

Living in a Moment

by Jim Cymbala

God can intervene in an instant to change our lives, but we must be focused and intentional in our pursuit of Him.

Duration: 29:59

Scripture: Psalm 27:8, Isaiah 55:6, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 18:20, Mark 5:25-34, James 4:8, 1 Peter 2:2

Topics: "Trusting Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that even in the presence of Jesus, not everyone receives what they need unless they are focused. He encourages the audience to prioritize spending time with God and consuming His Word in order to experience growth and transformation. However, the preacher also highlights that there are moments when God can bring about instant change and breakthrough in our lives. He uses the story of Jairus, a synagogue ruler who sought Jesus' help for his dying daughter, as an example of how Jesus can bring about instantaneous healing and deliverance.

Transcript

Although there are a lot of processes going on in the world right now today, plants are growing, trees are growing, children are growing, children will all grow. And these are processes that take time. And they're all around us and we're all aware of them.

But beside those gradual developments of life, there are other things happening in the spiritual realm. And they also involve a process. You don't get mature as a Christian overnight.

You don't grow in your faith in one instant. We're all aware of that, that Peter tells us, desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby. The Bible is something that every day we should be drinking the word of God, eating it, fellowship, hearing the word of God preached, spending time with the Lord alone.

Andrew Murray, the great devotional writer, said if all Christians could just make it a goal in any given year to spend 15 minutes, a quarter of an hour, alone with the Lord, their lives would be revolutionized. But we get busy and we get going and we forget that there's a growth process that's important. But at the same time, there are things that happen in an instant.

Some people only emphasize the process and take away the instant. Some people only emphasize the instant and forget the process. But there are things that happen in just one single instant.

An earthquake happens. Lightning happens. And in the things of God, there are moments when things just happen.

They were a certain way and then in two seconds, something has changed. And many times we need encouragement to our faith to realize that this God that we serve, the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, operates also in an instant at times. Jesus was put in the grave.

He didn't gradually was raised from the dead. There was an instant when he was dead as death is defined and then there was an instant that happened where he was resurrected and then he was alive forevermore. There was a moment on the cross when he was living and then he cried and said into your hands, I commit my spirit and then he died.

He didn't die as a process, he died in an instant. And we who believe in the Lord need to grow in our faith so that we can be alive and awake and expectant that God can do things in an instant. There's a prophecy about the Messiah coming, Jesus Christ, in the Old Testament that says that when he comes, he will open the blind eyes, he will set the captives free, he will break the chains.

You're either bound or you're free. You're bound or you're free. Now once you get free, there's a lot of growth that has to happen but you can't grow if you're bound.

You have to be unshackled. And the unshackling happens most times in just an instant. The greatest example of this instantaneous change that Jesus can bring is found in one of my favorite stories in the book of Mark.

A lot of you know it. A man by the name of Jairus comes and he's a synagogue ruler and he says to Jesus, my daughter is close to death at home and she's sick, would you come and heal her? Would you come and pray for her? Because I know if you touch her and pray for her, stand over her, she'll be made well. And Jesus agrees to go with him.

And as he's walking, Jesus, on the road with Jairus, there's a huge crowd just bumping into him, mobbing him. They're trying to stick babies in front of him to bless, to have them blessed. And everyone's just being jostled by this crowd.

And Jesus is at the center of it. But while he's walking, something amazing happens. Look up at the passage in Mark.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him and a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better, she grew worse. And when she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak.

Why? Because she thought, if I just touch his clothes, I will be healed. Immediately, in a moment, her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once, Jesus realized that power had gone out from him.

And what an interesting verse. At once, Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. And he turned around in the crowd and he asked, who touched my clothes? You see the people crowding around you, the disciples answered, and yet you can ask, who touched me? There's hundreds bumping into you.

But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. And then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. And he said to her, daughter, your faith has healed you.

Go in peace and be freed from your suffering. Now there is a dramatic change in just a moment. Not a process, in a moment it happened.

I thank God for growth, but I thank God that he intervenes in our life and he can do miracles in a moment. How many say amen with me? He can change things in an instant. And in an instant, things can be totally turned inside out by the power of Jesus Christ.

Now if there's any picture of hopelessness, this is it in the Bible. And I'm glad that this is in the Bible because some things in our life come upon us in our lives. They come upon us and they leave you with a feeling of absolute hopelessness.

There's a reason why this story is told in a couple of the Gospels. Because God wants us to know when it seems hopeless to man, it's not hopeless to God. When it's discouraging and the bottom comes out, that doesn't mean that God can't change it in an instant.

And here was this woman, we never know her name. We don't know what kind of life she lived. We don't know if she was married.

We don't know if she went to the temple regularly. We don't know if she was religiously bent that way, had a bent toward serving God. We don't know about her lifestyle.

