

This morning I was up in blooming at the, the 8 o' clock service up there and we, we sang that song as well. Just a beautiful reminder of God's faithfulness to us across all of our circumstances. We're in a series, 12 weeks where we're looking at hope and healing that Jesus offers us. And part of that is looking back and going, look where he's brought us from. There's an old song we sing here.

It's not an old song, but it references a lot of old songs called look what the Lord has Done. Anyone? When I say that, y' all know what I'm talking about. The chorus goes like this. He healed my body, he touched my mind.

He saved me just in time. And when we sing that song, I think of, I think of Judy. So let me tell you about Judy. I met Judy when I was really pretty young, but reconnected with her recently. Judy has suffered for many, many, many years with a debilitating disease.

For a while, doctors went back and forth on her diagnosis. They thought it was this and they thought it was that. They thought, at the end of the day, she's, she's struggled up until recently. It's really just been. They prescribe some pain pills to keep her as comfortable as possible, but her life is really small.

I met up with her and her husband Mark, not too long ago. They had just come from seeing a specialist who they thought might be able to help. It required a big journey. They had to travel quite a bit and it was just her and him. And if you know Mark, you know that he's not that big of a conversationalist.

He used to be when he was younger. He was a singer, he was the life of the party. But over the course of the last several years, his life has just changed a lot. And he's become really her primary caregiver. She needs him there to even get out of bed, to go to the bathroom.

Just the stuff. And so work has been effective. They were never rich to start off with. And so this has been really a struggle for them for, for many, many years. And that old carefree guy has changed into someone who's a little more care worn.

If you meet him, he has his own health issues. You know, none of us are getting younger. And this is the instance here too. And it's hard on her to watch him because she feels like she should be the one taking care of him. And instead he's caring for her and, and he's lonely.

She looks at him and she, she knows that he's missing out on stuff just because he's taking care of her all the time. That circle of friends, you know, that. That we lean into at a certain part of our adulthood, life. When she got sick, we're originally close, and, yeah, we're. We can stop by and we can help, and.

And then that slowly dissipated over time. And so she just doesn't. They don't see the people. They used to see it. So it's.

It's kind of lonely.

Her son and his wife do a pretty good job of checking in, but as she's gotten sicker, it's been harder for them, too, because, you know, when a world gets really small, what do you talk about? You just rehash the health issues, and maybe you talk about how the grandkids are doing. But then those visits, while regular, are just getting shorter and shorter. And she understands. She gets it.

She gets it. It's hard to watch a parent get weaker and weaker and weaker. And some of you are in that place yourself where you're watching people you love who took care of you now needing some care themselves. And she kind of wishes they'd had a daughter, because sons are great, but they're not great at those sorts of things. And if you've got a son, you know what that's like.

We're good at a lot of stuff, but caregiving is probably not the one that we lean into. Her pastor tried to help her and sent her a Bible, a little study book on the book of Job. And, you know, he says, as we all do, Job's really for those of us who are suffering. Job's just a good book to read. And she's like, I don't want to hear about Job suffering.

Mine's bad enough. I don't want to. I don't. It's no comfort to read about Job. So recently, though, she talked to her doctor, and her doctor had heard about a specialist in her area in with her issues that deals with her issues and offered some potentially helpful advice for her.

At least get a. Get a consultation with them to see what they can discover. And she says, so she talked with her husband about it and said, yeah, that sounds great. He's a. Again, it's a long way away, and there's some costs involved to get there to see this guy.

And of course, if you've tried to get a consultation, no offense to the doctors in our room, but we know when we need to see a doctor, it's always six months out. Well, we could be dead in six Months time, and then we don't need a doctor. Maybe that's what they're thinking. We'll just keep. But this is her thing, too.

She goes, I've been sick for so long. Six months out, might as well be six years out. So the doctor told her, said, just. Just show up. Just beard the lion in his den, as it were.

And I'm not recommending that. And I'm sure Kamel wouldn't recommend that either, just showing up. But in this instance, he said, just show

up and see what happens. And so. And so she talked to her son.

