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TOUCH OF OMNIPOTENCE

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TOUCH OF OMNIPOTENCE

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THIS INSTRUCTION
IS NOT A METHOD,
BUT A MESSAGE.

TOUCH OF OMNIPOTENCE

Today, the Twenty-third Sunday After Pentecost, we are informed concerning the two-way touch of truth. The lesson is presented in the form of two miracles of healing, one that takes place as a woman touches the hem of Jesus' garment, and the other such a healing as is classified by the human mind to be utterly impossible, the overcoming of death. The touch of omnipotence is a two-way touch.

Touch, you know, is considered to be the most material of all the senses, the organ of touch. Yet, when it comes in touch with truth it becomes the most spiritual.

People like to feel that they are in touch with the spiritual power, and they feel it to be their greatest

misfortune when they have a sense of exile, believing themselves to be out of touch.

According to the prescribed rationality of this Instruction it is seen by the super-logic that no one can ever be out of touch with truth. Truth, God, is all there is. In God we live and move and have our being. How can you be out of touch with that in which you live and move and have your being? Yet there seems to be a way even when we are within the very truth itself, that we are out of touch. This is because of some inner sense of being apart from God.

Today we show that greatest miracle of all, of being in touch within and without. And what a healing it is! Almost every person in the world feels that in some way he needs to be healed, needs salvation. The significant meaning of salvation is the complete restoration to spiritual and material health--salvation.

In one of my father's magnificent expositions of spiritual doctrine he spoke of this as an earthquake of healing. He said--it is not quoted exactly, but the meaning is here--These people are not sick, they are merely receiving healing. Put yourself in touch with that!

Perhaps you say, Why should I need to have a sense of receiving healing; wouldn't it be better if I never felt as though I needed any healing? One woman who fell down today and skinned her knee said that she thought she was going to be put on her knees one way or another. Why should we seem to need healing? Why should we seem to need salvation? Somebody asked me the other day: Why aren't we always just the way we ought to be? Well, we are! And that is exactly what this sentence means: These people are not sick, they are merely receiving healing.

Put this in the theological language of Saint Thomas Aquinas and you will have it in this way: Being

and becoming are one act. You can only become what you are. You could never make a change by truth, you know. The power of truth does not change things. What does it do, then? What is its miraculous touch? It is a matter of revelation, of an awakening to what is true. Any person who takes up spiritual doctrine to make a change in his life, to make a change in his health, to make a change in his situation, is starting from a false premise, and he is chasing himself 'round and 'round the "spinit bush," around and around his own mind.

These people are not sick, they are merely receiving healing, becoming what they are, awakening to the truth about themselves. That is what instruction is; that is why it is called a message, not a method. It is an awakening, a reminder of what you are, becoming what you are, receiving healing.

This is the reciprocal touch that is brought out in two miracles today: the touch of faith upon the hem of the Lord's garment, and the touch of the

right hand of God, the Lord touching the young girl that He saw as sleeping. The others around saw her as dead because they were using their own interpretation. You may think that Jesus was putting only His interpretation upon the situation. Well, when truth puts its interpretation upon something you may be sure that it is authorized. He Who is the Truth, the Word of God, does not deal in deceptions. When He says, She is not dead, but sleeping, He is speaking the truth, not to make it so, not to try to change conditions, but because He knows what is true and He is pronouncing the words of truth. Truth is true no matter what the darksome situations may be.

Here we have in today's account in the Gospel, in the ninth chapter of Saint Matthew, man touching God. In this instance "man" is in the form of a woman. When God created humanity He made them in His image; male and female created He them, condignity and congruity, the two forms of power in the

world. And they are not different. Being and becoming! Being is the con-dignity, becoming is the congruity.

Here we have a most becoming situation. The Lord Jesus Christ was on His way to the ruler's house. He had been called because the ruler's daughter was accounted dead. And on the way He was surrounded by a crowd of people. Wherever He went there was always a crowd of people. He did not try to get rid of them, He let them come. He was going along the way, crowds around Him. All of a sudden, when all these crowds were pressing around Him, He felt a certain touch. Not on His hand, not on His flesh, but on the hem of His garment, seemingly just as far removed as could be. And yet He felt that touch.

What is that touch significant of? It is the touch of faith. The woman had been ill for twelve years; she had spent all kinds of time running to the doctors; she had a so-called incurable situation, and the people didn't even like to have her around. But she had something in her

heart, she had an intuition of truth and she touched the hem of the Lord's garment. He felt that touch and she was healed.

