

Press On Despite Your Issue

by Rev. Sundria Sam ©

Greeting:

First giving honor to God and the spirit of my ancestors.

I stand humbly before you praying that this word speaks to you... the hearers as it has in preparation ministered to me.

This sermon is a journey with an unnamed and marginalized Biblical woman and how she pressed on despite her issue to get to a place of peace, validation, and value.

Scripture:

Journey with me now, if you will... To a familiar passage of Scripture **Mark 5: verses 25-34**
I'll be reading out of the New Revised Standard Version (the NRSV)

*25 Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years.
26 She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse.
27 She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak,
28 for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well."
29 Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.
30 Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?"
31 And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'"
32 He looked all around to see who had done it.
33 But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the WHOLE TRUTH.
34 He said to her, "Daughter, YOUR FAITH has MADE YOU WELL; GO IN PEACE, and BE HEALED OF YOUR DISEASE."*

The Title of this sermon is: Press On Despite Your Issue

Join me in a word of **Prayer:**

Dear Heavenly Parent,

Diminish me in the next few moments as you increase. Grant us fresh ears to hear a word from you. Then let us not just be hearers of this word but actively participate to *Press On Despite Our Issue* towards you to be made whole and receive peace.

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Introduction:

Of the synoptic Gospels, Mark reveals to us a more detailed account of the woman with the issue of hemorrhaging. This nameless woman is dealing with an issue RELATED to Reproduction (which today in the popular worldview remains connected to a woman's VALUE)

We see this woman defying cultural norms (reference at your leisure Leviticus 15:25) To get to Jesus!
She models for us what it means to truly
Press On Despite Your Issue

This woman of UN-NESS

UN meaning "without"

Without a name ~ unnamed

Without mention of a husband, male child, or male family member to cover her
~ uncovered, unsupported

Without wealth ~ unwealthy (for the bible tells us that she spent all she had)

Without health ~ un-able to cease her flow of blood

Without a prognosis ~ unable to see her healing

Without the right to be in public places ~ unclean, unwanted, undesired

In our land she would have been considered

~ undocumented, a foreigner, a Canaanite woman, a Gentile in the
land of the Jews

Despite all the un's, she still had faith that her situation, could get better.

She still kept searching for an answer with the desire for a miracle to be made well

As a female-bodied individual... I can empathize with her issue

BUT, I wonder if we can put ourselves in her shoes, for a moment.

Imagine expecting to be ill for a limited amount of time.

However, the illness lingers on with no view of ceasing ~ incurable

Sapping us of our energy, strength, and even our will

How do the side effects of our issue show up in our lives?

Perhaps we're moody, frail, cold, exhausted, doubled over in pain

with stomach cramps, headaches, stressed out, high blood pressure,
shortness of breath, and moments of mental foginess

We are cast aside, isolated, diminished, devalued, and now, we're broke!

EVERYDAY! 24/7 THIS MISERY is OUR LIFE ISSUE!

Imagine our choice of clothing. The affect this has on our intimate relationships.

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Imagine what that does to our mental well-being, our psyche.

These are our realities about our issue! But we also have to deal with the social turmoil
that comes with being a woman with an issue!

The gawks, looks, taunts, and stereotypes that others place upon us because of
their ignorant perceptions of our issue

In Verse 26 we see her.....

Suffering:

Emotional, physical, financial, mental, and spiritual, all because of her life issue

Verse 26 says she endured under many physicians

Can we imagine the male doctors

Pondering prognosis while practicing medicine on female bodies? Passing her from one to the other
as an anomaly until her funds run out. Their concerns cease and she is once again...

dismissed, but in worse condition

Today that's a referral, an initial appt, paperwork, labs, lab results

Then nothing! No cure!

More testing, more follow-up appts, more poking and prodding,

more referrals all the while spending no money, no money, no money!

To only grow worse, and now in a class even less than what we were before. We are broke!

In Verse 28 we see her.....

Stealing a moment, how many of us are aware that in this text Jesus was already on a mission?

He was en route to someplace else to do something else

But this woman interrupted Jesus. She sought to be in his presence!

Believing as we read in Verse 28,

"If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well."

She snuck up behind him full of faith, sure, and seeking a blessing while actively

Pressing against misogyny!

Pressing against anti-feminism!

Pressing against racial discrimination, a Canaanite, a foreigner

Pressing against disability!

Pressing against the belief or the feeling of not being good enough to be seen, healed, and saved

In Verse 29 we see that she

Took her issue to the only one

Who Specializes in Everything that has to do with the blood & our life issues!

She was already so many devalued and dismissed things

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And now she was in the wrong place according to... The Levitical Law

According to... others not concerned with her whole-ness.

But, she was in the right place according to her faith!

Through the crowd, she pressed on despite her stench, her pain, her agony, her un-ness

We read in verse 30 Jesus was...

Immediately aware that power

had gone forth from him,

Jesus turned about in the crowd and said,

“Who touched my clothes?”

We learn from this passage that God honors sincere, purposeful, and intentional touch

He makes time for marginalized bodies!

He validated her purpose! Because of the woman’s faith, healing power flowed from Jesus

I don’t know about you but I’m really excited about that!

Our Jesus mirrored her issue!

Our Jesus that has already endured everything that we could ever think or imagine!

He mirrored femininity in that moment and became a leaky Jesus!

Power flowed from him!

He was immediately aware that there had been healing and wanted to know...

“WHO TOUCHED MY CLOTHES?”

In Verse 32 we see A

Staring Jesus. He immediately conducted a high-priority faith-finding mission

Looking all around to see “who had done it”

Now, I don’t know about you... But I would have done just like the woman that used to have an issue! Feeling the weight of the crowd, the heaviness of the eyes of the crowd upon me, fearful of exposure, banishment, devaluation, and dismissal because I was an unclean, foreign, marginalized, hopeless, discriminated against -- woman oppressed by a dominant misogynistic culture

But here it is... the final verse...

In Verse 34 we see her..... Soothed

I like to think about my life before my ailment, my set backs, my disappointments. I, like this unnamed woman, believed that my Savior would heal me. In fact, I was healed, delivered, given clarity, liberty, and peace from cancer! My earthly doctors tell me that I am considered in remission until post treatment year 5... After that, I am considered cured!

But full of faith I press, believing the report of the Lord and knowing in advance that I am healed, whole, and liberated!

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So... what is it that we learn from the woman with an issue?

The first thing we learn~to press on despite our Issue ~ is that we are...

1. Seen when once Un-Seen. Jesus stopped everything to focus on the reason for her press

The second thing we learn to press on despite our Issue is that we are...

2. Validated when once UN-Voiced. Jesus gave her a platform to speak and be heard

The third and final thing we learn to press on despite our Issue is that we are...

3. Valued when once made to feel UN-Acceptable.

Jesus placed worth on her. She wasn't just a foreigner but a daughter, a child of God. Worthy to not just to be made well but to be made whole and receive peace.

I don't know about you but I am, just as this unnamed woman, willing to faithfully...

Press after God for my life!

Press after God for my health!

Press after God for my emotional well being!

Press after God for my mental well being!

Press after God for my financial well being!

Press after God for my spiritual well being!

What is ailing you to your core?

What is your Disease?

What is your issue?

What's your situation?

What is it that you have been wrestling with that the world can't solve for you?

Make a Good decision! Press after God for your yes!

And remember... everybody's miracle doesn't look the same

But God's got something amazing in store for you!

To make you whole & give you peace!

The word of God for the people of God. Amen! Amen! Amen!