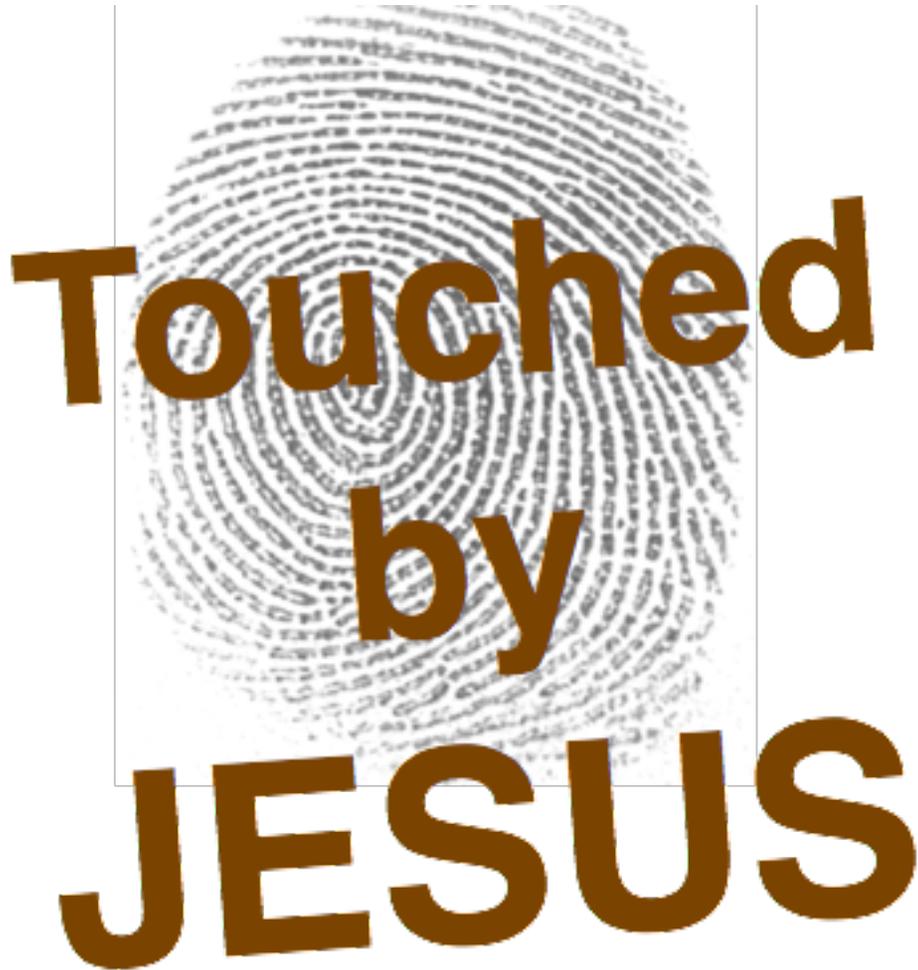


## Maywood Christian Camp

### 2016 Camp Book - Touched By Jesus

This week in our classes here at Maywood Christian Camp we are going to look at some of the events in the life of Christ as He touched and was touched by others.



# Touched by JESUS

**Lynda Harrison, an RN PhD** published a study in *the Newborn and Infant Nursing Reviews* a couple of years ago that included this statement: “**Researchers who study prematurely born human infants have reported that these infants receive very little comforting or contingent touch during their early days of life in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Most of the touch that preterm infants experience in the NICU is associated with medical...procedures (procedural touch).**” In other words these babies were being touched, but not caring touch, just touch that dealt w/doctoring them. The study went on: “**Preterm infants often show adverse responses to procedural touch;** they include hypoxia, sleep disruptions, or increased intracranial pressure. **The results ... suggest that providing appropriate tactile stimulation during the early days of life is critical for promoting optimal growth and development.**”

Six studies were identified that examined the effects of still, gentle touch without stroking or massage. They provided gentle touch to 13 preterm infants for 12 minutes, 4 times a day, for 10 days. **Infants who received the gentle touch had higher hematocrit levels and required less oxygen than infants in a matched control group.**”

This is not limited to preemie infants. It's true for all of us.

A study conducted at the University of Miami, in conjunction with Duke University, in labs and real-life experiments concluded all of us can benefit from increasing the amount of physical contact we have with friends, spouses and family. They found that the human body secretes lower levels of the stress hormones cortisol, norepinephrine, and dopamine. These hormones not only make you feel anxious,

which can be unpleasant, they can actually cause stress-related diseases - especially heart attack. Reducing their presence through massage, conversely, lowers stress hormones' ill effects.

