



Leader's Guide for the sermon, "Reaching Out"

Mark 5:21–34 | Pastor Jon Gerlach | Series: Courage to Reach | November 2, 2025

Session Overview

This week's discussion focuses on the courage it takes to reach out—to God and to others—especially when life feels overwhelming or isolating. Drawing from Mark 5:21–34, Pastor Jon explores how both Jairus and the bleeding woman demonstrate faith through action. Whether desperate for a miracle or weary from years of disappointment, both found hope when they reached out to Jesus. Encourage your group to reflect on where they might be holding back from reaching out, and how Jesus responds with compassion and healing.

Session Flow (60–75 minutes)

1. Welcome and Icebreaker (10 min)

- Example Question: "When was a time you finally asked for help after trying to handle something on your own?"
- Purpose: To create openness and highlight how asking for help often requires humility and courage.

2. Scripture Reading (5 min)

- Read Mark 5:21–34 aloud.
- Optional: Have someone read from a different translation (e.g., The Message or NLT) to capture the emotional tone of the story.

3. Discussion (40–50 min)

- Use 6–8 of the discussion questions below, depending on time and group size.
 - Encourage authenticity—many of us resist reaching out even when we know we should.
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Pastor Jon contrasted people who *point it out* (criticize problems) and those who *figure it out* (handle things alone). Which tendency do you naturally fall into, and why?

Leader Note: Normalize both tendencies—many people use them as coping mechanisms to avoid vulnerability. Emphasize how reaching out invites community and dependence on God.

Jairus risked his reputation to approach Jesus publicly. What might it cost you to reach out in faith?

Leader Note: Encourage participants to identify personal or social barriers that keep them from asking for help or showing need.

The woman reached out after twelve years of disappointment. What might her perseverance teach us about faith over time?

Leader Note: Highlight that faith is often quiet and persistent, not flashy. God honors those who keep showing up despite past pain.

Pastor Jon said, “Pointing out isn’t a spiritual gift.” Why do you think it’s easier to criticize than to reach out?

Leader Note: Discuss how criticism feels safer than vulnerability. Reaching out requires humility and trust that God and others will respond with grace.

The woman touched Jesus’ robe believing she would be healed. What does this reveal about the difference between superstition and true faith?

Leader Note: Her confidence wasn’t in the robe itself but in the person of Jesus. Encourage conversation about what real dependence on Christ looks like.

Jesus noticed her and called her “Daughter.” How does His personal response reshape your understanding of God’s care?

Leader Note: Emphasize that Jesus doesn’t just heal—He restores identity and belonging.

Pastor Jon said, “Faith doesn’t always look flashy—sometimes it just looks faithful.” What might steady faith look like in your current season?

Leader Note: Invite reflection on daily disciplines—prayer, honesty, persistence—as ways of reaching out to God.

How can our group be a place where people feel safe to reach out for prayer, support, or healing?

Leader Note: Encourage practical ideas to build relational trust—confidentiality, listening, consistency.

4. Application and Prayer (10–15 min)

- Invite participants to name one area of life where they need courage to reach out—to God or someone else.
- Pray together, asking God to help each person take that next step of connection.
- Optionally, share communion or close in a moment of silence, acknowledging that Jesus is reaching out to each of us.

Closing Prayer Suggestion

Lord, thank You that You reach out to us even when we are afraid, ashamed, or weary. Give us courage to reach out to You and to others in faith. Heal the places where we've grown numb or isolated. Teach us to live with open hands and open hearts, trusting that You notice us and call us Your own. Amen.