# RIVER *Flow*

*Seven Days of Devotional Practice*
October 25 – 31, 2026

## The Whole Story

Mark 5:25–34

### A Note Before You Sit

This week stays with the woman who touched Jesus' clothes after twelve years of bleeding, and offers her story as a path for your own. The question the week keeps asking: what would it mean to tell the whole of it, in your own time, to the One who stopped for her?

Go slowly. If the week stirs something heavy, please reach out to me or to someone you trust, or call or text 988.

Ways to use this guide, from the most shared to the most personal:

1. As a group: watch this Sabbath's sermon together (website and YouTube), then walk the week and discuss the questions at the back. No one need share more than they choose.

2. As a group that meets once a week: each person walks the days alone, and you gather one day, in person or on Zoom, to pray that day together.

3. One-on-one: read it with someone you are discipling, taking a day, or the closing questions, as your conversation.

4. On your own, or with your family, a day at a time.

*— Pastor Mel Baga, D.Min.*
*Lead Pastor, Auburn SDA Church*

# Daily Devotional Guide

## SUNDAY, October 25 — Seen in the Crowd

*"Who touched my cloak?" — Mark 5:30*

**Read:** Mark 5:30–32

Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my cloak?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?' " He looked all around to see who had done it.

**Reflect:** The crowd around Jesus is so thick that the disciples can hardly believe his question.

Mark's word for the crowd is *synthlíbō*: they were pressing in on him from every side. One touch was different, and Jesus knew it. He was on his way to the house of a synagogue leader whose daughter was dying, and still he stopped and asked who had touched him.

Then he kept looking around. Mark puts the verb in a tense that means he went on looking. He did not point. He did not call anyone out of the crowd or announce what had happened. He asked a question no one was required to answer, and he waited. Before she said a word, she had been noticed. Nothing needs to be told today. It is enough to know that Christ turns toward the one no one else has seen, and that his looking is not the kind that exposes.

**Notice:** Notice whether being seen feels like welcome or like danger to you today. Either answer can be brought to him.

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, you stopped in the crowd and kept looking. I am not ready to say everything. Let it be enough today that you have seen me, and teach me that your seeing is safe. Amen.

**Stay:** Find a quiet place and sit before God for twenty minutes, as you are able. Settle into a comfortable posture, kneeling or seated, and begin

your silent, wordless prayer. When a thought, feeling, or sensation arises, notice it, let it go, and return to the here and now. A short word chosen beforehand (*God*, *love*, *here*, *return*) or the breath at the tip of your nose can bring you back; once you have returned, let it go too. You are not emptying your mind, only resting it. In that stillness the Spirit does the transforming work he longs to do in you.

## MONDAY, October 26 — How Long

*"How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?" — Psalm 13:1*

**Read:** Psalm 13

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I bear pain in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all day long? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? Consider and answer me, O LORD my God! Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed"; my foes will rejoice because I am shaken. But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

**Reflect:** Mark measures the woman's suffering in years before he tells us anything else about her.

Twelve years is long enough for a condition to become a way of life. Whatever her days had been before, they were rearranged around the bleeding: what she could do, where she could go, what she could plan. The old normal did not end on a single day. It wore away, and at some point she stopped expecting it back.

Psalm 13 asks *ʿad-ʾānâ*, how long, four times in two verses. The psalmist does not apologize for asking, and God does not rebuke the question. Lament begins here, with the length of it. Before a loss can be grieved, it has to be counted: how long the wound has been carried, and what life

was like before it. The psalm does turn toward trust at the end, but only after the question has been asked in full.

**Scripture referenced:** Mark 5:25 — Now there was a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years.

**Notice:** Notice how long you have been carrying something you rarely name. You do not need to name it to anyone yet. Only notice the length of it.

**Pray:** Lord, you let David ask how long. I ask it too. You know how long I have carried this, and what my life was before it. Hold the count with me. Amen.

**Stay:** As on Sunday.

## TUESDAY, October 27 — Made Worse

*"She had endured much under many physicians" — Mark 5:26*

**Read:** Mark 5:25–26

Now there was a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians and had spent all that she had, and she was no better but rather grew worse.

