



On The Road With Rick...

April 2009
Message # 4
From the desk of Rick Hagans

I've asked Kim to write this month's message for you. We've been married almost 29 years (October 11) and she is as much a part of Harvest Evangelism as I am. In fact, through the years a lot of you have told me you love to hear from Kim. It seems that any woman who would (or could) put up with all the "unusual" situations I end up in and who could put up with me is bound to have something to say. No doubt Kim does indeed have a lot to say and I thought this month might be a good one for her to share in.

I have been "on the road" more than even my usual this summer. In the month of June alone I've preached in New Orleans, New York, twice in Birmingham and here in Auburn. I have also been busy beginning the preparations for Times Square Church to come here in October 2010. They'll be bringing 200-400 people for a week of crusades and I'm going to make sure everything is just right. This is my home church coming to my home state. I'm so excited! (Pray for these meetings. Call me if you'd like to help.)

I have also continued to be very busy trying to prevent the Alabama Department of Mental Health from forcing faith-based programs like our own His Place and Hosanna Home from being licensed and certified by their bureaucracy. This government sponsored take over attempt would force us to use a secular model of treatment (i.e. we couldn't call drug addiction and alcoholism a sin, nor could we say Jesus is the cure). I've been to meeting after meeting regarding this issue. It's consumed my time and energy, so I figured Kim would have a fresher word for you this month. O, and by the way, if you're like me and don't want big government taking over private, CHRISTIAN ministries like our's you need to contact your state representative and Governor Bob Riley (600 Dexter Ave Montgomery, AL 36130-3024; (334) 242-7100). Governor Riley has so far condoned and allowed this bureaucratic coup. He needs to know how you feel about it.

On top of all my ministry "minutes" this summer has also been filled with trips to the pool and gym as Elliot, and now Dreamer are on the swim and cross-county teams. Dreamer runs at 6:45am and Elliot wrestles at 7:30. They both swim at noon with numerous meets throughout the month. And did you know a swim meet can last 6-7 hours? You can imagine where we've spent a good bit of our summer. But, I love it. Like the country music singer, Trace Atkins, sings about his kids, "It won't be like this for long."

So, instead of a message from Rick, somewhere on the road, this month's message is from Kim, sitting here at home.

From the Kitchen Table with Miss Kim: "Who Touched Me?"

Rick has asked me to write this month's message. I am praying that what the Lord has laid on my heart will bless and touch you. I have chosen a message I was able to share in Ireland two summers ago at their "Summer Fire" conference, "Who Touched Me?"

In this day and time you don't have to go very far to find someone who is in a season of sadness, depression, fear, grief, even despair. Wherever I go, if I take the time to really listen to the hearts of the people I talk with, I often find their hearts are broken and they are desperately trying to find a way to pick up the pieces and find hope. They are looking for something that will heal them and give them a life they may have only dreamed of.

In this day of hurrying and rushing about, we all seem to make decisions based on the immediate circumstances we are in. If something does not happen right now-we must have missed God, or God isn't listening.

If you're reading this and you're afraid that your "great revelation" hasn't come yet, if you're looking at everyone else and they seem to 'have it all together', if all your friends have 'heard from God' and you haven't...if you feel that God isn't showing up for you, this message is for you.

I believe that God wants to show us, that He is still is our Jehovah-Rapha, The Lord our Healer. I have good news for you, Jesus is still here and He wants you to press through and touch Him. It's not too late, it's not too hard, it's time! Time to trust Him and run to Him for a healing of the heart.

In Mark 5:25-34 we read the story of the "Woman with the issue of blood".

And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

**Jesus
wants you
to press
through and
touch Him**

Harvest Evangelism* PO Box 2888* Opelika, Al 36803* 334/332-3932*
334/742-0777* www.harvestevangelism.org* info@harvestevangelism.org





And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

Matthew 9 tells the same story and in verse 22 it says, "...and the woman was made whole from that hour."