And again, knowing the financial situation, the family, the son's like, I'm not gonna tell you no, but it's a lot of money, and is it really going to do anything? And she's like, I don't know. I just. I feel like I'll know more when I talk to him. I'll know more when I see him.

She's not getting better. She says, I'm getting weaker and weaker. I know it. You know it. So I have to do what I got to do.

You know, when you're desperate, you do desperate things. And so that's. That's what they decided to do. So they packed their bags, and she and Mark traveled about 48 hours to get where the specialist was. But when she got there, all that adrenaline and that audacity sort of dissipated.

And, you know, you do the thing. Where. Do you have an appointment? Well, no, I don't have an appointment. Well, you know, the doctor is pretty busy.

He's been busy all morning long. He's got some. He's. They're doing the. With the.

And the cadre colleagues. They do the visits around the hospital and check on the other patients. And so he's got. He's got that all morning long. And then he's got a packed schedule this evening and this afternoon.

And the earliest maybe is Friday. If you are willing to wait, I can seek in Friday or next week. And what do you do? You. You say, okay, I guess.

I guess I could park myself here in this chair and just wait. Or we could. We could. Okay, Friday. Let's try for Friday.

And so they're leaving and walking out, and they see this guy rounding the corner. And again, he's with all his colleagues, and they're consulting and they're talking and all this stuff and. And moving at a pretty good clip. And she doesn't have a lot of energy. This is.

She can barely move from living room to kitchen on a good day. And so she's trying to get there. She sees him. She goes, I'm gonna talk to him right now. So, you know, Mark's like, hold on, hold on.

But we're gonna. Tomorrow's. We're gonna try again tomorrow. No, no. She goes, I need to talk to him right now.

So she takes off after him, and. And she's hobbling around, and thankfully, in a setting like that, someone in a walker isn't that

noticeable. And she gets right up to him, and then they start to move away. And so she keeps going, and she's. And she's.

She's trying to get his attention, and she says, if I can just touch his sleeve, I can get his attention.

So she surges forward and she grasps the side of his coat, and immediately he turns around, and he looks straight at her, and he says, who touched me?

And in that moment, whatever it was, she gets weak, and she knows what's happening, and she can't stop it. And he looks at her, and he looks down at the pool of blood there at her feet, and she looks back at him, and she looks in his eyes, and she feels herself going down. When she opens her eyes back up, she's on the ground. He's kneeling beside her, looking in her eyes, and he's kneeling right there in that mess that's been created. And she's crying.

And she's crying for. Maybe because she's embarrassed, she's crying because of the mess she's made. She's crying for her marriage and for her family and for the life that she used to have. And she's crying over what will never be again. Never be again.

And she's crying over just everything.

And then she feels it. She feels it stop. Now, most of us, when we start bleeding, we feel the bleeding. I bleed through my nose, and I feel it on my upper lip when I start. When my nose starts to bleed, I can feel that.

But she felt it stop. And that was a new sensation for her. And the doctor looks at her and he says, daughter.

And with that one word, it's as if everything that was lost and stolen from her life for these many, many, many years has been returned to her, gifted back to her. And she's. She says, it was like I was young and healthy, and I felt loved and I felt carefree, like I was bouncing on my dad's knee or being spun around in the air like a bird in flight.

And she remembers who she was. And then he tells her who she is. He says, daughter again. And he says, your Faith has restored you.

Faith, she says. Faith? What? What faith? I just.

I just came to where you were.

Now, when you talk to Judy, she'll tell you life is different. Oh, she's still old. Her knees still hurt her. You know, she doesn't move as fast as she used to, but she's got strength again. Her son and

daughter stop by and they've got something to talk about now, and they have a life that they share.

She smiles as she works in the kitchen, and she listens to Mark Singh as he goes about his work. Life is different, and life is good.

Now, some of you know Judy's story because it's actually found in the New Testament, in the book of Matthew and Mark and Luke. They all tell this woman's story. They don't give her name. She's only known by her affliction. The woman with the issue of blood.

