

# "Live as examples of Christ Jesus"

## Devotions for Deacons

**Title:** Respect Their Need for Dignity

**Scripture:** Mark 5:24-34

**Text:** Galatians 3:28

“Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can see as Jesus sees. Ask for that power; pray for that kind of vision.”

There was no health insurance in Galilee. So any illness would be expensive. But 12 years of suffering is enough to put this woman into poverty. For 12 long years, she has suffered “a great deal.” Physically, but probably also emotionally. She lives in a society governed by Pharisees. According to Old Testament law, any bleeding makes her unclean. An unclean and impoverished woman is truly on the margins of society.

In the crowd around Jesus, she is also a faceless woman –unnamed and unnoticed. The crowds press in on every side. In the swelling confusion, the woman sees her chance. She sees a chance to be released from her suffering. She knows, somehow, that power resides in Jesus and she only needs to touch Him. In this crowd, she believes that she could claim that healing without anybody noticing.

If only she can get close enough! But does she dare touch Him? Is she ashamed? Does she think that someone like Jesus would turn away, disgusted? What will happen when this “unclean” woman touches the One who is perfectly clean? But she knows that Jesus has the power to heal her. She knows she must touch Him.

Anonymous, she pushes her way through the crowds to Jesus’ side. With trembling fingers and a believing heart, this woman, unjustly rejected by society, reaches out.

She reaches out and is immediately healed. She reaches out to reclaim what is hers: deliverance and freedom! But also, and just as importantly, she takes back her value as a person, her place as part of these people. If only she knew that she had always had value as a child of God.

That moment of restoration must have made her heart pound. What does she think as Jesus searches for her in the crowd? Can you hear the love in Jesus’ voice when He finds her? “Daughter!” The only person in the Gospels that Jesus addresses this way. She is His precious child! How amazing! He is not angry with her. He does not call her out in front of the crowds. He names her His daughter. He restores her body and her spirit. He gives her peace and dignity.

If only we could have eyes like Jesus. Eyes that see equally and without prejudice. Eyes that look beneath and see each person only as a daughter of Jesus, a precious and unique person –no matter what colour of skin, what circumstance, what life choices. For we “are all one in Christ.” Deacons, we must respect the dignity of each person we serve and love. It will come through in our words. It will come through in how we respond to the needy –to see the person and not just the need. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we will see as Jesus sees. Ask for that power; pray for that kind of vision.