This is a beautiful story, about a woman who had been "plagued" with this condition, this hemorrhaging of blood, for 12 years. 12 years-she went to doctor after doctor, tried cure after cure, probably even tried all the "home remedies" and "experimental treatments" her family and friends brought to her.

But nothing worked. In fact, it says that after she did all this, she was worse off than before (verse 26).

She spent all she had—

- *all her money-her financial 'security' was gone.
- *all her dignity-being looked at, probed, tended to for 12 years leaves one's dignity abandoned.
- *all her strength-that consistent loss of blood makes one's body weak.
- *all her hope-she had lost all and was worse off than before.

This "issue" had probably cost her all her friends and relationships-anyone who is constantly sick for 12 years, most people get tired of having them and their 'issue' around.

It even cost her the freedom to go out and do ordinary, everyday things we take for granted—grocery shopping, gathering to chat on the corner with friends, taking an evening stroll, even attending events in town—she never knew when her 'issue', one that was embarrassing and shameful, would flare up.

Even today, any 'issue' others don't understand or approve of makes them uncomfortable and they in turn shame the one who's already troubled.

She had to hide her sickness, dress as if there were nothing wrong, act as if everything were 'fine, just fine'. She had to be so aware of her surroundings at all times so she could hide if need be.

Like so many of us...

We put on our good clothes, our smiling "I'm fine" faces, we try to hide the depression, the panic, the fear, the pain, the sadness.

Believing all the while;

- *If I can find the right preacher to pray for me...
- *If I can get the fresh anointing oil to touch me...
- *If I can memorize the proper scripture to hurl at the devil...
- *If I can join the most charismatic prayer service or the most popular Bible Study, or quote the most scriptures...

THEN, I'll be alright!

But these often leave us worse off than before.

This is the desperate, devastating place this woman found herself in, just at this moment... when Jesus came walking by.

Maybe she thought there was no more hope when, the Bible says, "she heard a report".

Who told her? What 'report' did they give her?

This was after the Sermon on the Mount. Thousands had heard His words then, did they go back and tell her. This was after Mark 1 when Jesus had "healed many". Did they share with her that this was the Christ, the Messiah...the one who has healing in His hands?

I do not know what they said to her, but what matters is that they told her.

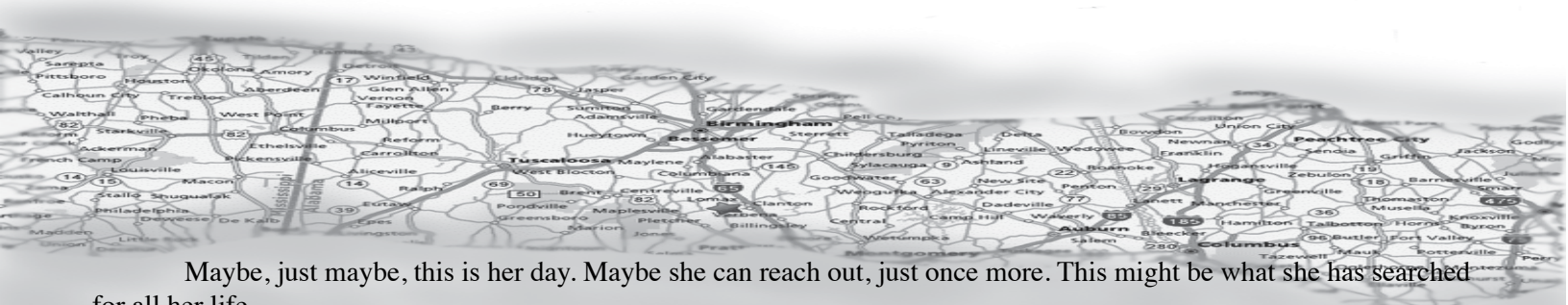
Today, so many of us have been taught so much that we have become almost numb to the truth of who Jesus really is. We have lost our compassion for a world who has no hope. We have forgotten that we, who have the answer, are required by God, to be HIS WITNESSES... to report.

