



Alfred  
Street  
BAPTIST CHURCH



**MARK 5:21-34, NRSV**  
**MARCH 6/7, 2021**

A SERMON BY  
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**VILLAGE**  
@ASBC

MOVING FROM CROWD TO COMMUNITY

Sunday, March 7, 2021

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Judy Fentress-Williams

Sermon: "That's Not My Name"

Scripture: Mark 5:21-34 (KJV)

**CURRICULUM  
GUIDE**





## Sermon Summary

In her sermon titled, "That's Not My Name", Dr. Judy begins by noting that there are multiple Bible stories that feature people whose names we do not know. She reminds us that while names are simply a designation they can also reflect a value system. For example, nameless characters in the Bible are often identified by their relationship to their family's structure in terms of whether they bring honor or shame to the family patriarch.

We learn that sometimes the concepts of honor and shame leak into the way we relate to one another. Some members of the Black community—especially with regard to our children, use names to establish destiny, self-determination, purpose, heritage and inheritance. Naming is often our response to a history of signifying us as a people with no importance. Using the story of the woman with the issue of blood, Dr. Judy illustrates how Jesus invites the unnamed woman to step into a paradigm shift that involves more than just physical healing. (continued)

# Sermon Summary

By demanding to know who touched him, Jesus gives the woman the opportunity to be transformed from an anonymous nobody signified only by her “issue” and shame—into the named beloved daughter—fully healed and fully restored into her identity as a precious child of God. Like the woman “with the issue” you are invited to live fully into your redemption. Reject the external and internal voices that try to define you by your failures and shame. Tell those voices “that’s not my name”! Take on the fullness of your healing, redemption, and salvation. Let go of your sense of shame and failure. Live into your identity and healing as a beloved child of God.

## Key Points:

1. Names are important in creating identity as they convey our value. When you are named by your issues, you must reject the external and internal voices that try to define you by your failures and shame and tell those voices “that’s not my name.”
2. There is power in being healed in public as Jesus demonstrates when he heals the woman with the issue of blood and calls her “daughter” publicly. Healing is more than just being physically restored. You must take on the fullness of your healing, redemption, and salvation and live into your identity as a beloved child of God.

## Notes for Facilitators:

Welcome to Week 6. Please be sure to remind Villagers, that the Curriculum Guides are always available for download from the ASBC website under the Member/Disciple Needs >Village > Curriculum Guide. Also, during this period of pandemic, please be sensitive to Villagers’ experiences of grief and loss.



# Getting To Know You Questions:

1. Many times, a person's name holds special meaning. Some of us are named after family members, after biblical people, and others after celebrities. No matter the origin, names identify who we are, and where we come from. What, if anything, do you know about the origin of your name?
2. Exercising faith sometimes involves a willingness to take a risk. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest, how willing are you to take risks? Do you have any hobbies or interests that require taking a risk? What are they?





## Into The Bible Questions:

1. When God changed a person's name and gave them a new one, it was usually to establish a new identity. In Genesis 17:5, we witness a biblical renaming when God changes Abram's name, meaning "high father," to "Abraham," meaning "father of a multitude." As you reflect on your own identity in Christ, has God renamed you?
2. After the healing, Jesus tells the woman, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole" (Mark 5:34 KJV). In your opinion, what is significant about Jesus saying "thy faith made thee whole" instead of God "made thee whole"?



# Life Application Questions:

1. One of the greatest revelations from this story is that God is a healer. It is likely that the woman in the text sought all types of treatment for over 12 years “and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse”. Have you had an experience that seemed like it could not be solved, but God intervened to fix it?
2. Dr. Judy talked about the significance of names to tell a story and to speak of heritage. While we know what we would like to be called, we know that there are times in our lives when people have called us things “outside of our name.” Have you had experience with being called by something other than your name? If so, how has that impacted you? What new titles or affirmations are you praying for this year?
3. Dr. Judy talks about a paradigm where people only have two options when associated with someone in power—honor and shame. In what ways have you felt that you have brought “honor” or “shame” to those around you? What pressure did you feel in those scenarios and do you still feel those in your current relationships?
4. There are many illustrations of Jesus’ healing powers throughout the Bible (e.g. healing the blind, mute, lepers and the paralytic). Yet, during the course of our lives, some of us have experienced the loss of a loved one or friend due to an illness/disease that was not healed. Do you wrestle with the belief that God is a great physician with the power to heal and the reality of losing a loved one because of illness? Do you ever hold feelings of resentment toward God because God did not intervene and heal?

