

Spiritual Depression

Luke 8:40-48

Charles Spurgeon used to describe his emotional and spiritual depression as a “fog that descends.” I like the analogy. When depression sets in you can’t see the beauty ahead, you often forget those blessings behind, and you will lose your bearings. This is why I like a statement about faith I heard a long time ago. *“Faith brings a man empty to God that he may be filled with the blessings of God”* (Calvin). This woman pictures an empty person for “Life is in the blood” (Lev. 17:11). How can my life be cured of emptiness?

I. The condition of an empty life brings terrible misery.

In the parallel account of this story, Mark tells us, the woman *“had much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all she had and was not helped at all”* (Mark 5:26). Why such effort?

(A). The misery was physical....

Women who hemorrhage uncontrollably after giving birth describe feeling unwell, faint, dizzy, lightheaded and a sensation of “falling back” or fading away from the room. If you had these feelings you would do all you can to find relief, and that is exactly what she was doing.

(B). The misery was spiritual ...

By all indications this woman was a Jew. The ceremonial law stated that she was “unclean.” *“Anything she lies on will be unclean, and anything she sits on will be unclean. Anyone who touches ... anything she sits on or lies on will be unclean”* (Leviticus 15:19-21). It seems that this woman had a condition that affected her and the people around her. Emptiness does that.

II. The cure for an empty life seems like a complete mystery.

After she had tried all of the physicians to no avail, she turned to the Great Physician (Mark 5:27). “When she had heard of Jesus...” not before that moment, but only “when she had heard of Jesus.” She came to Him, pressing through the crowd (and all obstacles in her way) and touched His hem. When her “unclean” hand touched His clean hem immediately “power” went out of from Him (v. 46).

How would you like to capture Divine power today in order to heal that which is unclean in your life? “His divine power grants us everything pertaining to life ... through the true knowledge of Him who called us... for He has granted us by His precious and magnificent promises... to become partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (II Peter 1:3-4).

It seems the cure for my spiritual depression is to “hear about” one of His divine promises to me, and then to reach out and take hold of this “precious and magnificent promise” and lean on His power.

III. The confidence an empty life can end requires Divine mercy.

I am continually amazed at the number of Bible teachers who emphasize “great faith” as the cure. No. You may object: “Wait a minute, Jesus said, “Your faith has made you well. Go in peace” (v. 48). Yes. But... let’s examine this “confidence” or “faith” that the woman had in Jesus to heal her.

(A). It was quiet, not showy ... *“When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice”* (v. 47)).

(B). It was fearful, not confident... *“she came trembling and fell down before Him”* (v. 47).

(C). It was personal, not corporate... *“and declared...why she had touched him”* (v. 47).

What do you think she declared? “I’ve tried it all. There’s been no healing. I heard about you. *I am unclean.* There’s nothing good in me. I reached out in shaky faith. Your promise is real.”