This touch is significant of faith. We know this because He said to her, Be of good heart, daughter--He called her one of His own--thy faith hath made thee whole. She had touched Him with her faith. Faith touches the omnipotence of God. It is man's way of touching omnipotence--faith. Faith is the evidence of things not seen and the substance of things hoped for. She received that substance, she received that transmission. Yet, she had merely touched the hem of His garment. This is significant of faith. Perhaps you do not feel that your faith is very substantial, or that it brings you very close. You think that your faith is quite on the outskirts of things. Your faith is the touch of this hem of the Lord, touching His hem, like the shadow, like the outer circle. Yet, when it touches, that touch is felt. The touch

on the hem of the Lord's garment with our faith becomes a "felt feeling" that we have heard so much about. Be of good heart, daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. The wholeness of faith.

What do you think faith had to do with the healing? It was not a "faith healing." It was not the faith that healed. So often people miss the significance of the relation of faith to healing. It is not faith that heals; it is faith that opens your heart to the recognition of healing. Saint Anselm reverses the order of our thinking about faith; he says, I believe in order to understand.

There is said to be a two-way touch of spiritual things in relation to you, a two-way touch. Revelation is the way by which God touches you and awakens you; and your own touch upon this truth is by faith. Through your own faith you participate in the revelation of omnipotence. It may seem to you, because you feel that faith is very intangible, as though your touch is on the outskirts.

You think that if you have a thing only by faith you are really very much out of touch. And yet you are really in touch if you have that wholeness of faith and that good heart of faith. And the Lord feels this touch.

What is faith anyway? It is called a consent, spiritual action, a consent. You know, a person could be pressed all around by miracles, could be touched on every side, could have instruction drummed into his ears, and it would mean nothing at all if he did not have that something within that becomes his awakening, his acknowledgment, his recognition, his consent.

Saint Thomas Aquinas gives as a definition of faith, that it is to think with assent. It is not just thinking, you know; but it is to think with assent, to consent, to open your heart, to awaken, to be aware of the omnipresence of God, to have that awakening that enables you to recognize that you do live and move and have your being in God, and that you cannot be out of touch. But it

comes as an assent or a consent within yourself.

Even though you touch only the hem of His garment, the outer garment of the Lord, you would be touching Him, because there are no outer garments to an omnipresence. Faith may seem to be something very remote to you, but there is no remoteness to this living presence of the Lord, His ever present presence. You may think you are out of touch with Him; but when your faith has awakened within you, you touch omnipotence with this faith. Even though it is only at the hem, at the outskirts, still it is a complete and satisfying touch.

The Lord felt the touch of this woman, even though all the other people were pressing around Him and joggling, perhaps, against Him in the crowd. Why didn't He feel all of those people? Why didn't they all receive? They were there. He was present to them. Why didn't all of those people receive the healing? Was He just holding it back and giving it to one person? All these people

were constantly in human contact with our Lord. The Scribes and the Pharisees could touch Him and did touch Him. Why didn't they all receive their enlightenment? Because they did not have this personal touch with omnipotence. It was there; He was present to them; but they did not give their consent. He was there; He did not have to come into their presence, He did not have to do anything. But when, in themselves, they were awakened to that faith in Him, that was their touch upon His omnipotence.

You can be right in the midst of something and be out of touch with it if you have not that awakening within you, that contact within that is called faith. Wonderful miracles can go on all around you. They were going on all around at that time, and many of the people saw them with their eyes and heard about them with their ears, and were present, in what is called a human touch, with these miracles. And yet they saw them not; they did not recognize them. They looked at these things as blasphemy

because their hearts were closed. When hearts are closed, minds are closed. Even though they were in His presence, in His living presence, they were remote because that remoteness was in themselves, not in Him.

But this woman, among all the crowd there, was in touch with an omnipotence. She had made that connection. And although He was present to all the others just as much, and they were even touching Him and crowding Him, it was this one touch on the hem of His garment that revealed to this woman her healing. She became what she was. She received her healing physically because she was whole spiritually.

Why should there be this outward activity? One time the disciples asked Jesus the reason for the need of miracles. They asked why a certain man was born blind. You could ask it about anything: Why is this; why is that? People asking these questions think they are going to get an answer satisfactory to their minds, an explanation of how these things come about. But there is only one answer.

From the relative viewpoint you could never answer where this evil comes from, or where that disease comes from, or why you have poverty, or why you have something else. You cannot answer things that way, for the very question is based on a false premise. There must be an absolute answer only. The question about the man born blind, He answered in that way. He said, That the glory of God may be revealed. You might say, Well, why are all these people sick? And we can answer, They are not sick--this is the earthquake of your healing--they are not sick, they are merely receiving their healing, receiving their awareness of the presence of health, spiritual and physical. And you say, Why should they need to receive health if they already have it?