# "Can I Push It?"

1. In this sermon, Dr. Judy references John 8:10 with the question "who are your accusers?" She then pushes the question further to ask are they in your community of faith? How have we as Christians and the church turned into accusers and who is damaged by our accusations and shaming? What new choices could we make to restore the names of those we've hurt?
2. The woman with the issue of blood would have been considered "unclean" and "untouchable" in that time period. Today in our ministries and churches, we can find ourselves pushing people away in the same manner. How have you either participated in rejecting or been rejected by your spiritual community? Are there any specific groups that the church rarely recognizes or actively rejects? Why?

## Activity:

### ***What's in a Name?***

There are several instances in the Bible where God changed someone's given name. Split up into two teams and set the timer to 3 minutes. Compete against each other to discover how many renamed people in the Bible you can identify.



## Spirit Work:

1. Take time to reflect, and being completely vulnerable with God, write a list of areas in your life where you don't feel completely whole. Ask the Holy Spirit to work with you in these areas.
2. In the spirit of renaming, write down an encouraging affirmation for each day this week (e.g. "I Am Blessed," "I Am Overcoming," "I Am Healed"). Place it somewhere you can easily see it (your computer, bathroom mirror, fridge, etc.) and work to live into that name for the day.

### **Additional Questions for Married Couples**

1. The woman with the issue of blood likely exhausted all of her options to find a solution to her suffering. How likely are you to try every other option before you take your marital issues to God?
2. The woman with the issue of blood fought through the crowd for her healing. How has your crowd of family, friends, or other outside influences made it more challenging to pursue what's best for your marriage? What are you learning as you push through the crowd?

### **Additional Questions for Young Adults**

1. Some people talk about Millennials and Gen Z as generations who have done nothing but bring shame. Dr. Judy observes that it is, "sad to be reduced to your resume." Do you find this to be true, or not true?
2. This sermon encourages us to remember that sometimes you will have to take a risk to get healed. As you look back on your spiritual journey, what risks have you taken? If you have not had a moment like that, what risks might be ahead of you?





### **Additional Questions for Parents**

1. Dr. Judy begins her sermon talking about families who have raised their children to correct the mispronunciation of their names. What is a value that you are raising your children to maintain as they go out into the world?
2. What has gone into the naming of your children? What discussions have you had about what to name or nickname your children?

### **Additional Questions for Women**

1. According to the law (Leviticus 15:25-27), excessive blood flow made a woman ceremonially unclean. Therefore, this woman likely experienced years of loneliness and feeling worn out from visiting doctor after doctor. Have you ever experienced a similar period of desperation for God's healing? How did you overcome the battle? How can you encourage another woman facing a similar battle?
2. Dr. Judy talks about how many of us are living under the shame of our past, and the fact that we are often called by many harmful names that are not our own. What names have you experienced? How has the shame of your past showed up in your current life? What part of your past are you healing so that you can truly live now? What name would you like to be called in this period of your life?

### **Additional Questions for Men**

1. This week's biblical passage emphasizes the determination of the woman with the issue of blood, as she literally pushed through the crowd to get to Jesus. Does her determination remind you of any brave women in your life who've similarly pushed through obstacles? Who are they? How might you, or the forces of a male-dominated society, contributed to the obstacles women have had to overcome?
2. We know that music, movies, art, and even some biblical texts use problematic and even violent language toward women. Knowing that Jesus identifies this woman as daughter, what can men do today to be an ally to women to ensure that they are called by their self-identified names and not the other names society has given them?



## Readings for This Week

Monday, March 8	Mark 5:21-34
Tuesday, March 9	Luke 8:43-48
Wednesday, March 10	Matthew 9:20-22
Thursday, March 11	Genesis 17:1-16
Friday, March 12	Leviticus 15:25-27

## Further Study and Resources

Self-Care Guide: <https://www.alfredstreet.org/selah/>

[Mr. Garvey] Substitute Teacher- Key & Peele

<https://youtu.be/Dd7FixvoKBw> (Viewer discretion advised. Contains adult language that some viewers may find objectionable. Not suitable for young audiences)