We who know, our responsibility demands, our love demands that we tell—we report that Jesus still does miracles!

This was a miracle moment; this woman, dying in her shame, her pain, her 'issue' and she hears a report; "Jesus is coming...Jesus is here!" and she goes out to see Him. All of a sudden, there is within her heart, a glimmer of hope. Where nothing was before, now there is something...a seed, faith growing inside her.

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Maybe, just maybe, this is her day. Maybe she can reach out, just once more. This might be what she has searched for all her life.

Jesus.

Jesus, who was on His way to minister somewhere else, on His way to heal Jairus' daughter, He was at that moment, right in her path.

She, after hearing the reports about Jesus, came behind Him, pressing through the crowd, pushing, insisting, deliberately moving forward.

Matthew 9:20 says, .." and touched the hem of his garment".

She touched the bottom edge. She was crawling through the crowd, she didn't push them out of the way, she didn't didn't grab Jesus and make Him notice her, she didn't stand in His way and tell Him how much she had been hurt and ask Him to pity her, she didn't demand that He help her. She crawled to Him, simply, humbly and touched the bottom of His robe. Jesus was passing by and she finally got to where He was-close enough to touch, so she reached out.

Her need touched His power and she was healed

Have you ever been that desperate for the something to change? Have you ever been determined to press through to touch Jesus? Deliberately, insistently, moving forward, even crawling if there was no other way to get to Him?

This kind of desperation meets dramatic results for this woman and it can mean dramatic results for you too.

Her faith, so strong, her desperation, so intense...when she touched the bottom of His robe, He felt 'virtue' going out from Him.

Jesus stopped and said, "Who touched me?"

Her need touched His power, and she was healed.

The dictionary says about virtue, that it is, "the worth, advantage, beneficial quality of something; the power that something contains to do something"

Yes, she saw something of worth in Jesus

Yes, there was something of benefit in Jesus

Yes, there was a power in Jesus— All the power of the universe, of creation, the power of the voice booming in nothingness, "Let there be light and there was light!"

Yes, there was power all right, and she knew it!

That worth, that benefit, that power is the same for you and I. The power, not just to make you cry, or feel good-but to make you whole. The power to come into those private places of pain and heal them. This is what Jesus offered to that woman that day and what He offers us.

Jesus, the one who created the universe, who flung the stars in the sky, Jesus who speaks and lives are changed, bodies are healed, families are mended, He is the same today for you as He was that day so long ago for that woman. We don't know her name, but we know that Jesus saw her.

He stopped in the middle of His journey, in the middle of the road and asked, "Who touched me?" He didn't ask because He didn't know, He didn't ask to bring her out and shame her, He called out to give her the chance to come out in the open and have Jesus do something truly remarkable in and for her. At this time, her issue had already been healed, but Jesus didn't stop with just a physical healing. It says, "*But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.*" She came to Him and told Him...everything! And the amazing thing to me is this, Jesus listened. What did He listen to? Everything she told Him, He heard her and validated to everyone else that he was concerned for more than just healing her body and getting on His way. He heard her and then Jesus reaches out to her and says to her, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

He commented on her faith, He noticed her and this was truly amazing, He gave her the freedom to open up to Him and tell Him all that was in her needing to be shared. Jesus was telling her that she was seen by the Father, her 'faith' had been noticed, she was important to Him.

Have you been feeling that you and your issues aren't important to Jesus? Do you think that you will have to just 'grin and bear it?' Forever? This woman too had given up, she had spent all she had...but just like this woman, you too can reach out to Him, crawl to Him if you have to and receive all He has to offer, you





heart can be healed. Your “issue” can be touched.