We know nothing about her. She's a nameless woman. The only thing that we know about her is the mess that she was in.

Because 12 years previous to this moment, she started to bleed. She started to hemorrhage. And this female bleeding wouldn't stop.

Now the Bible says the life is in the blood. So she was actually losing her life symbolically. She was just drained of her life and this negative flow, this terrible current of illness was just hurting her, troubling her.

On top of that, it made her religiously unclean according to the teachings of the Old Testament Mosaic Law. She was deemed with this bleeding to be ceremonially unclean so she couldn't go and worship and do the regular course of events that women could do in the court of the women at the temple because she was, in a way, self-ostracized by this bleeding. Well, this pained her and this hurt her.

So what she did was she went to doctors. But you know a little bit about what doctors did 2,000 years ago. Wasn't pretty.

Medical knowledge was very, very limited. Knowledge of the Bible, how things work, of the body and how things work was very limited. So the Bible says that she went to many doctors and instead of getting better, she got worse.

She suffered from the doctors. We don't know what treatment they gave her, but she didn't get better, she got worse. It would've been better if she never went to the doctors.

But her friends must've told her, you gotta do something. But instead of an improvement, she went into further decline. Not only that, you wanna talk about hopelessness.

She spent all the money she had, she now was busted. Because even back then, doctors charged a lot of money for their services. And she lost everything.

So now she's wasted, she's busted, she's worse than she began. And for 12 years, the bleeding can't stop, won't stop. And she's tried everything, but it's hopeless.

In fact, the Bible says it only grew worse. Have you ever had a situation like that in life? I wanna go past your body, I wanna go, yes, your body, but I wanna go your mind, your emotions, your spirit. Have you ever had something attack you or something develop in your life and you try everything you know how to do to turn the tide and it doesn't help? In fact, it's only getting worse.

It's only getting worse. It could be in your family, in your personal life, in your thought life, in your emotions, some besetting sin, some habit that rears its ugly head, some compulsive behavior, and it's secret just like this woman's bleeding was secret back in those days, like today, but a lot worse 2,000 years ago. You didn't go around and talk to anybody about your hemorrhaging problem, your bleeding problem, and she's just living in this dismay, despair, probably bordering on depression, if not depressed.

Now she has no more money. Now there are no alternatives because all you had was doctors, but then the Bible says she heard about Jesus. She didn't hear about church.

She didn't hear about the Brooklyn Tabernacle. She didn't hear about being a Roman Catholic or a Lutheran or a Baptist. She heard about Jesus.

She heard about this man who went about doing good and who had power over every kind of disease and evil spirit and problem, and somehow, something that we don't understand happened inside of her, but something just told her, if you can get to Jesus, things can change. I wanna stop and tell you that today. Unless you meet with Jesus, unless you have communion and contact with Jesus, coming in this building is worth absolutely zero.

This building has no power. Coming to church, saying even prayers, even opening a Bible, there's only power when you come into living contact with the Son of the living God, Jesus Christ. Can we put our hands together and say amen to that? There's a lot of superstition in all of us.

I think sometimes we spend our whole life getting rid of the superstitions we have. If I just get to the altar, if I have that pastor pray for me, if I read that book, listen, everything has its place. Going to church has its place.

Listening to pastors has its place, but in the bottom, at the bottom, you have to, you and I have to approach Jesus and have a living experience with Jesus. This lady not only heard about him, she went to where he was and she said somehow in her mind, if I could just touch his clothes, I know that this thing will go away. Now where that came to her, we don't know, but faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

Someone must've told her something that sparked this faith that said I've gotta get to Jesus and I wanna tell you today, whether you're going through it now or you go through it later on this year, when you're in a mess, you gotta get to Jesus. Come on, do I get an amen? You gotta get to Jesus, not to church. Not to

church, come to church.

Come every time the doors open. I'm for that, obviously. Listen to the minister, but you gotta get to Jesus because hundreds of thousands of people in our country now are going to church right as I speak now and nothing will change because they went to church, but they never had an encounter with Jesus Christ.

Things only change when you encounter Christ through faith, through the power of the Holy Spirit. So now the Bible tells us that as the crowd was jostling him and he's walking with Jairus to go and do another good work, she somehow, blessed woman that you are, she somehow fought her way to get behind him. She was too shy to stop him.

She didn't want to talk to him. She seemed to be shy. And somehow she had this point of contact for her faith.

If I just touch even the cloak, the hem of his garment, this thing will change. And can you see her now? The road is dusty, people jostling, hundreds if not thousands around Jesus, following him to see what's gonna happen at Jairus' house. Religious rulers watching, waiting to criticize.

And here she comes up and makes her way and bends over and just touches his garment. And the moment she touches his garment, the bleeding stops and somehow she feels it. What an amazing thing.

God, in an instant, can change the negative course in your life and in my life. I don't care what it is. I don't care if every demon in hell is on your tail.

