

## THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER

**Text: II Chronicles 7:14**

**Key Word:** Touch

**Key Thought:** Revival Takes Place with the Touch of the Master's Hand

Just like the word "*trinity*," you won't find the word "*revival*" in the Bible. Yet in both cases we know what they mean, and the Bible describes them over and over again. **A revival is a great awakening of people to the very presence of God.** Throughout history God has done this very thing over and over again, in all different parts of the world.

One noticeable example was when revival hit in 1949 on the Isle of Lewis in the Hebrides. At that time any devotion to God had been replaced with devotion to whisky. **The churches were nearly empty and many of them were about to close.** But at a time like this there were still people willing to intercede. Two elderly ladies (Peggy 84 & Christine Smith 86) in their eighties had been praying for a number of years for God to outpour His Spirit upon their island in the Parish of Barvis. This eventually led to a small group of men who gathered in a barn. **They prayed for six hours a day, three days a week for several months, determined to keep seeking God until He sent revival.** God sent an evangelist by the name of Duncan Campell for a 2 week evangelistic campaign that lasted for 3 years. In one meeting they read the following verse.

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."*

*II Chronicles 7:14*

They cried out to God for cleansing from personal sin and that night they witnessed God's glory. The two elderly ladies were assured that same night by God that He would send His reviving Spirit within two weeks, and that He would use a man by the name of Duncan Campbell. The promise came true, and these small Scottish Islands experienced one of the most powerful outpourings of God's Spirit in Church history. In one village, within two days, every young person had been converted. **Eye witness accounts describe people suddenly coming under the conviction of their sin, even while they were out working on their boats, or down in the mines.** Conversions were numbered not by a one time decision but by their commitment to prayer meetings.

What God did in the Hebrides, God can do in our country! He can cause the same sort of reaction in our work places and in our schools. **The need for such a Touch of the Master's Hand is probably even greater now than it was in the Hebrides in 1949.** I want to look this morning at how we can seek and prepare ourselves for such a touch from the Master.

To understand how we can do this, I want to look at what happened at the time when people met with God in the most tangible way possible. This is when people met with God in the flesh, our Lord, Jesus Christ. When Jesus walked the earth, as with every revival, everybody is affected, and yet often only a few fully receive all that God has for them.

### **I Want to Look at How We Can Make Sure That We Do Not Miss Out.**

**Those who encountered God's power in the time of Jesus were those who, recognised the need for a touch of God, were willing to fight for God's blessing, and then they received the touch of God however it came.**

### **I. RECOGNISING THE NEED FOR THE TOUCH OF GOD**

Jesus walked on the earth for 33 years and for the last three years of His life, His ministry was at full flow. Everybody on earth at that time, who lived within the travelling distance of Galilee or Jerusalem, had the opportunity to literally walk with God. They had the opportunity to physically encounter and be touched by God. This one Man was performing more miracles in three years as had happened in the whole history of the earth up to this point. What a great honour it would have been to live in these times.

**One of the great mysteries of the New Testament Gospels is not how many people were miraculously touched by the hand of God at this time. Instead it is how many people missed out.** The Son of God was walking on the Earth, **waiting, willing and wanting** to touch the lives of men, and yet so many missed out on what God had in store for them.

Everybody had a real need for that touch. The Jewish people were under foreign rule and were following a religious system of trying to please God themselves, only to find themselves constantly failing. The Gentiles were following their own gods with no real hope of anything other than an empty and meaningless life. **Everybody had a need of God and so why did only a relative few receive the touch of the master?** Who was it who actually received the touch of God.

**We find that those who received the touch of God were those who recognised their needs and failings, and were willing to expose those needs to God.**

*“At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind.”*

*Luke 7:21*

## I. RECOGNISING THE NEED FOR THE TOUCH OF GOD (Contd.)

It was those who were willing to expose their **need for healing** that were healed. It was those who were willing **to expose their sin** to Jesus that were forgiven, such as in the case of the prostitute who wiped Jesus' feet with her hair. It was those who were willing **to expose their weaknesses or lack of faith** to Jesus that were given the strength to overcome, such as in the case of the disciples.

Jesus walked along the roads between Jerusalem and Galilee. Some who got healed were those who sat along the dusty roads. It was **the beggars** who had their dreadful state exposed to all who were around. It was those who came out to find Him. Those who got a touch from God were those who were in desperate need of Him and weren't afraid if others could see that.

*"While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."*

*13. Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him."*

*Luke 5:12,13*

If that same man had been so ashamed of his condition that he had stayed in his home, or had covered himself up trying to hide it, then he would never have been healed and soon would have had to live in a leper's colony. **By openly declaring his condition, this man would become a public outcast, yet he fell at Jesus' feet, exposed his state, and begged the LORD to do something.** He publicly admitted his need for a touch from the Lord, and that need became fully met from the Master.

