

## East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide: The Power of Truly Being Seen

*Guest Speaker: Jan Brauer*

*Date: March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024*

---

### **Introduction:**

Jan Brauer introduced the sermon with a warm welcome to the online and physical attendees, expressing joy in sharing a favorite New Testament story that illustrates Christ's impactful actions. The introduction set the stage for the audience to dive deep into understanding how to receive and distribute the love and healing power of Jesus. Jan shared the hope that by the end of the sermon, attendees would feel motivated to act similarly to Christ. The introduction acknowledged the diverse burdens people carry and offered a promise of relief and peace through the upcoming exploration of Scripture, specifically focusing on Mark 5:21-29.

---

### **Jesus' Power of Presence (Mark 5:21-29):**

Jan clearly narrated the event where Jesus, on His way to heal Jairus' daughter, encountered a desperate woman who had been bleeding for 12 years. This part of the sermon highlighted Jesus' remarkable power of presence, showcasing His willingness to stop and attend to the needs of individuals, irrespective of their social status. The woman's faith and desperation led her to touch Jesus' cloak, believing that it would heal her. This story segment emphasized Jesus' accessibility and readiness to offer help and healing to those in desperate need, underlining the significant impact of His physical and attentive presence in the lives of individuals seeking solace and recovery.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Have you ever experienced a moment when you felt Jesus' presence in a tangible way during a difficult time? Share that experience.
2. Reflecting on Jesus stopping to help the bleeding woman despite being on another urgent mission, how can we practice being present for others in our busy lives?
3. The woman reached out to touch Jesus' cloak in faith. What does "reaching out in faith" look like in your life right now?
4. In what ways have you seen or experienced the church acting as the hands and feet of Jesus, providing presence and support to those in need?

### **Supporting Verses:**

**Mark 5:21-29 (NIV)** "When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, 'My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.' So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great

deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, 'If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.' Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering."

**Context and Reflection:**

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** This event occurs in a time when physical ailments, especially those like the woman's, were not only a source of physical pain but also social isolation. The act of reaching out to touch Jesus' cloak was a significant breach of social norms, given her condition.
- **Theological Significance:** Demonstrates Jesus' willingness to interrupt His journey to attend to an individual's need, highlighting His compassion and the power of faith.
- **Application:** Encourages us to recognize the significance of being fully present in the lives of those around us. Like Jesus, who was on His way to another miracle yet stopped to acknowledge and heal the woman, we are reminded of the impact our attention and care can have on individuals who might feel overlooked or marginalized. It prompts us to reflect on how we can embody Jesus' example of presence in our daily interactions.

---

**The Transformative Power of Being Seen (Mark 5:30-34):**

The continuation of the narrative revealed Jesus' intentional action to seek out the woman who touched Him, despite the pressing crowd. This portion of Jan's sermon delved into the transformative power of being seen by Jesus. When He addressed the woman as "Daughter," He restored her sense of worth and belonging, healing her not only physically but also socially, emotionally, and financially. Jan discussed the profound depth of Jesus' attention and affirmation towards an individual who had been marginalized and unseen for 12 years, illustrating the deep, holistic healing that comes from being recognized and valued by Christ.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Discuss a time when you felt truly seen and understood by someone. How did that impact you emotionally and spiritually?
2. Jesus addressed the woman as "Daughter," acknowledging her worth. How does knowing that Jesus sees us as beloved children change how we view ourselves and our insecurities?
3. Have you ever felt invisible or overlooked in a community? How can we, as a church, create a space where everyone feels seen and valued?
4. The healing Jesus offered was holistic, touching every aspect of the woman's life. Can you share an instance where you've experienced or witnessed healing that transcended just the physical?

**Supporting Verses:**

**Mark 5:30-34 (NIV)** "At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, 'Who touched my clothes?' You see the people crowding against you,' his disciples answered, 'and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus kept

looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.'"

#### **Context and Reflection:**

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** In the context of 1st-century Judea, a woman with such an ailment would be considered ritually unclean, and her act of touching Jesus could be seen as taboo. Jesus' acknowledgment of her not only breaks social norms but also restores her dignity and community standing.
- **Theological Significance:** This passage emphasizes the personal nature of Jesus' ministry and His desire to not only heal physically but also to restore individuals fully into community life.
- **Application:** Reflects on the deep need for individuals to be seen and acknowledged. Through Jesus' interaction with the bleeding woman, this portion of the sermon underscores the healing and transformation that comes from being recognized and valued. It challenges us to look beyond the surface and to see others with compassion and empathy, recognizing their worth and offering affirmation, as Jesus did.