In my own life, there have been times I needed that dramatic touch of Jesus. However, because my life looked so perfect to others, I didn’t feel I had the right to admit I needed His help. I was saved at age 5, and have loved and served the Lord the best I could all my life. All I ever wanted was to love Jesus and show others how to find Him. But even with all that, I never felt...”whole”. Oh, I was the ‘good Christian girl’ in church, involved in ministry at a young age, always wanting to do the ‘right thing’. I attended so many Christian conferences, seminars, camps, meetings...had some of the most powerful preachers speak into my life and every time I was determined I would be forever changed by what I felt there, heard there...was promised there. But can I admit something? Most of the time, after spending time, money, effort and emotion, I went home and after 3 weeks of “camp high” as I call it, I was really worse off than before. I had seen the truth and experienced life, but didn’t know how to make it last. I felt like this woman; *“after suffering many things, of many physicians and spent all that she had, she was nothing better but rather grew worse.”*

All this, and when I realized that I was not changed, I was devastated.

Have you been in that place? A wonderful conference experience then the cares of this world soon invaded and you were left with a feeling of vain worship?

I know about ‘issues’. In my life I have had times of severe depression, feelings of inadequacy, years of living in debilitating fear and bitterness. These things have at times in my life caused much pain and hardships. I have found that if I try to change in my own strength, I fail! But, when I go to Him, humbly, simply and even crawling at times, He has reached out and touched me, changed me and healed me. I came to Him and after confessing I had tried in my own strength, I asked Him to give me His. I realized that in doing it myself, I had messed it all up, come up empty and alone. But now, I trust Him, I follow Him, I give Him all the hurt, and “issues” of my life. Only His hands are big enough to hold me and to take the issues in my life away.

This woman with the issue of blood, knew she had no where else to go. She came up behind Jesus, she didn’t stop Him on His way, she wasn’t waiting for Him, she wasn’t walking beside Him...she came up from behind. Jesus was passing by and she realized, “This is my chance! I need to go to Him...NOW!” She decided in her heart, “Yes, I really want His touch.” She decided to become different. She had nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Sometimes we have to settle in our heart that we want to do whatever it takes to be made whole.

May I tell you, being “touched” by Jesus means to be changed! When you tell someone that you have had an experience with God, they expect a difference, in your attitudes, your actions, your behavior, the way you deal with others, your love...different, more like the One who touched you. Jesus Himself expects a change, many who He touched He went on to tell them...”go and sin no more”, or “take up your bed” or “take up your cross and follow Me.” When we have the honor to meet Jesus, we will never be the same, we will be forever changed.

What about you? What is your issue of blood? What keeps you bound up? Fear? Anger? Greed? Depression? Guilt? Grief? Shame? Addiction? Religion? Pain? Abuse? Loneliness? Or maybe you have no idea what your issue is but you know you have one. You know something is not right.

Whatever it is, Jesus is passing by right now. *1 Peter 5:7 says, “Casting all your care upon Him, because He cares for you.”* Jesus is available to touch your issue and as He did for this woman, ‘make you whole’.

If you will reach out and be made whole, you will go home different. The Bible tells us “immediately” she was healed of that plague. Immediately, there was a difference. What will you do when Jesus touches you? Will you allow Him to change you, from that moment forward will you walk in that difference?

Jesus is the only thing that is sure, He is the only true deliverer for the issue that plagues you. Run to Him, crawl through the crowd of things that would stand in your way, push forward until you reach Him then touch Him and let His healing flood through you and change you...He is the same for you as He was for this woman, the same, yesterday, today, and forever.

(You can receive a video version of this message in it’s entirety from Ireland’s Summer Fire Conference by simply contacting us at info@harvestevangelism.org. All we ask is that you include \$5 to cover the cost of the DVD and postage.

Also, drop Kim a note at kimhagans@harvestevangelism.org or PO box 2888, Opelika, AL 36803 and let her know how you feel about her message. She would love to hear from you.)

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