

Title: He Touched Me!

Text: Matthew 8:1-3

Take your Bibles, please, and turn with me to the Gospel of Matthew. The Gospel of Matthew chapter 8. I want to direct your thoughts to the ^{phrase} ~~subject~~ that is so beautifully expressed throughout the N.T. – HE TOUCHED ME. Matthew chapter 8 beginning with Vs 1.

STAND

(Read Matthew 8:1-3)

(NOTES)

(Prayer)

~~And then~~

We live in a day in which we are extremely busy! I think you all know that. Few of us have little time to stop and think and evaluate our lives. Thus, I believe, we are in great need of the TOUCH OF GOD UPON US. I believe that my life is in great need of THE TOUCH OF GOD. I believe that no matter how many years you may have known the Lord Jesus Christ, you still need the TOUCH OF GOD upon you. And I would be willing to bet that there are people, here, who long for THE TOUCH OF GOD. { Maybe some of you have come to this service with a heavy heart and a great need of comfort. And you long for the touch of God. Maybe some of you have come realizing the sin in your life, and you would like that sin removed by the touch of God. I don't know what your need is today. But, dear friends, I know that God is able to meet that need.

And so, I would like to share that little phrase that appears so often in the Bible, HE TOUCHED ME. I want to share the TOUCH OF GOD and the results and consequences of that touch. There are basically three kinds of touches that I want you to see this morning.

(1) Number one. In these few verses that I have read from Matthew chapter 8, we see the wonderful touch of cleansing. The touch of cleansing. Did you know, dear friends, that God wants clean people? That is right! God wants clean people.

Maybe you have never come to know Jesus as your personal savior. God looks at your heart as if it were black with sin. And God knows your need. He wants you to come to Jesus. He wants you to believe in Jesus. He wants to cleanse your heart. And the touch of cleansing is what you may need today.

Did you know that there are many folks who have been Christians for years, and yet, their lives are filled with some particular sin? OR, some group of sins to the point that God cannot use them anymore? It is sad, but true. Oh, let me tell you, if that describes you, then you need the touch of cleansing. Not for salvation, but for effective and meaningful Christian living.

In the story before us, a leper came to Jesus. A leper who wants to be clean. And he said: "Lord, you can make me clean." And Jesus honored his faith and said to him, "Be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

We find in the book of Leviticus chapter 14:4, in the ceremonial cleansing of the leper that a hyssop plant was used. And then over in Psalm 51, when David was praying for repentance, he said: "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean." In other words, David liken his own sin to leprosy.

Now, we may not have the physical disease of leprosy. But, we may have spiritual leprosy. We may have sin in our life. [And leprosy, you see, makes one incentive to pain. They tell me that you can stick a needle right into a score of a leper and he will not feel the pain.

Dear friends, leprosy is a beautiful example of what sin is like. And Jesus cleansed lepers. He cleansed them physically. And he cleansed them spiritually. And he wants to cleanse our lives. He wants to give us the touch of cleansing. "He touch him and he was cleansed."

Isaiah, in chapter 6, saw himself as a leper. He said when he saw that vision of God, “woe is me, for I am unclean and I dwell in the midst of a people with unclean lips.” Do you understand? In comparison to the Holiness of God, Isaiah saw himself as a leper in the midst of a leper colony. And the Bible says that God touched Isaiah and purged him of all his iniquity. God cleansed him of his spiritual leprosy.

And God wants to cleanse us today. God wants to give you a clean sheet. Wouldn't you like to leave here with a clean conscious? A clean mind? A clean heart? God want to do that. The Bible tells us that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sins. You see, that is not only for the person who has never come to Christ, but it is, also, for the one who is already in Christ. For the Bible teaches that that blood has the power to continually cleanses us from all sin. I John 1:9 says that “if we confess our sin He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” ~~The application of the blood of Christ is applied to the believer's life who truly confess and admits his need before God.~~

Dear friends, if you need the touch of cleansing today, then come to Jesus. He wants to *Touch* ~~cleanse~~ *your life* ~~and to~~ *you.*

(2) But there is a second kind of touch that I want to share with you this morning. And that is the touch of comfort. Many need this touch today. Perhaps you are one who has a heavy heart. There is some burden which is too great for you to bear. You ~~may need~~ *and long for* the touch of comfort.

Please turn to Matthew chapter 17. Matthew chapter 17 and the Mount of Transfiguration when Jesus on one occasion took three disciples .. Peter, James, and John .. and manifested himself in all of his glory to them. He revealed all that he was, his true nature, his radiance and his glory. And the Bible says that when they saw who he really was they were scared to death. ^{Now} Please follow along in your Bibles. Matthew chapter 17 verse 1. (Read Vs 1-8)

The touch of comfort. Oh, let me tell you, they were afraid. But Jesus touched them. And when they lifted up their eyes they saw no one, except Jesus.

(3a)

You know, wouldn't it be wonderful if we Christians were like that? We wouldn't see others, just Jesus. The song writers says:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full into his wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.

Let me ask you. Do you ^{need} ~~see~~ the touch of comfort, today?

Is there something that hangs heavy upon your heart? A burden...a weight. Perhaps a disease or illness or a death in your family? Something that you hadn't expected. Perhaps it is a spiritual need of a loved one. And your heart is hunger for an answer. Then I want to say to you, that Jesus wants to touch you. He wants to touch you with the touch of comfort. And only the Lord can bring you that comfort. He said, "come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden. And I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. For I am meek and lowly in heart. And you shall find rest for your soul." The touch of comfort and God wants to give it to you.