**Reflect:** Mark is unusually blunt about the doctors.

She had suffered much *hypò pollōn iatrōn*, under many physicians. The grammar makes them more than failures to cure. They are part of what she suffered. She spent everything she had. She was not helped at all. She grew worse.

Some wounds come from strangers. Others come from people who were supposed to help: a parent, a doctor, a counselor, a pastor, a church. Psalm 55 knows the difference: "It is not enemies who taunt me … but it is you, my equal, my companion" (vv. 12–13). Harm from a helper wounds twice. It hurts, and it teaches you that reaching out is

dangerous. Good helpers are many, and needing one is no failure. But if you were made worse by someone meant to make you well, that is real, and it can be grieved. Today it is enough to name it before God. Jesus is not one more physician who takes what you have and leaves you worse.

**Scripture referenced:** Psalm 55:12–14 — It is not enemies who taunt me; I could bear that. It is not adversaries who deal insolently with me; I could hide from them. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend, with whom I kept pleasant company; we walked in the house of God with the throng.

**Notice:** Notice whether you hold back from asking for help, and whether that caution was learned somewhere.

**Pray:** Lord, some of my wounds came from hands that should have healed. I bring them to you without having to defend them. Do not leave me worse. Amen.

**Stay:** As on Sunday.

## WEDNESDAY, October 28 — From Behind, Alone

*"She came up behind him in the crowd" — Mark 5:27*

**Read:** Mark 5:27–29

She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his cloak, I will be made well." Immediately her flow of blood stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.

**Reflect:** No one brings her to Jesus.

Earlier in Mark, four friends carry a paralyzed man to a crowded house, open the roof, and lower him at Jesus' feet (2:3–5). Jairus, a leader of the synagogue, comes in the open and pleads for his daughter. The woman has no name in the story and no one speaking for her. She comes

from behind and plans a touch no one will see. Mark says she kept saying it to herself: if I touch even his clothes, I will be made well. The only voice in her plan is her own.

Her condition isolated her whether or not anyone turned her away. Long illness does that. Life narrows to what can be managed alone. Psalm 142 says it plainly: "no one takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for me" (v. 4). And yet she came. Her plan was small and careful, it protected her at every point, and Mark lets it work. Then Jesus turns and finds the one nobody brought. Coming alone is not the same as being left alone.

**Scripture referenced:** Mark 2:3–5 — Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

**Scripture referenced:** Psalm 142:4 — Look on my right hand and see: there is no one who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for me.

**Notice:** Notice where you have learned to manage alone, and whether anyone has ever offered to help carry you.

**Pray:** Lord, I have come to you from behind more often than I have come openly. Thank you for noticing the touch no one else saw. Find me where I have been alone. Amen.

**Stay:** As on Sunday.

## THURSDAY, October 29 — Tears Kept

*"Put my tears in your bottle" — Psalm 56:8*

**Read:** Psalm 56:8–13

You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your record? Then my enemies will retreat in the day when I call. This I know, that God is for me. In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I am not afraid. What can a mere mortal do to me? My vows to you I must perform, O God; I will render thank offerings to you. For you have delivered my soul from death and my feet from falling, so that I may walk before God in the light of life.

**Reflect:** Mourning is not the same as hurting.

Pain is what a person endures. Loss is what a person grieves. The woman in Mark lost more than her health. She lost twelve years. She lost everything she had. She lost trust in the people who were meant to help her. She lost the ordinary belonging of a life not arranged around a wound. Hope deferred, Proverbs says, makes the heart sick (13:12), and hers was deferred again and again.

Psalm 56 pictures God keeping the psalmist's tears in a *nō̂d*, a skin bottle, and writing them in his book. The same verse says he has counted the psalmist's *nōd*, his wanderings. None of it is lost on God. Hannah wept at Shiloh until the priest thought she was drunk, and she told him, "I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD" (1 Sam 1:15). Grief like hers is not a failure of faith. It is how faith speaks when something has been taken. Grace with what is comes after grieving what was, not instead of it.

**Scripture referenced:** Proverbs 13:12 — Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

**Scripture referenced:** 1 Samuel 1:15 — But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman deeply troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD."

