

**HEALING SERVICE COMBINED CONGREGATION 9:30 AM MAY 29,**  
**2011**

**TITLE: THE HEALING CHRIST**

**READINGS: Mark 5:21-43, Luke 5:17-26, Luke 17:11-19**

There are times in our lives when we have felt hopeless, surrounded by darkness, times when we feel a soul-crushing terror. Something is wrong. It is terribly dark and it does not seem to be getting light. St. John of the Cross referred to this time as the dark night of the soul. Jairus, who we see in our first reading, knew about that kind of darkness. He had come to see Jesus. He pleaded with the Master, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." Now is there a more helpless, a more desperate feeling than having one of your children become critically ill? Is there ever a time darker than that? If you have ever had a terribly sick child you can certainly identify with Jairus and those feelings of emptiness, hopelessness. And Jairus was an important man. He was the leader of the local Synagogue. A Proud man I'm sure, but now here he was on his knees begging Jesus for healing for his daughter.

Another person desperately seeking healing which we heard about today was a woman ill for twelve years suffering with hemorrhages. She had tried countless doctors, but rather than getting better, she was now worse. Not only were the hemorrhages dangerous to her health, but they made her a social outcast. She was unclean, not welcome in the Temple. People were to avoid and shun her, on the streets, in the city, in society. This suffering lady knew she wouldn't be able to simply approach Jesus, announce her need and ask his healing help, as we saw in the case of Jairus. No one would have allowed her to get near. So she snuck up from behind, hoping to be unnoticed and if she just touched one of the tassels on Jesus' robe she would be healed. Something deep inside her told her that if she would do that, just touch him, she would be healed. She did, and she was! Now she would steal away.

But no, her adventure was discovered. "Who touched me?" Jesus asked. "What?" his disciples wondered, "there is a huge crowd pressing in on you why would you ask that?" His eyes found the woman and she, filled with fear, fell trembling at his feet. But no rejection, only love came from him. "Daughter," (and this

is the only time in the Gospels that Jesus addresses anyone in this special loving way) your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease.” Mk.5:34. Hallelujah! What a wonderful word! Healed! The healing touch of Christ! We, too, need that healing touch and if we only reach out to Jesus in faith, he will touch us with that same healing touch.

In our second and third readings today we have seen other examples of the healing touch of Christ. Our paralytic stood and glorified God, our cleansed leper came back, “praising God with a loud voice.” Lk.17:15. And what does Jesus require? Simple faith. “Get up and go on your way, your faith has made you well.”Lk.17:19. He requires the same for us, simple faith. Faith expressed through prayer and confidence that whatever happens is in the hands of God and is in accordance with his will for our good. We must be convinced in faith that we will experience the healing touch of the Lord. There is power in belief. We have faith and we have prayer. The healing touch of the Lord Jesus is in both, sometimes for the body, always for the soul.

In 1976 John Ulrich’s son was taken to the hospital with no heartbeat and no brain waves. Co-workers had found him at a work site. No one knew what had happened. The doctors managed to restore the man’s vital signs, but for three days he remained in a coma. On the fourth day he awoke but he was completely insane. His father was beside himself. “I walked out of that room,” he said, “and I saw a sign for the chapel and thought I might as well try that.” There in the hospital chapel he prayed. The next day he asked his wife to pray with him. That evening John Ulrich prayed all night, “My shirt was soaking with sweat,” he remembers. He promised God that he would give up his bad habits and even his good job if only God would save his son. The next day he returned to his son’s hospital room. His son was sitting up in bed calmly talking to his mother. Ulrich sat down and talked to his son for two hours. “He was perfect,” he said. Ulrich followed through with his promise and it changed his life. He later became a very effective Missionary in South America. When things seemed hopeless and utterly black for him, he turned to Jesus and received the miracle of healing.

There is something else we must remember. We must remember that ultimately God is in control. You and I have a decision that we need to make about life. The decision is this: just how much do we trust God? Sometimes healing is nothing that we would ever expect and sometimes it is our acceptance. When I was a hospice chaplain and faced those who were terminally ill with a disease such as

cancer, I experienced that healing peace and tranquil calm came over a person whenever that person, through faith, came to acceptance. It came when he/she really and truly put it in God's hands, whenever he/she surrendered to whatever God wanted for them. So we need to ask how much do I really trust God? Can I trust him when one of my children lies at death's door? Can I trust him when I have a crisis with my own health? Can I trust him when I feel hopeless, surrounded by darkness, when I feel that soul-crushing terror?

We have come together today to intertwine our spiritual, mental and physical lives in a special way. Some among us are here with needs of physical, psychological and emotional healing. We are all here with needs of spiritual healing. Our work will be to join our hearts and minds and wills with each other seeking the healing touch of Christ. As we kneel before the altar and receive the imposition of hands and anointing with oil we come with humble faith, the same faith found in Jairus and the woman who fell begging at Jesus' feet, the same faith found in the leper who came back rejoicing and praising God, the same faith found in the paralytic who stood took up his mat and walked. Expect it, pray for it, know that the healing touch of Christ is still very much with us. And if we just touch the tassel of his cloak in faith, we, too, will be healed. **Amen.**

**Pastor Barney**