There is a two-way action always, by which the glory of God is revealed. We might use this illustration: We have the sun that shines--it is shining beautifully today, no smog, and yet probably you could find smog if you went hunting for it; but out of the window right now

I see no smog, just sunshine. We have the sun, and the earth that reflects sunlight; and there is a wondrous reciprocation between the two. What would the earth be without the sun shining on it, and what would the sun be without the earth upon which its light shines? You can ask yourself that. You do not make the sun bright, you do not make the sun because you are on the earth that the sun shines on. But you do have that ability to reflect the sunshine. The earth reflects the sunshine--and the earth could not exist a moment without it.

It is the same way with the omnipotence of God. You do not make this omnipotence because the revelation of it is expressed in the world, because of the healings, of the miracles. Yet these things reveal the glory of God; they are opportunities for us to be reminded of God's love and wisdom and power. How would you ever know His love and His wisdom and power if you did not have something in your own life upon which it is revealed? You offer up your mirror for

the revelation of God's perfection. You become His living mirror when you express this good heart of faith. You touch the revelation of God by your faith.

We continue with the Gospel account provided today which gives us an example of the touch of omnipotence upon humanity. Faith is our touch, our way of being in touch with omnipotence, that which we cannot see, that which we have no outward evidence of except what we have within ourselves; the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for. Faith is our touch upon the hem of the garment of the Lord.

Now, we come to the second miracle, which is the example of the Lord's touch upon humanity--dead without His touch, although not dead to Him, because we are the way He sees us, not the way we think ourselves to be. You do not have to make yourself over. You can become what you are, and what you are is the way He has created you to be. Your healing is that becomingness which is your relationship with truth.

And so the second miracle. The Lord was on the way to this second miracle, you know, when the other one took place. These things happen along the edges, just like the healings that took place by the shadow of Peter.

The Lord was really on His way to awaken humanity--human nature which is always expressed as a feminine--to awaken human nature to the true life, to awaken man out of his stupor, out of his languor. This is expressed to us through the Gospel story of the ruler's daughter. When Jesus came into the house there was great mourning going on, noisy, clashing, cacophonous noise. They were trying to drown their sorrow with noise. Most people in the world try to drown their sorrows with a lot of noisy activity. They do not get very far, but they try. They think maybe it will make them forget.

Do you know what the Lord said when He came into this household of mourning? He said, Give place, give place. What is there to give place to?

Give place to what is omnipresent? Give place within yourself, within your own heart, within your own nature, to the recognition of the Presence. He was there. He said, Give place. He went into the death chamber, that place that is significant of utter darkness. He was not disturbed. He saw that what the people around were mourning over as death was only sleep. And when He said that, they laughed Him to scorn. Well--you go out and tell somebody that sometime and see what happens to you! You will begin to back down quickly.

But the Lord stood fast in truth. He did not care what they called it. Let the mourners call it death if they like; what difference does it make? But He knew what He was about, and He Who is the fountain of life put out His hand and touched this girl--the touch of omnipotence, the touch upon humanity, the touch upon human nature.

The touch of omnipotence upon human nature is freedom from death, freedom from the fear of death, freedom

from any hold of anything upon you but truth. Why should you fear death if you know this omnipresence of life? Why should you be afraid if you are aware of this touch of omnipotence?

And this girl arose. The Word had been spoken. The Lord said to her, Arise. The touch of the Word, the touch of the Word of truth, which is the right hand of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is called the Word. He came into the world that He might touch human nature in a very special way, such a special way that He took this human nature right up into Himself, not to keep His divine nature parallel, but to bring human nature right into Himself, that there might be a personal union, a hypostatic union, a wondrous touch--in touch with omnipotence.

And you live in this. You cannot be out of touch with it. All has been accomplished for you. You have been lifted up, you have been roused out of the kind of dying that is a stupor, that is a languor of nature. You have been

roused even as this girl was roused. But how are you aware of it until you yourself respond, make your contact, make your place of recognition within yourself, which is called your faith? This is something that has already taken place, is fulfilled. You are not sick, nor is anyone sick. Yet, you are receiving healing because you are awakening to the presence of truth within and without. And you can only awaken to what is true. You do not make a change by your awakening. You awaken to what is. This is the action of omnipotence in your life. Your contiguous point with omnipotence is truth, because the right hand of God has already touched you.

People think that they can do these things themselves by their own minds, and they are full of affirmations and denials, trying to think things out, and trying to work them out in their minds, and running 'round and 'round the spinit bush, finding more and more footprints to track, and seeming to be quite baffled. But it says in the Psalm--and

this is a message well worthy of being committed to memory, Psalm 43 verse 4-- Their own arm did not save them. People try to use their own powers to bring things to pass--power of will, power of activity, power of mind, power of whatever. Their own arm did not save them.

