



WEEK 1 - LEADER GUIDE

Message by Chad Bruegman

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

Think of a time you had a real need. Was that need met? How?

SHARE

Welcome to our brand new teaching Series called “The Outsiders.” When you think of outsiders, you think of people who just don’t seem to fit, or you think of outcasts and rebels; the people on the outside looking in. But what did Jesus think about outsiders? I think you might be surprised at who the outsiders are in God’s eyes, and it certainly isn’t the people you think it is. That’s because in God’s eyes, we were all outsiders at one time. Knowing that; what if we viewed the world differently? What if knowing that God loved us even when we were outsiders changed the way we saw people?

In his message this week, Chad talked through the story about the woman “with the issue of blood.” We don’t get many details about her situation, other than the fact that she has had this issue for a long time, and no one can help her. In ancient Israel, blood is a big deal and this woman’s condition has made her a major outsider.

To fully grasp her situation and how she was viewed in that culture, we need to understand what the Old Testament law said concerning this.

Read:
Leviticus 15:25-31

What stands out to you about this passage?

What is this woman’s status in her community? Can you empathize with her?

How do you think this has affected her emotionally? Physically? Spiritually?

GROW

It isn't hard to see and understand that this woman has a big issue. In his message Chad makes an effort to not camp specifically on what was wrong as much as he camps on the broader implication that something was wrong. We all walk through life with issues and baggage, big and small. Some has been caused by our own choices and direction of life, others have literally happened to us and we have no control over them.

How or why we find ourselves in the situation we are in doesn't change the actual situation, and doesn't change the fact that we need help. The good news is we serve a God who loves us deeply and doesn't wish that anyone would have to endure life's tough obstacles alone. Let's take a look at how he deals with this woman.

Read:

Mark 5:21-34

Does anything stand out to you about this interaction?

How does Jesus' reaction to her inform your own situation (general or specifically)?

The Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible draws a really remarkable picture out of this scene:

Yes, the multitude "thronged and pressed Him" — they jostled against Him, but all involuntarily; they were merely carried along; but one, one only — "a certain person — TOUCHED HIM," with the conscious, voluntary, dependent touch of faith, reaching forth its hand expressly to have contact with Him. This and this only Jesus acknowledges and seeks out. Even so, as AUGUSTINE long ago said, multitudes still come similarly close to Christ in the means of grace, but all to no purpose, being only sucked into the crowd. The voluntary, living contact of faith is that electric conductor which alone draws virtue out of Him (feel free to re-read if you need or want to).

What is your reaction to this (does anything stand out to you)?

What is being implied by this commentary?

Does this change how you view asking things of God? How?

MOVE

Through this story, we see a God who does not show partiality. If you recall, the scene painted in Mark 5 was Jesus actually on his way somewhere else and if we aren't careful, we might think that healing this woman is secondary to Jesus initial mission.

What we are tempted to see is an un-named outcast interrupting Jesus as he walks toward the more important task: healing the daughter of the synagogue ruler. What is really unfolding here is nothing short of divine, and illustrates the heart of God toward all of his children. These two people, Jairus, and the woman who still remains nameless, are on completely opposite ends of the social spectrum and yet Jesus treats them exactly the same. Both reach out to Jesus for help, and both receive it. Their status is the furthest thing from Jesus' mind. Their hearts, and their faith in who he was as Lord and his ability to help them set them apart from the crowd.

When we look at the big-picture implications of this story, we can all relate to the need that these two individuals felt. We can also see the way that God values his children. With that in mind, it becomes easy to understand that there are truly no outsiders in the kingdom of God.

Does this change anything in your own life? If so, how?

Does this change the way you view others?

Does this change the way you view God in the context of your own life or situation?

How can we avoid being sucked into the crowd and have the courage to reach out to Jesus?

Conclude with any thoughts or questions from this week's study.

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

TO GO.

Isaiah 41:13

For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, "Fear not, I am the one who helps you."