Jesus can change it in an instant. Come on, can we put our hands together and say amen to that? In an instant, he can do it. There are some things that take gradual process.

There are some things that take time, growth. There's other things. Knowing the Bible, you don't know it overnight.

You don't never know it in an instant. As I read it, I'm just starting to learn it in a new way myself. But some things, thank God, happen in an instant.

Demons can be expelled in an instant. Bodies can be healed in an instant. When my oldest girl was just a little baby and we were just enjoying her so much in the house, I was newly now in the ministry.

We didn't have a doctor and things were very, very tight. And this beautiful little girl that we named Christine Joy, one morning, my wife said to me, what's that underneath her eye? And I said, what? And there was this bump under her eye, her tiny little eye. She was maybe a year old.

I said, I don't know, it'll go away. It didn't go away. It got bigger and it grew.

And now it was clearly visible. And I would take her at night and I would walk with her and hold her at night. I knew my wife was praying too, but I would hold Chrissy and walk with her through that house where we were living then in New Jersey.

And just walk with her and weep and pray, God, please, I don't know what this is, but please heal her, God, please. Nothing, it grew bigger. It grew bigger.

It just grew bigger. And now there was no getting around it. We had to see someone.

We found a doctor down the block that we could walk to from where we lived in Maplewood, New Jersey. We went in to see the doctor and the doctor examined her and said, listen, you don't have to worry. It's nothing dangerous, but I'm gonna have to cut, we're gonna have to cut under her eye and take that out.

He acted like it was nothing. When that's your first child, then they're gonna cut under the eye. That's a big thing.

How many agree with me? Eh, we're just gonna cut. I didn't know what to do. Struggling with my faith, praying, seeing nothing happen.

You ever have cases like that? So a couple Sundays later, we were in a service and we began to sing a song like we're gonna sing now, like Emmanuel, which we'll sing in a moment. And as we were singing and I was just worshiping God, boom, faith came in my heart. And I knew that God was gonna heal my daughter that morning.

I knew it. As God is my witness, people were at the altar, we were worshiping and waiting on God. And I yelled to the back, who has my daughter? Who has my daughter? Because different people in the church, women would hold her and watch her because Carol was playing the keyboard, the organ or whatever.

I was up on the platform and someone lifted their hand. I said, come on, bring her up. And I just held her in my arm.

And when I just held her, I just knew, God, you're doing it. You know, when you have faith, you don't have to scream and rant and rave. You just know, thus sayeth the Lord.

Come on, can we say amen to that? We know God is gonna change her. I held her, said a quiet prayer over her. Within 24 hours, there was no bump, no surgery, nothing.

God totally changed her. But listen, it stopped in that instant. I know in that instant, it all turned around.

You say, well, I don't believe that. Believe what you want. Why would I wanna argue what you believe? I'm just telling you the truth before Almighty God, what he did.

And we've seen that in our own lives, haven't we? How many have had God intervene in your life in just an instant and change everything? I told the church in one of the prayer meeting nights how several times in our life, my wife and I have seen God just intervene in a moment. In a moment. Everything is so dark and gray and not looking good.

And in a moment, he can shine light. Just in a moment, he sets the captives free. He breaks the chains that hold us back.

That complex that holds you back, he can break that complex in an instant. Well, how do you know? Because he's God. With God, nothing is impossible.

So here's the end of the story. Jesus stops and he goes, who touched me? What an interesting thought. Who touched me? And the disciples go, are you kidding me? Who touched you? Hundreds of people are touching you.

They're bumping into you. They're bouncing around. They're jostling.

They're trying to stick their babies in front of you. They just want you to... And you're asking, who touched you? He said, no, somebody touched me. Somebody touched me.

You know what that tells me? That even in the presence of Jesus, not everybody gets what they need unless they're focused. And I will not leave until I receive that thing that God has for me. Because they were all in his presence.

They were all bumping and bouncing around into him. I've noticed that since I first went in the ministry choir. In the same meeting that God touches people and changes their life, in the same row, three other people fall asleep during the service.

Isn't that amazing? In the meeting where a drug addict is delivered from heroin abuse, that same meeting, another person just comes to sit and criticize and why they sing that song and why do they make us lift our hands and blah, blah, blah. Come on, am I right or wrong, right? See, everybody comes for different reasons. You could sit here and criticize me, the choir, whatever.

Meeting's too short, meeting's too long. The point is, did you touch Jesus? You know what we prayed before we came down here? We prayed that people would have faith in this building to draw from Jesus the thing that you need. Because Jesus is still alive.

He's more alive in a sense than he was back then. And the Bible says, wait, where two or three are gathered, Jesus said, I'll be there. Now he's with us.

He said, lo, I am with you to the end of the age. So we know he's with us. But why would he say this? Well, where two or three are gathered, oh, there I will be with you.

