

Sermon Title: **“If I But Touch His Cloak”**

Bible: **Mark 5:21-43**

When: on the 7th Sunday after Pentecost, July 7, 2024

Where: about 25 people (plus YouTube Live viewers) at Gilroy UMC

Opening Prayer

O Lord, let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock, and our Redeemer. Amen.

1. Sandwich

A sandwich is two slices of bread with a filling between them. Do you like sandwiches? What are your favorite sandwiches? Chicken Sandwiches? Beef Sandwiches? Egg Salad Sandwiches? Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwiches? I love every kind of sandwich, (SLIDE) but the most delicious one I have had was a Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich. (SLIDE) During the summer of 2014, I went on a SSP trip, the Sierra Service Project, near the Walker River Reservation in Nevada. SSP is a summer youth project to do home repair or improvement for those in need. During the hot summer, we built a wooden wheelchair ramp. (SLIDE) It was very hot, but it was very fun and rewarding. (SLIDE) One of my favorite parts was lunch time. We had PBJ sandwiches and lemonade! It was just delicious after a lot of work and sweat, and under very cool shade. Do you have any stories about your favorite or memorable sandwich?

Depending on the filling between the two pieces of bread, there are many kinds of

sandwiches. And in today's scripture reading of Mark, can we find the sandwich? There is no literal sandwich that we eat, but there is a type of storytelling, which is a sandwich. (SLIDE) How many stories are there in today's scripture reading? There are two healing stories. One is the healing story of Jairus' daughter, and the other is the healing story of a woman who suffered from a flow of blood for twelve years. The story of the woman is inserted into the story of Jairus' daughter. In other words, the story of Jairus' daughter works like two slices of bread, and the story of the woman who suffered for twelve years works as a filling. So, there is a sandwich in today's reading after all, right? We can find more sandwiches when we read more stories in the Bible.

2. If I But Touch His Cloak

The sandwich that we find in today's scripture reading describes how Jesus Christ was a great healer. Jesus healed both the girl and the woman. Jesus restored the life of a girl who was twelve years old, and Jesus healed the woman who suffered for twelve years. To me, it seems like Jesus was like a great doctor in both the ICU and ER. (SLIDE) Have you been to the ICU or ER? Do you remember that moment? Jairus' daughter was at the point of death, and her condition was critical. In my interpretation, she was in the ICU, and waiting for a doctor. Her father could not wait, so he looked for a doctor. He was desperate. So, when he found a doctor, he was taking the doctor to his daughter. For the woman who suffered for twelve years, there was no time to make a doctor's appointment. So she just went to the ER to see a doctor! She was desperate to see a doctor even for just a minute. She might have said,

“If I see the doctor for just one minute, I will be fine.” Have you been desperate at the ICU and ER before?

(SLIDE) Jairus was desperate, and begged Jesus to come and lay his hands on his daughter again and again. The woman was also desperate, so she came to Jesus through the crowd, and touched Jesus’ clothes. Have you been desperate for Jesus’ healing? I have been to visit our church members in the ICU, in ER, and in hospice care. I was desperate, so I prayed on the way, I prayed there, and I prayed even on the way back home.

Somehow, on this Sunday, on the first Sunday of the new appointment year, I am desperate just like Jairus and the woman! My hope is to serve the church as the place for healing and growth in spirit and body in God’s love and grace. Is our church the place for healing? Is our church the place for growth? Is our church the place in God’s love and grace? I am still desperate for God’s healing, God’s growth, and God’s love and grace! How about you? Are you desperate?

3. God’s Presence In Our Daily Lives

Sometimes, we experience the miracles and the healing of God. But I know that God does not promise that we will be cured of all illnesses. Nevertheless, I am desperate. I pray and I will pray. Prayer makes me realize God’s holy presence even in pain, sickness, injury, and estrangement. I will also remember that God is with us all the time in our ordinary time, too. In the Gospel of Mark, there is a sandwich, the healing stories of Jesus Christ. But that is not all. What Jesus did was not only healing, but also living together with his disciples. Jesus ate

together, and lived together with his disciples and all people. Today, when we have communion, when we share the broken bread, let us remember that Jesus Christ is with us in our brokenness for healing. When we share the cup of life, let us remember that Jesus Christ is with us in our daily lives, for life itself!

Closing Prayer

Loving and living God, when we are desperate, please be gracious to reveal yourself to us. We need you. O Lord, even in our ordinary lives, please open our eyes to see your holy presence. So, please guide us to live with you anytime. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.