---

#### **Our Call to See the Unseen:**

In this practical application of the sermon, Jan Brauer encouraged the congregation to embrace Christ's example of seeing and attending to those who feel invisible and marginalized. Highlighting the universal need for healing and belonging, regardless of one's societal status, she urged followers of Christ to be vigilant and responsive to the needs of others around them. By making others feel seen, valued, and accepted, Christians can participate in the profound healing process, fostering a sense of community and belonging. Jan's sermon concluded with a call for a personal and communal reflection on how individuals and the church as a whole can better embody Christ's inclusive love and attention.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Can you identify someone in your life or community who might feel unseen or marginalized? What are some ways we can reach out to them?
2. Reflect on a time when you felt lonely or isolated. How did you overcome this, or how are you currently dealing with it?
3. In what ways can we cultivate a culture of belonging within our church and communities, especially for those who feel they don't fit the traditional mold?
4. Discuss the statement "We are all bleeding in some way." How does this realization affect our approach to relationships and community building?

#### **Supporting Verses:**

**Hebrews 13:2 (NIV)** "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."

#### **Context and Reflection:**

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** This advice comes from a letter aimed at encouraging Christians facing persecution and reminding them of their duties towards each other, including showing hospitality.
  - **Theological Significance:** Highlights the importance of kindness and openness to all, reflecting the belief that God's messengers or blessings could come in unexpected forms.
  - **Application:** Calls us to awareness and action regarding those who feel invisible in our communities and circles. Just as the sermon illustrates through Jesus' ministry, we are encouraged to be intentionally observant and to reach out to those who are often overlooked. It highlights our responsibility to make everyone feel seen, valued, and included, mirroring the inclusive love and attention Jesus showed.
- 

### **Action Steps:**

As we reflect on "The Power of Truly Being Seen" and the transformative messages shared by Jan Brauer, let's consider practical ways we can live out these teachings. This week, let's each commit to taking at least one actionable step towards embodying the compassion, presence, and inclusivity Jesus demonstrated. Here are some suggestions to get started:

1. **Being Fully Present:** Choose a day this week to consciously practice being fully present in your interactions. Whether with family, friends, or colleagues, give them your undivided attention, showing the same attentiveness that Jesus showed the woman in the crowd.
  2. **Acknowledging Others:** Make a deliberate effort to acknowledge someone who might feel unseen or underappreciated in your community. This could be through a kind word, a note of encouragement, or a simple gesture of kindness.
  3. **Cultivating Belonging:** Identify a space or group where you can contribute to creating a sense of belonging. Consider volunteering for a community project, participating in a church ministry, or starting a support group for a specific need within your church or community.
  4. **Reflect and Reach Out:** Spend some time reflecting on the question, "Who might feel invisible in my circles?" Pray for guidance on how you can reach out to them. Then, take a step to connect with them in a meaningful way, perhaps inviting them for a coffee or a walk.
  5. **Educate and Empathize:** Educate yourself on a social issue that affects your community but may not directly impact you. Seek to understand the challenges faced by others and consider ways you can offer support or advocacy.
- 

### **Prayer Requests:**

[Share any personal prayer requests, and pray over the week ahead]

---

## References:

### Primary Sources:

- "The Power of Truly Being Seen" Sermon, East Hill Church, 03/10/2024. Provided by Guest Speaker Jan Brauer.
- Sermon Discussion Guide, Provided by Kelly Paxton, and East Hill Church.
- The Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV). Biblica, Inc.™, 2011.

### Secondary Sources:

- Contextual and Theological Insights: Derived from general biblical scholarship and commentaries relevant to the verses from Mark and Hebrews.
- General Sources on Biblical Studies:
  - Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. "How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth." Zondervan, 2014.
  - Keller, Timothy. "The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism." Penguin Books, 2009.

### Linguistic and Grammatical Resources:

- Strong, James. "The New Strong's Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible." Thomas Nelson, 2010.
- Mounce, William D. "Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words." Zondervan, 2006.

### Collaborative Contributions:

- LLM Contributions: Based on a mixture of licensed data, data created by AI models, and publicly available data, synthesized for the study of the provided biblical verses.

### LLM Training Data:

- LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to April 2023.