I wonder why he would be with us today. I have felt his presence from when I walked in and Pastor JC was leading. The Lord is here today.

Is he not here today? Why would he be here with us? To hurt us or to help us? To bless us or to curse us? To lift us or to put us down? To lift us. But not everybody will experience that. Now some might walk out.

You're even counting the minutes now when you can get out. And just because you went to church, you wanna be able to say, I was at the tab on Sunday. I was at the tab.

You don't need the tab. Listen, one touch from Jesus. Who touched me? Because he felt something go out from him.

The woman knew. It's odd that they say he had to look around. He didn't know.

He just didn't have like supernatural power to just, for this, to say, I know it's you, woman. No, he was looking around. She came, threw herself at his feet, and told him everything.

And Peter was there and listened. And Peter was the one who probably influenced the gospel of Mark, the writing of Mark, because Mark wasn't there. She told her story.

I'm busted. I have no money left. I'm worse than I was when I started.

But I knew if I could just touch you for an instant. She wasn't healed because she was a great Christian. We don't know that.

That's not mentioned. God doesn't heal us because we merit it, we've earned it. He blesses us because we have faith.

The feeblest hand that lifts itself to God to receive something is all God is asking for today. No matter where you are, He doesn't upbraid us and say, what, you want something from me the way you've been living the last few months? If He was like that, who of us could receive anything from Him? No. He just looks for those hands that go out in faith and are empty and say, I need you, Jesus.

I need you to instantaneously change this mess that's going on in my life. Now mark my words here from the Word of God. This is one of those rare places where Jesus said this.

Woman, your faith has healed you. Why didn't He say, I have healed you? Because He didn't even know who she was. Look at the power of faith.

Faith that expects something from God is so strong that just touching the hem of Jesus' garment, though others are jostling, they receive nothing, but one woman touching Him got the miracle that she needed. And this Jesus is alive today and He's here. The same Jesus that changed, healed my daughter.

The same Jesus that has helped so many of us just instantaneously. I just wanna share this with you. I lived in a house in Queens and there's a stairway there.

It's a center hall colonial house and a stairway, many times when I pass by it, I think to a certain day, I was at my wits end. I won't give you the details. I couldn't go on.

I was so attacked by Satan. I was so messed up in my mind, confused. My nerves had been drawn too tight.

Years ago this happened. I didn't know what to do, but I was in panic mode. I was in distress, SOS, whatever I was, and I'm not the only one who ever experienced that.

Come on, how many have ever been in a place where you didn't know what to do? Just lift your hand. You didn't know what to do and you're torn inside. Well, what about those stairs? Because for some reason, I just was walking through the house weeping.

God knows I was weeping, and I faced those stairs. I was in the foyer and I looked at those stairs and something just told me, cry out to God now. Cry out to God now.

He will help you now. Cry out to him now. Just something told me that.

You know, my wife and I grew up in a church and they would sing this song, songs like this. Jesus is passing this way today. He's passing this way today.

He's passing this way. Another song that would go with it was, reach out and touch the Lord as he goes by. You'll find he's not too busy to hear your hearts cry.

He's passing by this moment your needs to supply. Reach out and touch the Lord as he goes by. There are moments in life when the Lord is calling you and saying, believe me, believe me.

Call to me, believe me, I'll help you right now. If you miss that moment, you don't know when it will come again. I know the thing, God doesn't change, but the way our faith changes, when he deposits that faith in

us and beckons us, he's gonna do something great.

Close your eyes with me. That day facing that stairway, I cried to him, and I'm telling you, as God is my holy witness, he lifted that junk that was on top of me, he lifted it like a cloud layer was lifted off, and the sun began to shine, and joy filled my heart. I don't care what it is, Jesus is passing this way.

He said, where two or three are gathered, I will help you. I wanna ask if there's anybody upstairs, downstairs, you are like that woman, it's getting worse, not better. You're going south instead of north.

You're being honest, you're being vulnerable, you need him right now. In your emotions, your nerves, your mind, your body, your spirit, you need the Lord today. You don't need him tomorrow, it's time-sensitive, you need him today.

Get out of your seat and come up here, please. Just leave your seat. It's your way of saying to God, I'm the woman, Lord, who touched the hem of your garment.

I know if I call you today, I know I have faith that you're gonna help me. I'm not hoping you're gonna help me, I believe you will help me. I'm not throwing up a whim and a fancy kind of prayer, no, I'm being definite, God is gonna help me today.

He is not happy with the way things are going right now in my life, he's gonna help me. And now let your light shine upon your people, and grant them your peace, Lord. Let joy and peace be with us today, and flood our hearts.

And we thank you that we can look behind us and not see demons, but goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life. And we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. We cast away and resist Satan's every negative thought, because we have Jesus, and if God be for us, who can be against us?

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