



“Reach Out and Touch the ONE”

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Saturday & Sunday, June 30 & July 1, 2018

All Services

The Reverend John H. Brock
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Mark 5:21–43

Grace to you and peace, from God who is, who was, and who is to come. Amen.

I love the gospel of Mark. It's fresh, every time I read it. It's a great read, especially in the original Greek, because the author is **so** excited to get the story. It's rather like Mark stood up in front of a crowd and just spewed out this fantastic, incredible story of Jesus of Nazareth. And I can just imagine that while he was gasping out this amazing saga, someone else was sitting in the crowd, writing furiously as the drama, the passion, the life, of Jesus infused the ears and hearts and souls of the listeners.

Too often, though, in my opinion, English translators of Mark's gospel attempt to “clean up” the poor grammar, lack of punctuation, questionable use of pronouns, and repetition of words and phrases. As example, this is how a transliteration, a word for word translation, of Mark would sound:

*And Jesus, having crossed over in the boat again to the other side was gathered together a large crowd to him, and he was beside the lake. And out comes one of the synagogue leaders, by the name of Jairus, and having seen him he falls down at the feet of him and he begs him earnestly saying, “My daughter is at the point of death, that having come you may put your hand on her in order that she may be saved and live.” and he went with him. And following him were a large crowd and they were pressing against him. And a woman being with a flow of blood twelve years and having suffered much by many physicians and having spent everything with her and having benefitted nothing but rather into a worse having come and having heard about Jesus having come in the crowd behind she touched the garment of him. For she was saying “If I may touch even his garments I will be healed.” And **immediately** was dried up the fountain of the blood of her and she knew in the body that she has been cured from the terrible affliction. And **immediately** Jesus having known within himself the power having gone out from himself having turned around in the crowd he was saying, “Who touched my garments?” And were saying to him the disciples of him, “You see the crowd pressing against you, and you say, who touched me” And he was looking around to see the one having done this. Now the woman was fearing and trembling having known what had happened to her she came and fell down before him and said to him the whole truth. And he said to her, “Daughter, the faith of ou has saved you. Go in peace and be healed from the affliction of you.”*

I'm stopping there, because I need to catch my breath. Hopefully, you get the picture. There were some things I'd like to point out a couple of differences, between what *I* just read, and what the **NRSV** said. You caught the jumping around between tenses, right? Present, past, it doesn't really matter to Mark, he's in such a hurry to get the message out. Things for Mark are very **IMMEDIATE**. You heard that word *twice* in what I read and it's *four times* in our passage today. Of the 78 times that word is used in the Old & New Testament, Mark uses that word **27 times** in that one gospel. Because, for Mark, things are *important*, immediate, and happening **Right Now!**

Also in our passage today, Mark uses the word *sothan*, Which in our translation was used to mean "be healed" which is an acceptable translation, But it literally means "to be saved." It's used in vs 23, where dad Jairus says to Jesus

*put your hands on my daughter that she may be **saved** and live;*
and again in verse 34, where Jesus says to the woman with the hemorrhage
*daughter, your faith has **saved** you.*

I have to be careful at this point not to veer off into *works righteousness*. That's one of those big, churchy phrases that not a lot of people *outside* of the church setting really understand, and to be honest, not a lot of folks **within** the church setting understand, either. When pastors start talking about *works righteousness*, what we're meaning is the thought that, by doing good things: feeding the hungry, visiting people in prison, donating to church and other charitable organizations, being part of the Big Sister or Big Brother program, or whatever, that by doing something good, something unselfish, something faithful, we are going to EARN Gd's love.

Works righteousness is thinking that

*well, if I do enough good things, then Gd will **have** to love, Gd will have to bring me into heaven*

Now please do not get me wrong - those are all *great things* to do. **Please, do** go and feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit those in trouble, and always help kids in need. Marianne reminded me that Martin Luther said

Gd doesn't need your good works - but your neighbor does.

Remember: *doing* those things does not earn us Gd's grace or love or forgiveness. Those are all given to us freely, without strings attached. They are given to us by the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

What was it that Jesus told both Jairus and the woman? What "saved" them? **Faith**. The *Faith* Jairus had that Jesus could save / heal his daughter. The *Faith* this unnamed woman had that Jesus could save / heal her, when no one else was able to. They *Both* acted on faith: Jairus by asking on behalf of his daughter; the woman by reaching out and touching.

Gd gives us that faith. A lot, then, rather depends on our personalities. Mark got that faith, and couldn't keep quiet. He couldn't even slow down enough to write a good, grammatically correct gospel. Jairus got that faith, which compelled him to brave the crowds and approach this radical, kind of weird, new teacher that he had heard about. This poor, disadvantaged, socially ostracized woman, had that faith to go where

she was not allowed - large crowds; to do what she was not supposed to do - have contact with a man unrelated to her.

By virtue of your baptism, Gd has given **you** faith. By the simple fact of you being *here*, in this place of worship, must mean Gd is active in your heart, urging you to whatever acts of faith you are called to, you are capable of.

We can choose to reject that gift of faith. However, we are called to **act** on that faith, in Gd's name, *reach out*, touch the hearts and minds and faith of those around us - at home, at work, at school, in your neighborhood, wherever. Allow Gd to fill your heart, let Gd move your hands, reach out with Gd's grace and strength and love and forgiveness.

Allow yourself, too, to be *sothan*: To be healed; to be saved.

Amen.

Copyright © 2018, John H. Brock. All rights reserved.



www.trinitycamphill.org