**Notice:** Notice one loss you have not let yourself grieve. Name it to God as a loss, and let that be enough for today.

**Pray:** Lord, you keep my tears and count my wanderings. Here is something I lost. I do not need to make sense of it before I give it to you. Keep it with my tears. Amen.

**Stay:** As on Sunday.

## FRIDAY, October 30 — The Whole Truth

*"She ... told him the whole truth" — Mark 5:33*

**Read:** Mark 5:32–33

He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth.

**Reflect:** She did not have to come forward.

Her body was already healed. She could have slipped back into the crowd, and no one would have known. Instead she came, afraid and trembling, fell down before him, and told him *pâsan tēn alḗtheian*, the whole truth. Mark does not record what she said. The story she told belongs to her and to the one she told it to.

Fear and faith stand side by side here. She trembled, and Jesus named what she had as faith. Trembling faith is still faith. The telling also came in her time, not the crowd's. Psalm 62:8 says, "pour out your heart before him." The verb is *šāpak*, the same word Hannah used of her soul at Shiloh. The whole truth can be poured out to God first, in prayer or in writing, without editing it for anyone's comfort. In time it may be right to tell it to one person you trust to hear it to the end, without hurrying, fixing, or looking away. That is a choice, not a requirement, and it can wait until you are ready.

**Scripture referenced:** Psalm 62:8 — Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.

**Notice:** Notice what you usually leave out when you tell your story, and whether it is safe yet to leave less out with God.

**Pray:** Lord, I come to you trembling, and I do not have all the words. Here is more of the truth than I usually say. Thank you for staying to hear it. Amen.

**Stay:** As on Sunday.

## SABBATH, October 31 — Daughter, Go into Peace

*"Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace" — Mark 5:34*

**Read:** Mark 5:34

He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

**Reflect:** Jesus answers the whole truth with a name.

*Thygátēr*, daughter. Nowhere else in Mark does Jesus call anyone by that word. A woman with no name in the story, no one to speak for her, and twelve years of being known by her condition, is called family in front of the crowd that never noticed her. Your wound is not your name. Then he sends her: *hýpage eis eirḗnēn*, go into peace. It is the old Hebrew blessing *lěkî lěšālôm*, the words Eli spoke to Hannah when her prayer had been heard (1 Sam 1:17). Isaiah gives God's own version: "I have called you by name; you are mine" (43:1).

Her body was healed, but the twelve years did not come back, and neither did the money or the trust. Shalom does not erase what happened. It is a wholeness that can hold the scars. Jesus adds *ísthi hygiḗs*, go on being whole. The life on the other side of being heard is hers to live, and it is not the old normal. It is grace with what is. Sabbath is the day God gives for this: to stop, to be named his, and to rest in a peace that does not wait for everything to be undone.

**Scripture referenced:** 1 Samuel 1:17 — Then Eli answered, "Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him."

**Scripture referenced:** Isaiah 43:1 — But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.

**Notice:** Notice a name you have answered to because of a wound, and set beside it the name Christ speaks: daughter, son, mine.

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, you heard the whole of it and gave me a name. Let me rest today as one who belongs to you, carrying my scars into your peace. Amen.

**Stay:** As on Sunday.

# Group Discussion Questions

1. The week began with being noticed before anything was said. What was it like to imagine Christ turning toward you without asking anything of you yet?

2. Psalm 13 asks "how long." What did counting the length of something you carry stir in you this week?

3. Tuesday named the pain of being made worse by people meant to help. Without naming anyone, how has that kind of harm shaped the way you ask for help?

4. The woman came to Jesus alone, with no one to carry her. Where have you learned to manage alone, and what would it take to let someone help carry you?

5. Thursday set pain and loss apart. Was there a loss you were able to grieve this week, or one you are not yet ready to approach?

6. She told the whole truth while afraid and trembling. What makes a person safe enough to hear someone's whole story, and how could our church become more like that?

7. Jesus answered her story with "Daughter" and sent her into peace. What name do you sense him speaking over you, and how might it change the way you carry your scars into the coming week?

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