

Gaines Congregational United Church of Christ

July 18, 2021

Old Testament Reading; Jeremiah 23: 1-6

Responsive Reading; Psalm 23

Epistle Reading; Ephesians 2: 11-22

Gospel Reading; Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

Sermon Title:

TOUCH HIM AND BE HEALED

By Rev. Jim Gardner

Summary: Being healed by Jesus is not dependent on the energy of Jesus but on the resolve of the person to touch Him. How far will you go to touch Jesus?

Have you ever been so exhausted that you just could not put one more foot in front of the other?

Well you are not alone. The disciples were so busy that they did not even have time to eat. Jesus saw their stress and said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest awhile." The disciples were burning themselves out and Jesus was working just as hard as they were. Remember that Jesus

was fully God AND fully man. Jesus had a human body that wore out just like the rest of us. Jesus needed a break too.

Jesus took His disciples to a deserted place but to His dismay the people had figured out where He was headed and beat Him and the disciples to that place. When Jesus saw the people He did not say, "Hey! We are on a break. Office hours start tomorrow at 9 am. Come back then."

No, Jesus had compassion on them because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. Jesus put His rest time on hold and spent time with them, teaching and reassuring them.

Later in that lesson Jesus is totally swamped by people needing His healing touch. They were being carried on their beds and put down in the street so that they could touch the hem of His robe as He walked by and be healed. And as many as touched Jesus were healed. Remember the woman with the hemorrhage of blood that touched His robe and was healed. Jesus felt the power go out of His body. This shows that healing was not just a passive thing but took something out of Jesus every time it happened but, Jesus never denied healing to anyone that sought it from Him.

In our Old Testament Lesson Jeremiah is saying for God, "Woe to the Shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" God says that He is going to replace the lazy and incompetent shepherds with new shepherds that will be true to

God and He will raise up one of the line of David one who shall reign and prosper and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth and He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

In the 23rd Psalm we are told that God will cover our every need from food and drink to safety to a wholesome relationship with God even to the point of being anointed by God. God says that we will have every spiritual and physical need fulfilled.

In our Epistle lesson from Ephesians we are told that the “we” is not just the Hebrew nation but all the world will be invited and accepted. “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

Did you catch that last line? “In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

Not only is God saying that you will be invited into His presence, you will be made into a temple for God to reside in.

God is pulling out all the stops to be part of our lives but there is one requirement.

We must come to God. We must carry ourselves or enlist the help of others to carry us to His presence so we can touch the hem of His robe.

In the book of Luke, chapter 11, verses 9 and 10 it says, "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

It is there for you but you must seek it. God is not going to force His blessings on you. You have to ask. You have to touch the hem of His robe.

To touch the robe of Jesus you have to get pretty close to Him. You cannot be walking in worldly selfishness, stealing, lying, cursing and generally disrespecting everything God stands for and think you will be close enough to touch the robe of Jesus.

You have to swallow your pride and confess your wrongs, accept Jesus as your savior, and try to live up to the family name in everything you say and do. Oh, you are sure to fall short, we all do, but God does not ask for perfection, He offers it. If you try, He will make you worthy to walk hand in hand with Him and even be His dwelling place. Jesus says that we

must be Holy as God is Holy and we can be that if we try to do that.

How far will you go to touch the robe of Jesus? Will you give your life to Jesus so you will not only be saved but you will be blessed?

All of those who give their lives to Jesus are saved but those who touch His robe are doubly blessed.

You too if you touch His robe you will be made well. Go ahead, touch His robe.

Hallelujah and Amen!