That's how we know her. But I tell her story this morning the way I told it, because sometimes we get so used to a story, we get so used to biblical count, that we lose the impact of that. And I want you to hear this woman, let's call her Judy. I want you to hear her story as if it's someone you know today. Because the truth is, we're all, in some sense, in the world that Judy lives in.

Many of us are sick. Many of us are tired. Many of us suffer afflictions both physical and emotional and spiritual. And we've suffered a long time with these things, and we've been searching for a long time for a way to heal them, and yet we're still hurting. Like Judy, we spent much of our life chasing relief for our pain, only to come up empty time and time again.

Now, the reason we're in pain, the reason we're suffering, the reason we have these afflictions, whatever they are, can stem from a variety of sources that may be physical, but it could also be emotional, could be mental, it could be spiritual. The tragedy is that that one pain oftentimes begets another pain. Have you experienced that? One pain begets another pain. And so eventually, it's like you have all of those sources of pain.

You got it all. I got the physical stuff, I got the emotional stuff, I got the spiritual stuff, the mental stuff. All of could be caused by something you did. It could be caused by something that someone did to you. But finding a relief for that has cost you some very valuable things.

You've lost some stuff. Maybe you've experienced rejection from people you thought were your friends. And then they're not around anymore. Maybe you've experienced relationship stress from your immediate family. Maybe you've experienced self blame and self shame because your pain is connected to your own actions and decisions.

And then maybe you've isolated yourself because you feel like an embarrassment, you feel like a burden to people. And then maybe finding a source or a help for this has just wreaked havoc on your finances and it's you paid a financial price that's left you feeling really helpless and scared about tomorrow and the future.

And if you are in some sense a believer, then you've probably experienced disappointment with God because all your prayers seem to be for nothing. So as my friend Nick says, we're not alone in our lives because we all struggle with something.

A guy named Crawford Lawrence wrote this. Weakness and shame comes in all shapes and sizes. Broken relationships, Been there. Strong temptations. Anyone deal with strong temptations?

Depression? Anyone struggle with depression? Tragic loss. Has anyone here experienced a tragic loss? Feelings of inadequacy.

Can I get an amen? Mistreatment really doesn't make much of a difference what it is. The question is, what do you do with those weaknesses, those failures and those wounds? We have two options. We can stay away from God and remain in this place of brokenness, despair, or we can walk towards God.

And that's what Judy did. She walked to where Jesus was walking towards God. Walking towards Jesus and then walking with him is what the Bible calls faith. Someone said it this way. Grace is God moving towards us.

Faith is us moving towards him.

And God really asks us to move towards him. Last week, our step one that we looked at was when we realize that we are powerless to help change ourselves. That's step one. We can't do it. But step two is the corollary.

Someone can. God says, and it's him. So step two is believing that we can come to God and God's power can restore us to this place of health and healing and hope. Like a child taking his first steps toward the outreached arms of his dad, his daddy. Faith is where we respond to his outstretched arms and we start walking towards God.

And if you've ever done this for the first time, it can feel weird. It can feel real wobbly, it can feel uncomfortable. We ask ourselves, am I doing this right? Am I walking in faith the way I'm supposed to walk in faith? Are other people doing it better than me?

Should I be doing it a different way? Are people looking at how I'm doing it and judging me? But here's what we remember when we are walking towards God. We remember that no one else has ever offered us the hope that Jesus offers us. Only Jesus does.

So this woman leaves, leaves her doctor's office and says, I got nowhere else. No one else can help me. I'm going to go where Jesus is. And if we keep walking, even stumbling towards God, we are moving in

faith. Faith is of the utmost importance to God.

In Hebrews 11. 6, it says, without it, without faith, it's impossible to please God. Second Corinthians says, if we walk by faith, we don't walk by sight. Faith is important. Ephesians says, by grace, you've been saved through faith.

God's work in us as we move towards God. This is interesting, isn't it? Jesus tells this woman, your faith has restored you. Hmm? Faith is important.

Walking by faith toward God always brings us to the feet of Jesus, our healer, the great physician, the good doctor. And the good doctor has been waiting on us to come to him.

