

Mark 5: 21 – end

‘Two Touches’

**Introduction ...**

There is such a wealth of material and meaning in our New Testament reading tonight that it’s difficult to know quite where to start!

So let’s focus in this evening to the two touches that took place:

**The haemorrhaging woman (whose name we never discover) touching Jesus**

and

**Jesus touching the daughter of Jairus**

**Touch ...**

Touch – or the lack of touch – is something that we’ve all become aware of during Covid. For some – especially for some who have been abused – touch is difficult, risky ... needs to be only at that person’s invitation ... for others, touch is a necessary part of being human ... touch is needed. Let’s bear both of those in mind as we think more about the 2 touches in tonight’s reading.

**Forbidden ...**

Neither of these touches was ‘normal’, ‘usual’, ‘everyday’. Both were actually forbidden. The law of Moses states that a woman with such a discharge is unclean and that anyone in physical contact with her becomes unclean too.

Perhaps one of the striking things that we might miss in this account is that Jesus is still invited to and admitted within the house of Jairus – a synagogue leader.

And a dead body was termed unclean too – in this case, Jesus initiated the touch – he touched the 12yr old daughter.

**Uncleanness** was a massive and important issue for people of the time. It was almost a ‘real entity’ ... it was certainly considered to be a power ... an evil, destructive power.

But when Jesus is involved – he reverses this and healing takes place ... he somehow – in the mind-set of those around – absorbs the evil present without becoming contaminated by it ... and brings healing and freedom.

**Contrast ...**

It’s clear that the ‘backstory’ of the woman and the child are different ... and I came across these comments by Steve Thomason:

**The woman who has been on the margins of community has to come into the centre of community in order to receive the touch of God and to be made clean. All the people that she touched as she moves through the crowd to Jesus were technically tainted by her presence ...**

So – a question for us ... who do we need to encourage back into our community ... of church, of family?

Back to Steve Thomason:

**Jairus' daughter on the other hand – she had enjoyed the limelight and privilege of living in the centre of community ... she had to move right outside of the community – in death. Jesus then met her in her isolation ...**

Might we need to move into a different place or rhythm to experience Jesus touch?

**These are not accidental details ... Jesus has come to turn the world upside down. The Kingdom of God calls the marginalised to be brought into community and calls the privileged to experience the death of that status.**

**Why – so that we can all have life and be made clean.**

**Conclusion ...**

And so to recap:

Wherever we sense an evil power to be at work – let's be the presence of Jesus in that situation or prayer for his presence to be there somehow. There is always hope with him.

And – as we are called to be the Body of Christ – does someone need his touch via you – or do you need his touch via someone else?

God longs for each and all

to be made clean

and to have life.

Amen.