In a '96 study published in the International Journal of Neuroscience, showed the participants who received meaningful touch completed math problems in significantly less time with fewer errors. That same study showed that massage recipients showed a profound decrease in job anxiety. University studies of waitresses proved conclusively that those who touched their customers casually on the wrist or shoulder received much bigger tips than those who kept their hands to themselves.

While logic might dictate that victims of rape or sexual abuse would be stressed-out by touch, Touch Research Institute studies actually show that touch can help women who have experienced these traumas. Professional touch is also helpful in treating several psychological conditions, including anorexia and bulimia.

These studies all basically conclude that touch is helpful, even necessary. Our study this week here at Maywood will reveal that Jesus understood all of this long before modern research "confirmed" it. Twenty-eight times in scripture we have times where the text tells us Jesus touched people for a variety of results. I think the primary reason Jesus touched people was to teach them and US something. Jesus has been in the business of touching lives for years and He can touch yours.

It seems that most anywhere Jesus went, he was surrounded by people. They wanted to get near him... touch him (maybe not unlike our own celebrities except Jesus could work miracles... that would be different). But one significant thing that sets Jesus apart from current celebs with their body guards and security detachments, is that He touched others. **He wanted to be in touch.**

Jesus has been touching lives for centuries and still does today. That phrase even rings with truth as we still hear the phrase "touched by Jesus."

In Matthew 8:3 He touched the untouchable, those with communicable disease. I know this about Jesus, He didn't have to! Often He healed people without touching them. He was intentional in this touch (Mark 1:40-45). In Matthew 8:15 it is Peter's mother-in-law who he touched and healed. A chapter later he touches two blind men and heals them (vs. 29; see also 20:34). Jesus' touch could calm fears (Matthew 17:7). In Mark 7:33, he touched a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment and made him whole. In Luke 7, Jesus brought a boy back to life simply by touching the casket he was in and calling him back to life. Yes, His touch was always a blessing. Mark records "And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them" (10:13).

It is obviously the compassion, the vast heart and great caring of Christ for humans that moved Him to walk into their pain and touch them. Hebrews 4:15 expresses that truth eloquently: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities..."

DAY 1:

## Jesus Touched Hurting People Proof of the Sermon on the Mount

KEY TEXT: Matthew 8

Some say it is the greatest sermon ever preached. Others call it the declaration of Christianity. Regardless the immediate reaction proves that Jesus words recorded for us in Matthew 5-7 prove that He was a game-changer.

“And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes” (Matthew 7:28-29).

He proved Himself to be a person of authority with His words but how often and heart-breaking it is to hear people speak with force, eloquence, style, grace, humility, craft, wisdom and, well, authority - but then their walk and their words are not in step. They say something well, but then their lives deny their lips, their walk denies their wisdom, their compassion does not match their communication.

As you continued from Matthew 7 and the Sermon on the Mount, and move directly into Matthew 8, the question certainly would be asked: Would Jesus live out what He had just taught?

### Jesus' Touch

Immediately following The Sermon you have three events that will solidify that Jesus “walked the talk.” Two of these fit our theme this week and reveal a lot about the power of Jesus' touch. “When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, ‘Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.’ And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, ‘I will; be clean.’ And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, ‘See that you say

nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them”” (Matthew 8:1-4).

“And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘*He Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses*’” (Matthew 8:14-16).

Notice Jesus touched those people who were hurting. I see six lessons we can learn about Jesus touching these people in Matthew 8:

1. ***Jesus touch was associated with teaching the good news:*** I desperately want you see this. There are those who would try to get you to believe that Christianity has no rules and that it is all emotion. That mentality will only lead you away from Christ (see John 14:15). Notice this in the text Matt 5-6-7, then Matthew 8. Right doctrine (the teaching of 5-6-7) always proceeds right living (the actions of 8). God's Word must affect how we live! So Jesus had finished the sermon, the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority.” Then the very next verse... a multitude starts to follow as a result of the teaching and vs 2 he demonstrates both His teaching of compassion and His own authority by touching and healing the leper. It's almost as if Jesus is saying - “You've been astonished at my teachings but you ain't seen nuthin yet!” One writer said “the people will see that Jesus is not only Messiah in word but is also Messiah in deed.” What we need to learn from this is the authority of Christ and therefore of His inspired writers (John 16:13; 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). So if the Word says it, it is our authority above preacher, parents or popular opinions. Take a minute in your class and talk about what that means.

**2. *Jesus touch conveyed worth:*** One of the most desperate feelings of the sick or the downtrodden is a feeling of hopelessness and worthlessness. The Leper. Jesus is just showing compassion in the touch. He didn't have to touch him to heal him as demonstrated in the healing immediately following this one (8:5-13). I've heard people compare leprosy to AIDS, but it is no comparison. It was not only deadly and untreatable (Luke 4:27); it was highly contagious (read how lepers were to be treated in Leviticus 13-14). Any person with leprosy was required to be examined by the priest, who afterward could pronounce them sick or well with one of two words—either clean or unclean (Leviticus 13:2). If the word “unclean” was heard, it changed all of life! The person was to be isolated from the rest of the community, they were required to wear torn cloths, to cover the lower part of his or her face, and cry out “Unclean! Unclean!” when anyone came even near them. It is probable that no one, not one person had touched this man for years.