Oftentimes, faith means going where an encounter with Jesus is likely to happen.

That's faith. Says, I don't know what I need, but I know Jesus can do it. Where's Jesus going to be? Well, welcome to Sherwood Oaks, Bedford. This is not the only place Jesus is this morning, but he's here.

You've shown up. And that was a step of faith. Good job. Turn to your neighbor and say, hey, oh, ye of great faith, you're here this morning.

Grace is God moving towards us. Faith is us moving towards him. And throughout Scripture, Jesus repeatedly issues that invitation. Come to me. Come to me.

Come to me. In Matthew 11:28, he says, Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and unto. I will give you rest. Luke 18, he says, Little children, come to me. In John 6, he says, Whoever comes to me, I am not going to turn away.

If you come to me, I will not turn away. Turn you away. John 7 says, if you're thirsty, come to me. I'll give you something refreshing to drink.

So this woman simply came. And when she got to Jesus, he didn't cast her away. He didn't see her as broken and weak and useless. Instead, he turns to her and he says, who touched me? Not what touched me.

Oftentimes, we. We tend to. I've spent some time in hospitals, and I know how this works. Sometimes you say, hey, we've got the cardiac patient in room 102. We've got the.

This in room 103. Names are irrelevant. It's the issue, that is how we are Known. And we start this early in our lives, don't we, where we.

We tell.

We call people by what they do, that thing they are rather than who they are. But here's the deal. This woman was not her cancer. She wasn't her tumors. She wasn't that cervical affliction.

She was Judy. And Jesus turns to her and says, who touched me? And Judy says, who. Who am I still?

Well, she's. She's not her disease. Instead, Jesus says, ah, who touched me? My daughter touched me. She came to him and he claimed her and he brought her into his family.

And that encounter right there, Jesus, changed her life. We may not really know this woman's name until we meet her in glory, which we will meet her in glory. I'm confident of that. But we know her situation. We know her painful need.

And Jesus ensured that we would know of her faith for the rest of time. We know Judy by her faith. Alan last week said something. I've thought about it all week. Her stigma became her stigmata.

And if you were not here last week, let me just capsule that. Her sign of weakness, her sign of failure, her sign of shame became this beautiful sign of God's grace. That's a beautiful story. I love. I love this story.

I love knowing Judy's story, because here's what she teaches me. She teaches me that against all odds, despite what others say or how they believe, we keep walking in faith. We keep walking towards God. This pleases him when we do this, and he rewards this movement towards him. No matter what else is going on, no matter how stumbling and frail and faulting our steps are, God rewards those who move towards Him.

So if you are moving towards God this morning, amen. Amen. God is very pleased with you. You. The other thing it just reminds me is you keep walking.

Even when healing doesn't happen immediately. Sometimes healing comes in a touch, like it did with, with this woman, Judy. But sometimes healing comes in time, over time. My friend Nick, again, I've talked to him a lot. I feel like I need to bring him up here and have you guys meet him, talked to him this week and we were talking about the sermon previously.

And he goes, tim, here's the thing, though. Sometimes time just takes time. You know what he's saying when he says that? Sometimes time just takes time. But in the meantime, in that space between our request and God's answer, in that between time, Jesus says, if anyone here is in pain, or if anyone here is tired, if anyone, anyone here is hungry or

thirsty, if anyone here is grieving.

If anyone here is running away from something, if anyone here is just weary and heavy burdened, then come to me, Jesus says, and I will give you rest. Come, little children, sons and daughters, come to me. And whoever comes to me, what does Jesus say? I'll not cast them out. I'll not turn them away.

You have a guaranteed welcome when you. You come to Jesus. No appointment is necessary. You can come today at the end of the service. We've got some folks at the back who are willing to pray with you.

I don't care what your issue is this morning. It may be physical, it may be spiritual. You may need to make Jesus your savior. Just say, I'm ready to turn my life over to him. You may have a physical ailment that you just need prayer for.

You're struggling physically and you need someone to pray with you. We'll pray with you. You may be suffering some mental stuff, some depression, some emotional stuff, some grief. Whatever it is, Jesus says, listen, you've come this far by faith. You've showed up.

