



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

Mark 5:24-34

The people you meet: Fall down

He was only a junior in high school, but his life was falling apart. His backpack slid off his slumped shoulders. He fell forward onto his bed wordlessly and took a mental inventory of his life. His text messages were full of poison. His Instagram was a reminder that he was not the person he desperately wished he was. His Snapchat confirmed his suspicion that everyone he knew was happier than him. A small prayer escaped him: "God...make me better." He rolled over and grabbed his Bible off the nightstand, opening up to his highlighted Confirmation passage.

The woman Jesus met in this text had suffered a long time. She had tried many expensive things to heal her illness, but she was worse off than when she started. Now she was sick *and poor*.

We are that woman. We suffer the effects of sin in this world. We experience disease, loss, frustration. We suffer from the effects of our *own sin* in this world. We experience guilt, despair, and messed up relationships. We have spent all we have, our time, our effort, our money, on attempts to fix ourselves through the world's remedies. We confess that we are getting worse instead of better.

We are that woman. We recognize that our only hope is, and always has been, Jesus. The woman's hope stood out in its humility. She could not bear to even directly ask Jesus for help. Instead she clung to his clothes in trust that he could do exactly what she needed him to do.

God gave us Jesus' clothes in our baptism. Jesus spent all he had on the cross, and we get all the blessings of that sacrifice in baptism. Salvation. Forgiveness. Eternal life in heaven. Jesus heals our bleeding, broken souls. He frees us from all our suffering, even if that suffering doesn't go away.

To grow in faith is to say: "My world is pain and yet my world is glory...so full of God's glory." This is countercultural in our world today. The world often showcases pride and self-reliance. But you, broken child of God, be different by falling down. Fall at Jesus' feet; grab his clothes; go in peace.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, we are very grateful that we meet you at the cross. Transform our hearts through the means of grace that we recognize our complete reliance on you and find peace in the clothes you give us at our baptism. Amen.