It was not this woman's arm touching the hem of the Lord's garment that saved her; it was not the girl's arm that saved her; it was that omnipotence, omnipresent omnipotence that flowed and radiated and illumined even the death chamber. The death chamber was filled with the light of truth. And what happened to the shadows? Well, we are told that we only have, now, to deal with the shadow of death. But what happens to a shadow when the light of truth is present? No matter how long the shadow has been there, it does not make any difference; it goes just as quickly.

In Sunday School Mrs. Richards told the story about the three men who were tested to see which one was to inherit a fortune. It would go to the

one who could fill a room most completely with what he could obtain with his little trivial portion that was given to him in the form of material wealth. One of them brought hay and tried to fill the room--unsuccessfully. Another brought thistledown and tried to blow it all around the room--unsuccessfully. But one gave most of what he had to charity, and with just the little bit that he had left he bought some flint and a candle. He went into this room and struck the light and lit the candle, and the whole room was filled with light.

People have ideas of what they are going to have to do to get rid of their particular kind of darkness, what kind of activity they are going to engage in. The answer can only be the message of truth: Awaken to what you are.

And so it says in the Psalm:

...neither did their own arm
save them; but thy right hand,
and thine arm, and the light
of thy countenance, because
thou [wast pleased with] them.

This is the healing. This is the reception of what is true. It comes about

through the revelation of this countenance of the Lord shining upon us with His pleasure toward those who are acceptable in their faith.

He is there for everyone. Yet there are those who feel most out of touch because they have closed their hearts to the living presence. He can, of course, shake you out of your languor by a sweep of His arm. He is the right hand of God, and He has made His touch with you, and He can shake you loose. But He invites you to shake yourself loose, and to accept the healing of His living presence. He is the fountain of life and at His touch you are filled with this vital energy, life more abundant. He came to bring life more abundantly. Why? Because He brings it where it is. He brings the revelation of healing where health already is. He does not make a change, but He brings to light by His revelation, and through your faith He makes known to you what is. You awaken to the omnipresence of truth.

These two miracles of healing are intended to arouse within us our confidence in prayer. Prayer, you know, is an act of faith. We are told in the rule for faith that when you desire anything, believe you have received it. Is this not an exercise of faith, to believe you have received? Well, you have to awaken to what you are, then. It does not say that your believing will make it so, but your believing it is the awakening in you to what is so, an act of faith. A true prayer is an act of faith. A true prayer is the touching of the hem of this garment of omnipotence. And the revelation pours in upon you: Be of good heart, faith has made thee whole. You are made whole because you have awakened to present wholeness--not built up to make you whole--you have awakened to your completeness, to your perfection.

So, again we pronounce these words which are indeed an earthquake of healing: These people--the whole world--are not sick. There is no sickness, there is no death; no one can be sick,

no one can die, no one can be unhappy, no one can be out of touch; but they can merely receive the revelation of this vital living presence of truth. This is the condignity and the congruity of your life, becoming what you are; being and becoming, the two aspects that are contiguous in man. The Lord Himself revealed this in His hypostatic union-- what you are and therefore what you can be. You do not change yourself, but you awaken to what you are. And in that way He calls humanity out of its sleep, out of its languor; calls it to an awareness of what it is, not to change it, but to awaken within it that integrity that had been granted and given there by the Lord Himself Who created man, His masterpiece. At this hypostatic touch, personal touch, man himself has the overflow of his soul into his flesh as a vigor of incorruption.

When you pray desiring anything, believe you have received. And in this way you touch the hum of the Lord's garment, and He Himself comes to you--

even as He came to the ruler's daughter. He stretches out His own arm of omnipotence, and His own voice resounds with the Word of truth which He is Himself, calling you to arise, out of your languor, out of your stupor, out of your sleep, out of your death; calls you to give glory to God. He said: Amen, I say unto you, all things whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that ye have received and it shall be done to you.

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, that Thou wouldst not permit to be subject to the dangers of this human life, those whom Thou hast called and admitted to the joyful participation of Thy divine life--those who have touched the hem of the garment, the Robe of Glory.

Those who have touched the hem of this divine life can no longer be subject to the dangers, to the afflictions, to the ignorance, to the darkness. They

receive the healing of the light of truth, the revelation of perfection. We can almost hear the word of the Lord saying to the woman who had touched the hem of His garment: Be of good heart, thy faith hath made thee whole.

Absolve, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the mistakes of Thy people that by Thy clemency we may be delivered from the bonds of our ignorance, contracted in the darkness of our own frailties. Give us the blessings of truth, give us the benediction of Thy touch of omnipotence.

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