Have you ever suffered from something for a long time? Have you ever been called something for an extended period of time, only to have your real name and true identity feel like it became obsolete? It can be hard to overcome the labels that people give you. The reason being is that labels can be shackles that hold you to them and can be given the power to hold you back and hold you down.

This has become the life of the woman that we meet in the story. Just think about all the information we receive about her, they are all labels, and they all involve her situation. Listen again. There was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians. And spent all her money and was not better, she was actually worse. I mean did no one bother to get her name. This woman is identified by her suffering and she has been shackled by her label.

And think about this, her suffering is not just the flowing of blood. Her suffering is deeper than that, because this blood issue has consumed all aspects of her life. She has gone from doctor to doctor trying to find the issue. She has spent every penny that she has had trying to find a cure and nothing is working.

Can you imagine the emotional suffering she has had to endure after trying everything she could, and not to just stay the same, no, that would be a blessing, things actually were getting worse and worse? That must be draining, that has to be depressing. And to make matters worse we learn from Leviticus that she is unclean. And has been unclean every day for twelve straight years and that takes a toll. How do I know it takes a toll? Because if you are unclean because of blood, not only can people not touch you, but you cannot touch anyone else. Could you imagine no physical contact with another person for twelve years?

And it doesn’t stop there, its not just that people can’t touch her, they would actively avoid her because of not wanting to become unclean themselves. Just think about it, she is walking down the street and people are walking over to the other side of the street. And if you are close to a group of people you would have to yell out unclean and cause them to move yourself. This would be emotional torture.

Now let’s think about this spiritually. She can’t go into the temple. She can’t offer sacrifices, she cant be a part of communal prayer. She can’t worship with her kin for 12 years. This hemorrhage has consumed her and now it is all she is known by. There goes the lady who bleeds. Watch out there goes the bleeding lady.

Let me tell you what I think has happened. I think that her life had her down in the dumps. She must have been down in the pits seeing no way out after spending the last penny she had on a solution. And here is where context matters. What is the story right before our pericope of Mark 5:21-43?

Jesus is in the region with the Geresenes and he faces off against legion and she has heard that Jesus was able to heal the man that lived in the tombs, the man that no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. She believed with all her heart that if Jesus could heal this man labeled and known by his affliction and make him whole, then Jesus was the last resort, Jesus could make her whole too.

But here’s the thing, I asked myself why does she kind of sneak up to Jesus. Is it that she is ashamed? I don’t know because she is willing to go out there and do it. It may be that she doesn’t know if he is going to help, could that be it? But no because she is going to touch his robe because she is convinced he can help. She would not be there if she didn’t think it would help.

Hmm, It might be that she just doesn’t know if Jesus would stop for her. Theres a huge crowd and he is making his way from the crowd to take care of Jairus’s daughter, and he is the ruler of the synagogue. He is important he is going to get the healing, who am I? And so she sneaks. So maybe she is desperate, thinks Jesus would help, but doesn’t expect attention.

And don’t we act like that sometimes. Oh, who am I that God would want to deal with me? Who am I wretched sinner that I am that God would want to intervene in my life?

And so we will wait and wait and wait to go to God. And yet when she touches Jesus what does he do, he gives her his attention. We must learn from this lady and just go to Jesus because healing is found in him. We must not let our situations and labels stop us from going to God. Because God is the one who will remind us of our true label and we will see that in the story.

So lets keep going. Note this, there is one man who was identified by his significance "Jairus" and there is one woman who was identified by her issue she was called "the woman with the issue of blood". There was a time this woman had a name, but 12 years is a long time, and overtime she lost her name as she was consumed by her issue.

While this is possible, it is also possible for this to happen with your achievements. Just like people will identify you with your issues, they will also identify you with your position and achievements, that is dangerous.

Do you define yourself by your emotions, status, my lowest moment, do you define by your highest achievements? All of these definitions are dangerous. Because the moment you start believing that you are what you do, or you are what you went through, it creates a bleeding on the inside. There is a bleeding on the inside when your sense of self-worth is defined by what you do and what you go through.

The Bible said she heard, what are you hearing these days? Notice that what she heard wasn't what healed her. Faith comes by hearing and hearing of the word of God, but faith without action is dead. It's not going to get better because you took good notes, you can go to every Bible study and get worse. Remember she heard about Jesus healing the man and heard he was in town. And so she acted.

The bible said she heard, she came and she touched. (And maybe instead of waiting for a touch from God, you just have to make up your mind to touch God yourself, touch him for yourself.)

And when did her bleeding stop? This is amazing because I did not see this until I read for this week. Verse 28 says the bleeding stopped immediately after SHE THOUGHT. She thought to herself “If I but touch his clothes I will be made well.” And Immediately her hemorrhage stopped and she felt in her body that she was healed.

So did the healing come from the touching or from the thought, I think you can see it either way because if she doesn’t have the thought she would never have touched. So, 'She Heard' 'She Came' 'She Thought' and 'She Touched.' And God says to tell you that you can stop it with a thought.

She got healed because she thought. It was her thought that made her touch the hem of Jesus’ garment. You can stop the darkness, pain, and reproach with a thought. And what was her thought, her thought was, I am more than my situation. I am not the woman who bleeds, I am a woman who happens to be bleeding and she held onto that for twelve years until the thought drove her to Jesus.

Where do your thoughts drive you? Isn't it crazy that some of the ways you try to feel better made you feel much worse in the end? Have you ever eaten something to feel better, and truly you felt better for a while, and then later it made the situation even worse? Oh yeah, the fixes were only for a minute. The Bible did not say she never felt better, the Bible said she didn't get better.

And I wonder if in this time of our lives, this times of troubles and transitions and trauma and sickness, and bleeding if some of us are running to places, where we are spending our energy and giving our attention to things that promised to make it better but end up making it worse. Sometimes what we think is better is based on a point of reference that has no grounding in reality.

And in this woman's case, she was getting worse, to the extent that her issue has so consumed her she was being identified by her issue. Until she went to Jesus. And just like her bleeding started on the inside, so also did her deliverance start from the inside with a thought.

I always thought I was only as good as my achievements, I was only as good as my trophies. Now that may be all I have experienced but that is not all I am. How many times have you limited yourself because of what you thought you were not? How many times have you limited yourself because of what you thought you were?

You see everyone is identifying her as her situation, and she has had to focus not on who she is for twelve years, she has had to focus on who she is not. And I always wondered, why would Jesus stop her and call her back to tell her what she already knew. Why call her back and let Jairus' daughter die by wasting time? Just to tell her what she already knew, then I realized something, IT'S NOT WHAT HE TOLD HER, IT WAS WHAT HE CALLED HER.

Why did he stop on the way to heal Jairus' daughter? Because there was another daughter who forgot that she was a daughter.

So he didn't let her sneak away like a beggar, if he had let her sneak away at that time, the bleeding may stop, but she might live the rest of her life as something she is not, instead of who she really is.

What would you do, if you knew it was true that you are a child of God? What would it be like, if you knew that Almighty, omnipotent, all-powerful God had committed His resources to you?

What will the opinions of others mean to you, when you realize I am not what I did, and I am not what I suffered or what I lost. I am not my perversion, I am not my last mistake, I am not my failures, I am not my past, I am not my flesh. I am a daughter; I am a son.

He called her back just so she knows. She was his daughter. Jesus was giving her the only label that she needed to live by in order to live into who she is and not who she is not. How do you change your life, you do it with a thought, the woman thought, if I could only touch and it changed her life? You are to do it with the thought that you are a son or daughter of the most high God.