**If these were the people who received God's touch, who missed out?** The Gospels make it clear that it was those who hid their true conditions from God. Some trusted in riches, like the rich man in Matthew 19:16-24, others were content in their own righteousness, such as the religious leaders of the day. Either way **pride** prevented them from exposing their need for a touch from God. In John 9: 41, Jesus said to the Pharisees . . .

*"If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."*

*John 9: 41*

It is because the religious leaders claimed they could see spiritually. They claimed that they were all right. Jesus said *"it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."* If they had only admitted that they were sick they could have been treated by the greatest doctor of all.

## I. RECOGNISING THE NEED FOR THE TOUCH OF GOD (Contd.)

The state that the people found themselves in 2000 years ago in Israel, isn't much different to this city or this nation. People have tried to do things in their own strength and have found themselves in a mess. Both the Jews and the Gentiles had found themselves in need of a touch from the Lord. **In this nation, it is not just the world that needs a touch from God, the Church also needs to rediscover the power of God.** As the Church, we are in desperate need for a move of God's Holy Spirit. **Our nation** is growing further away from God and is suffering the consequences, but if we are honest, **so is the Church.**

I believe that God has always been preparing to move in power. I have been noticing lately a quickening in my spirit. However, I accept the fact that many people will miss out on a touch from God. **The main reason for this is that people refuse to express their need.** If we want God to move again in our lives, in our Churches, and in this city, then **we need to confess to Him that we are sick, lame and sinful, and that we are hopeless without His touch.**

## II. RESISTING OPPONENTS TO RECEIVE THE TOUCH OF GOD

The second reason that some encountered the power of God while others didn't, is that some had the desire for God's blessing enough to fight for it. Many people would have recognised that they had a need for a touch from God. However, often it was only those who were willing to struggle against the odds that received that blessing. The book of Matthew gives us an example in the account of two blind men.

*"As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him.  
30. Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"  
31. The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"  
32. Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.  
33. "Lord," they answered, "we want our sight."  
34. Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him."*

*Matthew 20:29-34*

## II. RESISTING OPPONENTS TO RECEIVE THE TOUCH OF GOD (Contd.)

In this chapter we see two men with needs that were obvious. They would have heard that Jesus was coming. They would have heard the disturbance of the large crowd and so cried out, **'Lord Son of David, have mercy on us.'** The crowd rebuked them. The people in the crowd were probably thinking, *'stop being so irreverent', 'that's no way to act', or 'be quiet you're embarrassing everyone.'*

The desire of these two men to receive a touch of God was an embarrassment to those around. It put them to shame. *'Who were these blind beggars anyway? They must have been sinners as they were blind. How dare they cause a commotion?'* The two men were probably being pushed away by the crowd. It would have been easy for these two men to be discouraged. They could have thought to themselves, *'Well we tried, maybe it just wasn't meant to be.'*

Instead the men simply started to shout even louder. **They cried out with more determination and desperation.** They weren't going to let Jesus pass by them unnoticed their dilemma. No amount of discouragement from a crowd was going to stop them. They cried out again, **'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us.'**

They caused such a commotion that Jesus stopped to take special notice. Jesus could probably see that these men were blind and yet He still asked them, *'What do you want me to do for you?'* Jesus wanted to know their greatest need and these two men were only too willing to answer. **'We want our sight.'**

These two men weren't alone in having to fight to receive a touch from God. Blind Bartimaeus also resisted the crowd that told him to be quiet (Mark 10:46-52). There was also the woman who had been subject to menstrual disorder for 12 years in Matthew 9:20. According to Jewish Law she would have been ceremonially unclean. **We see her like the blind men in a desperate state.** She knew that medicine couldn't help her as she had tried all of the doctors. She pushed through the crowd just enough to touch the edge of Jesus' clothing and was healed.

When God is passing by, if you don't want to miss out, you may have to be desperate enough to fight in order to receive a touch from Him. **When was the last time that you struggled with God in prayer for what you needed?** When was the last time you prayed in tears over the needs of this city, crying out to God for Him to do something? When was the last time that you fought with God for an experience of Him during the worship?

If we want to stop God in His tracks and receive a blessing then we need to be willing to cry out to Him. **We need to be willing to break out from our apathy, realise our desperate state, and not rest until He meets with us in power.** Jesus passed by many, but only a few received His anointed power. **God can move mightily through a place, but only those who are willing to truly seek Him will see their lives transformed.**

### III. REACHING OUT TO RECEIVE THE TOUCH OF GOD

There were those who fought for Jesus' blessing and there were those who had others fight on their behalf. The stories about His many miracles filled the gospels. **JOHN WROTE THAT SO MUCH COULD BE WRITTEN ABOUT WHAT JESUS SAID AND DID, THAT ALL THE BOOKS IN THE WORLD COULDN'T CONTAIN HIS WONDERS.** So how did Jesus actually touch the people and what were their reactions when He did?

