

# TAKING HOLD OF LIFE

Luke 8:42b-48

## INTRODUCTION

Imagine you have a rare disease. There is only one doctor who can help, but he is too far away. One day, you hear this doctor is coming to town. Would you try to see him or not bother? Today we hear about a woman who had a serious illness. The only person who could help was nearby, and she goes out of her way to meet him. The woman joins the crowd because she believes that if she can just grasp the edge of his garment, she will be healed. In doing this, the woman latched on to life itself. Today, we can do the same. This is our first point...

## 1 TAKING HOLD OF LIFE

Luke 8:43 says the woman had been bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. Mark 5:26 says she had spent all her money on doctor's bills, but instead of getting better, she became worse. What made matters even worse is that according to Jewish law, she was regarded as unclean. People were not allowed to touch her, nor was she meant to touch them. Leviticus 15:25 says, "When a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, she is unclean as long as she has the discharge." This woman was a social outcast.

Mark 5:27 says the woman heard that Jesus was in town, and she risked being out in public to see him. Just being in a crowd was enough to break the law, but as part of a crowd, she might go unnoticed. It was worth the risk. The only one who could heal her was passing by, and he may never do so again! All she need do was hold the edge of his garment without touching him. She could then be healed and move on without anyone knowing. Verse 44 says the woman came up behind Jesus and grasped the edge of his cloak. This is a square shaped garment worn over the shoulder. An important part of this garment was the tassels that hung from each corner. Deuteronomy 22:12 says, "You shall make tassels on the four corners of the garment with which you cover yourself. Numbers 15:38-39 says, 'You are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. You will do this to remember God's commands.'"

We have a disease that is worse than the one mentioned in this passage. It is called sin and we have had this since we were born. Like the woman who came to Jesus, this disease affects all our social contacts. We can spend our money on physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, and even pastors, but the only person who can help is passing by right now. He may never do so again so take the opportunity while you can. Isaiah 55:6-7 says, "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their way and the evil their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them." This leads to a more urgent point...

## 2 TAKING HOLD OF LIFE NOW

The doctor we need has arrived in town. We know he can help so what are we going to do? Do we pray that the doctor may hear about us, seek us out, and see us? No, we do all we can

to see the doctor. Jesus said, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” In other words, “Take hold of life now!”

Luke 8:44 says, “The woman came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak.” This was more than a brush of the hand. The woman held it. This symbolised at least three things. The amount of blue dye in a person’s tassel was an indication of their wealth and authority as the dye was expensive. The colour in the cloth also reminded Jews about their need for priestly purity. More important, however, is the link with the Law of Moses. By holding the tassel, she was as close to Jesus as she could be without breaking the law. Verse 44 says when she took hold of the garment the bleeding stopped. Imagine this after twelve years. Imagine the excitement running through her veins! Mark 5:29 says, “Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was free from her suffering.”

Jesus is all we need to cleanse us from sin. So come to him. Latch on to him. In doing so, 1 Timothy 6:19 says we lay hold of life that is life indeed! Many in the crowd had touched Jesus. Some had been pushed right up against him. Others had held his garment, but unlike the sick woman, this was not an act of faith. Many today have heard about Jesus; they are impressed with him, but they don’t follow him. We must take hold of life now as Jesus passes by. This leads to a further point...

### **3 TAKING HOLD OF LIFE IN JESUS**

In verse 45 Jesus said, “Who touched me?” Peter says in v45, “People are crowding and pressing against you.” Jesus however was insistent for he knew power had gone out from him. This is important because Jesus is the healer and not the garment.

The woman had now been noticed. She then fell at the feet of Jesus and told the crowd how she held his garment and was instantly healed. Jesus then said, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.” He used the word, “Daughter” to assure her, and the crowd, that she was part of God’s family. In declaring the woman healed, Jesus fulfilled the role of a priest. He declares her clean and encourages the crowd to accept her into the community.

We cannot come to Jesus without being noticed. This woman would not have been able to keep this to herself and nor should we. People need to know that we are in God’s family and that we follow him. So let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

**The following may help us reflect further on the message**  
we use these points as a discussion guide at our fellowship groups

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1. What was the most encouraging part of the message from Luke 8:42-48? *What similar Scriptures have been of help to you recently?*
2. How does Psalm 40:1-3 relate to the woman's experience in Luke 8? *How do you relate to the Psalm?*
3. How did the woman's desperate condition motivate her, and how does this relate to our situation in life today?
4. How can we as Christians apply the idea of "taking hold of Jesus" today?
5. How should we apply Matthew 7:7-8 in our daily life? *How does Isaiah 55:6-7 relate to this?*
6. Why did the woman in Luke 8:42-48 hold the edge of Jesus' garment? (Numbers 15:37-41 may help your discussion).
7. How can Christians continue to apply I John 1:8-9 in their daily experience?
8. Discuss the progression from physical healing to spiritual healing in Luke 8:43-44 and vs.47-48.
9. How significant is the use of the word "daughter" in Luke 8:48? *The situation with the waiting Jairus may provide a clue.*