Don't walk away without taking the next step in faith and having someone pray with you. Can you just. That invitation is there. Don't miss it, because there's a lot of us in this room that when we hear the song, look what the Lord has done, we. We can count off on our hands and toes what the Lord has done.

He healed our body, he touched our mind, and he saved us just in time as we prepare. What's that?

Okay, let's do it right now. Let's just do it. So he and his wife Heather need prayers. Who else needs prayer this morning, right now? Let's do it.

Okay, Steve back there, you want to talk about what you need prayer for? Do you just want us to pray for you? Okay, Steve, we're going to pray for you. Yes.

What's that? Okay, those are. Here's what I want you guys to do. If someone in your area has a prayer request, I want you to listen carefully, and then we're going to do something. This is the second part of the Risky Morning.

I'm gonna have you pray for him. So who else needs prayer? Yes.

Okay. To wisdom. Okay, over here.

We're off script right now. That's all right. That's all right. Don't

be nervous. Yeah.

Okay. I know Alice in a biopsy. Okay. Over here.

So here's what I'm going to have you do. Young man back there at the back, I want you stand up. I want you to stand up. When you stand up. Steve, I want you to stand up.

Stand up. Yes, Ron.

Denny Godsey, stand up. Now, there's a cluster over here, you guys. No one over here needs prayer. Y' all are doing great. That's amazing.

So you're challenged because you're you. The Lord is blessing and keeping and sustaining you all in amazing ways. Your challenge this morning is to look across this hallway, and I need one of you to jump up, and you're going to go over and you're just going to stand by one of these people. Now, I'm not going to ask you to do anything beyond that at this point in time. Just.

Just. This is your first step of obedience. God is over here, and an act of faith is walking over there to where God is working. So thank you very much. Can I get some more people to help with that?

Just walk over to someone who's standing up near you. There you go. Thank you very much.

And we're going to pray.

Shana, come on up. Okay. Heavenly Father, this morning you have created a space and a spot in this moment for us by faith to come to you.

Holy Spirit, you know the needs. Some of them have been spoken and others have not. But you, you know them regardless. And even the things that we speak, sometimes those are simple words that. That under that underneath are a whole host of concerns.

But you know them. You are acquainted with our ways. You're acquainted with our thoughts. You're acquainted with our fears. And so when we come to you, we're coming to someone who knows better than we do what the best path forward is.

And so for each of these people standing, I thank you for their faith. I thank you for their willingness to trust you with the next steps of their journey in faith. I thank you for these men and women who have stood up and said, I'm willing to pray right now for the person beside me. And so right now, I'm going to shut up and I'm going to give just some space for the people around them, just to lay hands on them and either audibly or silently, pray for the people that you are with.

Holy Spirit, encourage us in this moment.

In Jesus name, Amen. SA.

Jesus, we who have walked by faith and continue to do so, we reflect on your goodness. The Psalmist wrote in 103, Bless the Lord, O my soul, forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, and who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle. Lord, this morning we are no longer children, but we are your sons and daughters. And as such, we pray that you would renew our youth and bring us back to the place where we know that we are loved and valued. Bring us back to that place where we know that you are watching over us.

We have no fears for the future because you are sustained, sustaining and taking care of us. You are a good, good father to us.

In just a moment, we're going to take a cup and we're going to take some bread and we're going to be reminded again of how much you love us.

But for right now, we remind ourselves that we're forgiven, we're healed, we're redeemed. We're filled up with your love and your mercy and the fullness of joy. Lord, for those who are standing, you know their deepest need and you alone. We believe that you alone can answer and satisfy and heal that deepest need. Thank you for the faith that is represented in this room.

And I pray that you would honor it. I know it pleases you. Honor it by showing up in their lives in power and doing amazing things for them. In Jesus name, Amen. You guys can be seated.

I'm going to have the ushers serve or the server serve Communion. Turn your eyes upon Jesus and let's walk by faith once more to the cross. Father, thank you for your love represented in Jesus. Amen.

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