescribes more money and a better economy but the patient keeps coming back, discontented and sick with greed (see *Isa. 55: 2*). The alarming personal and national debt crisis aggravate the illness.

'Dr DIY' advocates self-help measures and innate human resources. But the patient keeps falling flat on his face in failure (see *Ps. 118: 8-9; 1 Cor. 1: 17-25*). This remedy flies in the face of thousands of years of human history.

'Dr Fun' and his fantasy partner **'Dr Who'** prescribe plenty of TV entertainment and sport, with lots of drink, drugs and promiscuity. A famous king proved this was useless (see *Eccl. 2: 1-11*). Kings and commoners are still suffering! Royalty rarely provides good examples of healthy living.

'Dr Deviant' urges patients to go on a sex binge, to experience homosexual as well as heterosexual freedom. Sadly, his remedy for repression is personal and social poison. It is nothing but sexual slavery.

'Dr Ritual' thinks that 'religion' will cure the patient. Unaware that the Papacy is founded on a fallacy, he opines that the Pope alone provides hope. Neither does his partner **'Dr Multi-faith'** with his Islamic potions help. Indeed ritual without reality deludes the patient. Without a true experience of the grace of God in Christ, this only aggravates the disease, promising healing where there is none (see *Isa. 29: 13*).

The truth is, these doctors are 'quacks', treating symptoms and not the cause. They didn't study in God's medical school. What is more, it is a case of "Physician, heal yourself" (*Lk. 4: 23*).

3. THE DIVINE DOCTOR

At last, the woman came to **'Dr JESUS'** (see *v. 28*)! All others had failed. Here was One who could heal her. What is more, the healing was free! Indeed, free at the point of need, though costly to the gracious Healer. In faith, she touched Christ's robe and was immediately healed (see *vs. 27-9*). What a glorious picture of the Gospel! Christ alone is 'the Way, the Truth and the Life' (*Jn. 14: 6*). He is the *only* One 'whereby we must be saved' (*Acts 4: 12*).

The Gospel is the INTERNATIONAL SALVATION SERVICE, available to ALL.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved (*Jn. 3: 16-17*).

... if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the

righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world (1 Jn. 2: 1-2).

... the living God, who is *the* Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe (1 Tim. 4: 10).

As surely as the happy woman 'felt within herself that she was healed', we too experience the saving power of God's grace when we truly turn to Christ in repentance and faith. Pardoned by His blood and renewed by His Spirit, we are saved by *receiving* not *achieving*. It is all of grace, FREE GRACE (see Eph. 2: 8-10). May we also fall before Jesus, 'in wonder, love and praise' and hear His voice, "Go in peace...be healed."

We noted earlier that her healing was 'free' to the woman but 'costly' to the gracious Healer Who felt that 'power had gone out of Him' (v. 30). All this has to be seen in the light of the cost of the Cross. At Calvary God made Christ 'who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him' (2 Cor. 5: 19-21).

What does this mean? Simply that, on the cross, the Saviour was treated as a sinner that we might be regarded as righteous. A great exchange took place! Our debt of guilt was 'imputed' or charged to His account, so that the universally-available 'credit' (or 'merit') of Christ's sacrifice could be imputed to all who trust in Him! The sinless Saviour was thus condemned and punished so the guilty sinner may be justified and acquitted: 'Justified by His blood' (Rom. 5: 9), we are thus declared righteous in God's sight.

When Jesus said to the woman "Your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction" (v. 34), we must carefully grasp an important truth. We are not saved by 'faith' as an activity of our own, but by God-given 'faith in Christ in whom *alone* we trust. In short, we look to the One Who saves rather than to our act of believing: 'Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling' (Toplady). Indeed, salvation is all of grace!

While Sinai's Law justly condemns us for violating it, Calvary's Gospel justly acquits us (since Christ has died). Let the Apostle Paul sum up the wonderful message of salvation for us: 'Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the Law' and 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom. 3: 28; 5: 1). After centuries of spiritual darkness in the Church of Christ, this was the wonderful truth rediscovered by Martin Luther in the sixteenth century: Justification by faith in Jesus Christ alone!

Furthermore, real contact with Jesus is truly life-transforming. He makes a difference to our lives, attitudes, aspirations, relationships and pursuits. It's not 'easy believe-ism'. The Christian life involves duties as well as delights. There are commitments as well as comforts. Yes, true saving is a 'faith which works by love' (Gal. 5: 6).

Hymns have beautifully expressed and applied the wonder of this miracle of grace. John Greenleaf Whittier wrote:

We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

George F. Root wrote:

Oh touch the hem of His garment! And thou too, shalt be free;
His saving power this very hour shall give new life to thee!

May we also trust, praise—and joyfully serve in faithful witness—Him forever.
Amen!

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