

**Trusting in God** – a sermon by Bethany Brown, given at St Michael's Church, Sandhurst on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Reading: Luke 8:40-48

Hello

For those who don't know me, my name is Bethany Brown and I'm a member of the Youth Church and today I'm giving a sermon about **Trusting in God**.

The reading that we had today was from Luke 8, verses 40 to 48 telling the story of a woman seeking healing from Jesus to stop her bleeding. This story is an excellent example from the bible of how trusting in God can answer your prayers.

There's a group of people surrounding around Jesus and this woman who wanted healing knew that she had to touch him. She had to go against all the laws of society even though she was an outcast.

She had tried everything possible to heal her and had spent all her money on various cures, but none had been successful. This had been going on for 12 years. 12 years! Imagine being free and suddenly having it all taken away and having that illness for 12 years with no way of fixing it.

After this long period, she had probably given up the idea of ever finding a cure, after all she had spent all her money to no avail and would have thought that all hope was lost. Perhaps she had heard about Jesus's actions of curing the sick and her faith told her that Jesus could do the same for her.

She knew Jesus's touch would cure her, but she also knew that she had many obstacles to overcome. These included:

1. She knew that it would work, but she didn't know where Jesus was. He didn't announce his movements in the paper, on Twitter or on any social media.
2. She knew she would have to travel to see him, but it was 2000 years too early for UBER.
3. She heard that Jesus was nearby, but how was she going to get his attention? He was surrounded by a massive group and she was an outcast because of her illness and knew they wouldn't budge for her.

4. She was also a woman in a male dominated world and again the men wouldn't think her important enough to let her through.

However, her faith was powerful enough to encourage her to do whatever was required to overcome these obstacles.

She must have been pushing her way through the crowd much to the distaste of all the others there trying to push her away. When she reaches Jesus, her initial intention would have been to ask him to cure her, to implore him even to rid her of this disease that she has had for 12 years.

But oh no! Alas! By the time she reaches the point where he was, he has already moved and now has his back to her. He's being rushed on by an important synagogue leader to save a child – what could be more important?

All she can do is reach out and touch his cloak. But rather than being despondent and giving up hope of being healed, in faith she reaches out and touches the last tails of his clothing. However, this simple act of faith is sufficient for her to be healed.

Jesus is suddenly hauled up. Not by someone throwing themselves at his feet, not by someone yanking his cloak as he walks by, but by the simple touch of his clothing and him feeling the healing power going out of him. I don't think that this is necessarily the power going out of him, like a battery going flat, but more the simple act of faith that allowed the healing to take place. All the other healing that he done had been requested and he was aware and had used his powers to heal purposefully, but this time someone had sufficient faith to know that this would work.

When Jesus asks, who touched him, she is too scared to initially own up. Peter mistakes the question as literally meaning 'who touched me' – a bit like a 'who spilt my pint moment' in a crowded pub and explains that it's crowded – perhaps he thinks that Jesus was cross. Jesus then explains that he had felt the healing working.

Everyone must have looking around wondering what was going on and trying to find a culprit and it was probably at this time that they truly noticed her – they were perhaps thinking oh no, look, it's that bleeding woman. She had no option but to own up and she did this whole heartedly, throwing herself at his feet in exultation, but also trembling not just in fear, but perhaps in excitement and in joy – she has after all

just been healed of an ailment that has lasted 12 years. She must have been scared that an angry Messiah might reverse the healing.

Trusting in faith again, she knows that honesty will be the best policy and explains to Jesus and the crowd that she knew touching his cloak would be sufficient. She wanted to spread the 'Good Word' that he could do miracles and that by simply trusting in him was enough. The 'Good News' for us is that he doesn't need to be physically standing in front of us in person placing his hands on our head, looking into our eyes and answering our prayers.

She wanted to share her testimony with those present to inspire them. Jesus goes on to emphasise the importance of this message to say that it is her faith that has healed her and she is to go in peace. In delivering this he is not only speaking to her and the crowd, but also to us here today.

I also think that Jesus's use of the word 'Daughter' is critical. It shows that even she, an outcast in a misogynistic society is an important part of the church family. It's not merely

'Your faith has healed you', but

'**Daughter** your faith has healed you.'

Even in today's society, notwithstanding Donald Trump, we should all note that intimacy of the address that Jesus uses to this woman stressing her importance.

This story demonstrates that having the faith to approach Jesus and then trusting alone in him will bring healing.

Ask yourself:

Would you have done the same in her position?

Are there things now that you should trusting in God to help you with?

We are now going to finish with a quick prayer:

*Dear Lord,*

*Please let your faithful congregation have the courage to put their trust in God for all their problems. Like I have done in the preparation of this!*

*Amen.*