Whenever Jesus taught, performed a miracle, or forgave somebody, we find that reactions to it were as varied as His methods. The nation was expecting their Messiah to come, but Jesus would often cause them to be **offended and confused** because He didn't come in the way that the people were expecting. **There were three main types of reactions to the wonders that Jesus performed.**

#### A. There Were the Religious Folk

Jesus caused **great offence** to those who thought that they had their religion all sorted out. **The religious leaders of the day had put God in a box. They followed their laws and traditions and felt righteous.** They thought they knew God. When Jesus came, **He upset their system. He healed on the Sabbath, He associated with sinners, and He exposed their emptiness, hypocrisy and sin.** This wasn't how God was supposed to move according to their beliefs. He was supposed to come their way, as a warrior to set them free. They were moved to great anger and tried to kill this move of God. How unrighteous is that?

#### B. There Was the General Crowd

They observed and listened but many left when they found Jesus' teaching too hard to bear (John 6:66). After feeding the five thousand Jesus found that His following had gone from five thousand plus, to just twelve, in just two days. They wanted to be fed by God. **THEY WANTED TO HEAR GOOD TEACHING AND TO SEE MIRACLES, BUT THEY WEREN'T WILLING TO LET IT CHANGE THEIR LIVES.** They didn't want to leave their comfort zones and so they just wandered away and forsook Him.

#### C. There were Those Who Truly Recognized Their Need

The third reaction was from those who truly recognised their need. Jesus often moved in their lives in the most unorthodox way. When healing a blind man we find that Jesus did so by spitting right on the blind man's eyes.

*"He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spat on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?"*

*Mark 8:23*

### III. REACHING OUT TO RECEIVE THE TOUCH OF GOD

If anybody had a right to be offended by Jesus' methods, then these people certainly did. **To spit in somebody's face in any country is an offensive gesture.** The move of God can come in ways that we don't expect. **Those who are most desperate for God don't care so much how He moves, they just want to feel His touch.**

\*\*\* Smith Wigglesworth was a man who had a great healing ministry and was used greatly by God. He would also use some unorthodox ways to heal. On one occasion he punched somebody in the stomach as he prayed for them to be healed from stomach cancer. Many people were shocked and offended, but the one who got healed from the cancer certainly wasn't. \*\*\*

#### CONCLUSION:

I truly believe that God is beginning to move in our area. God is ready to answer the cries of those who have been calling for Him to do something in our lives, with the church, and within our nation. **Many would say that God won't move when the Church is lukewarm.** However, God does answer the prayers of a faithful few. Israel was in a lukewarm state in Jesus' day. God was ready then and still is today to meet and transform lives. **We need to be ready and willing.**

We need to be in a state where we are desperate enough for God to do something with our lives. **Are we satisfied to just allow God's presence to pass through our area without abiding with Him? In the Hebrides revival many spoke about the tangible presence of God that they felt.**

Our city and nation are in a desperate state. Drug abuse is taking the lives of many. Sin is rampant and becoming a normal way of life even among Christians. Pornography is available to even our children at the click of a button and they are becoming Dopamine addicts. Children and women are being trafficked and many end up dead. Sexual practices offensive to God are becoming accepted and even approved of and openly practised in lukewarm churches. Bibles are being covered with dust and prayer is scarce.

The worse thing is, that while all this is going on, many churches have become spiritually impotent and have stood aside, allowing it to happen. Ordained ministers have shamefully become involved. God is waiting to fulfil the promise given by Solomon in Chronicles.

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; **then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.**"*

*II Chronicles 7:14*

**Are you ready, willing, and waiting for the Master's touch?**

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Date: Sept 8/24

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Arise, Shine (for Thy Light is Come ) - C; Touching Heaven Changing Earth - G

Revised sermon originally spoken by Mark Holdcroft (April 2004). Revised from his original words with further details.



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**I Want to Look at How We Can Make Sure That We Do Not Miss Out**

**I. RECOGNISING THE NEED FOR THE TOUCH OF GOD** - *Luke 7:21; Luke 5:12,13*  
*Matthew 19:16-24; John 9: 41*

**II. RESISTING OPPONENTS TO RECEIVE THE TOUCH OF GOD** - *Matthew 20:29-34;*  
*Mark 10:46-52; Matthew 9:20*

## **III. REACHING OUT TO RECEIVE THE TOUCH OF GOD**

**A. There Were the Religious Folk**

**B. There Was the General Crowd** - *John 6:66*

**C. There were Those Who Truly Recognized Their Need** - *Mark 8:23; II Chronicles*  
*7:14*