In Hebrews 13:5 Jesus said.. "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

In Matthew 28:20 Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always even until the end of the age." Isn't that wonderful? He will never leave us. And He wants to give us the touch of comfort. He wants to comfort the one with a heavy heart.

(3) There is a third touch that I would like to share with you. And I would like you to turn to Matthew chapter 20. The Gospel of Matthew chapter 20 and beginning with verse 29. And here we have the touch of compassion. And all of us, need this touch from the Jesus. The touch of compassion.

Matthew chapter 20 beginning with vs 29....(Read 20:29-34)

THE TOUCH OF COMPASSION. Please notice, the multitude wasn't concerned. Two blind men seating by the road. Men who had to beg for bread. Men who had a great need. And when they heard Jesus they cried out to Him. But, the multitude sernly told them to be quiet. But Jesus had compassion.

Many of us are in need of the Lord's ^{Why?} compassion. There are people in our frame of references who live around us and nobody ^{Cares} carries about them. Oh, let me tell you, we need the touch of compassion. There is no one outside of the love of Jesus. He was concerned about everything and everyone.

For example: in chapter 19 verses 13-15 when Jesus picked the children up in his arms, ~~the word is infants, He took these infants up in his arms and He loved them.~~ And the Bible says that He put his hands on them. A sign of His touch and his love of children.

Another passage in the book of Matthew tells how a woman possessed with an evil spirit and nobody wanted anything to do with her. But Jesus loved her. And the touch of compassion reached that woman. And she was saved. *Praise God!*

Dear friends, I don't know who is in your frame of reference. I don't know who the Lord maybe directing you to. But, I do know that our eyes, spiritually, are never open untill we have the touch of compassion. Untill God's love grips our hearts, our eyes are like these men's eyes. They are blind and we don't see anything, but own selfs and our own interest.

The touch of compassion. Jesus was concerned about people. He was so concerned that He loved them to the point of the need of the moment. They were lame, they were blind, they were poor, they were rich, they were dumb. Yet, in every case, Jesus knew their greatest need.

Often, when Jesus healed someone, He would say, "Go your way. Your faith has saved you." Dear friends, the greatest need we have is faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "the son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Do you remember what Jesus said.. "As my Father has sent me, so do I send you." *Dear Friends,* Do you understand? *— W. M. M.* If we have the touch of compassion, if we have in our hearts what is in the heart of Jesus, we must reach out to people with the Gospel message. There is no other choice. "As my Father sent me, so do I send you," Jesus said. And with the power of the Holy Spirit and the touch of God's compassion on our lives, we must go forth. *The Touch of Compassion*

I wonder, do we love people? We ask that question so easily. But, wouldn't it be wonderful if we could simply say.. "YES"...But do we? Can you think of somebody right now that you don't love?.....

Oh, I believe the point is so simple. We come across people all the time that we don't love. We come across people who have a particular need that we don't want to deal with. Oh, how we need the touch of God's compassion.

His touch will open our eyes. It will broaden our outlook. It will show us what we must be doing. That we must have on our hearts what is on God's heart, if we are to be sent forth as Jesus said, "to seek and to save and to love the lost."

I believe this with all my heart. Do you know why? Because I find that this is the thing Satan fights in my life. It is the one thing that Satan doesn't want me to do. He wants me so busy doing other things. He doesn't want me out witnessing. The Apostle Paul said in 2 Cor. That the one thing Satan wants more than anything else is to blind people's minds to the truth of the Gospel.

My Dear
~~Oh, my~~ friends, we have the Gospel. Jesus said that we are the light. And our light should shine so that all may see it and glorify the Father who is in heaven. But, dear friends, we will never be effective until we have the touch of compassion. We all need the touch of compassion.

Now, let me tie all this together. If you need the touch of God's cleansing power, today, whether Christian or non-Christian, you need the touch of cleansing, Jesus said: "I will touch you and you will be cleansed. If you need comfort, today, then come to the one who gives the touch of comfort. Namely, Jesus our Lord. And compassion. God's got all the compassion any of us will ever need. The Holy Spirit wants to place it in your life. He wants to manifest His love through you. And God wants to touch you with the touch of compassion *so that you can love others with the love of Christ*

But, you know, dear friends, I thought, knowing all this, and knowing that this is God's Word to us, and yet, some will say NO! NO LORD!. DON'T TOUCH ME! I DON'T WANT IT. You see, when it comes down to the bottom line, it is our responsibility to accept that touch, isn't it? We must respond when Jesus touches us.

I am sure you have heard the poem, THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND, by Myra Brooks Welch. But let me share it with you as we *Close This Morning* ~~prepare for communion~~.

Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
As he held it up with a smile
What am I bid, good folks," he cried;
"Who'll start the bidding for me?
A dollar, a dollar--now two, only two--
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"
"Three dollars once, three dollars twice,
Three dollars---and going for three--"But no!
From the room far back a gray-haired man
came forward and picked up the bow.
Then wiping the dust from the old violin
And tightening up all the strings,
He played a melody, pure and sweet,
As sweet as an angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, "What am I bid for the old violin?"
As he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars--and who'll make it two?
Two thousand -- and who'll make it three?
Three thousand once and three thousand twice,
And going and gone," ~~said~~ ^{said} he.
The people cheered, and some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand--
What changed its worth?" The man replied,
"Twas the touch of the Master's hand."
And many a ~~man~~ ^{man} with his life out of tune,
And battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,
A game and he travels on,
He's going once, and going twice,
He's going -- and almost gone!

But the MASTER comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand

The worth of a soul, and the change that's brought
BY THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND.

(Close In Prayer)