Jesus touched because He had compassion: Matthew 9:27 “When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy on us! Jesus was brave. We are not told He was immune to leprosy.

**3. *Jesus touch sends a message to us:*** While we cannot heal physically, we do have the healing power of touch. As we noticed Jesus didn't have to touch to heal so there must be some other reason He touched this man.

**4. *Jesus touch often had a ripple effect:*** Any time that Jesus touched others and healed them word of His power quickly spread which brought more followers to Him. In Luke 5:13 Jesus encounters a man who was full of leprosy. He put out *His* hand & touched him and healed him. Jesus charged this man to tell no one. “But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him” (vs. 15).

And the multitude came! I think there is something here for the church. Individuals & the multitudes will respond to meaningful ministry. “And again He entered Capernaum after *some* days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive *them*, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them” (Mark 2:1-2; see also 6:4-6; 6:53).

The point is this. So it may be with us, if we will touch those who are hurting and their lives. People will see and it may bring more to Christ. Jesus touch attracted more—ours will too.

**5. *Jesus healing touch was complete:*** He was not like modern so called “faith healers” – He healed real stuff! He healed completely. No doubt! As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!” Matthew 20:34-“they immediately received their sight.” Mark 1:31 “immediately the fever left her...”

**6. *Jesus healing touch gave hope:*** Without faith, life is hopeless.

All of those who Jesus touched and healed eventually died, but not without hope! They knew even dying that there was one greater than their death, Jesus. He had touched them. In Mark 9 after one of those dramatic healings, Jesus told His disciples “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise” (Mark 9:31). John 14 he explained it further and promised “I will come again, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:3). OUR HOPE IS IN JESUS and all around us are people who need hope (see Mark 9:20-28)!

If you are going to be like Jesus, you must start touching hurting people and trying to meet their needs.

## GOT QUESTIONS? WE DO:

DAY 2:

Discuss some of the different reactions to Jesus' preaching? Were they all positive? What made them unique?

Look at each of the six lessons about Jesus' touch. Which of these can we replicate?

How much authority does Jesus have? Where do we learn about His authority? What does that mean to us?

Does Jesus authority in our lives involve just knowing His Word?

What are some ways you can touch the lives of others this week at Maywood Christian Camp?

## Jesus and the Funeral Home Jesus Touched Dead People - and you won't believe what happened next

KEY TEXT: Mark 5:35-43

When I was your age I could count the number of funerals I'd been to on one hand and still have some fingers left. I imagine most of you are like that. Some of you have had the tragic heartbreak of attending the funeral of a friend already, or a grand-parent, a few of you a parent or sibling BUT I bet in the class all of the students put together haven't attended more than 30 funerals. Funerals are most often sad solemn occasions - rarely are they are time of laughter. But that doesn't mean some funny and/or unusual things don't happen at funerals.

There was the one where at the grave-side the 80+ year old funeral home owner slipped (it had been raining and the grass was wet) and fell into the open grave - he popped up out of it quickly - looked at the family, then his helpers and said "let it down boys, everything is fine down there." Or the time I showed up to preach a funeral and the person whose funeral I thought I was preaching was sitting on the second row! Wow, that'll get your blood pumping! There was the funeral I preached where the singers sang all the verses of Rocky Top, acapella. And then the one where the preacher called on the grand-daughter of the deceased to sing a song. It was bad, real bad, bad enough that dogs in the next neighborhood were covering their ears.

But I'll tell you none of this compares to the stories we are going to look at today. Unless I missed something, every time Jesus showed up at a funeral the funeral ended because there wasn't a body to bury. He brought the person back to life.

You've heard the old joke: "What do you want people to say at your funeral?" One guy says: "I want them to talk about what a good

man I was.” Another said: “I want people to talk about how I brought joy into the lives of those around me.” The last one said: “I want them to say, ‘hey look, he’s moving.’” If I have my choice when I die, I just want Jesus to show up! Because every funeral he attended turned into a shocking celebration of the living, not the dead! Or as one guy said: “Jesus ruined every funeral He ever attended.”

### **FUNERAL #1**

Consider our text today of Jesus with resurrection touch bringing a man back to life. “...He went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, ‘Do not weep.’ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, ‘Young man, I say to you, arise.’ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus[d] gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, ‘A great prophet has arisen among us!’ and ‘God has visited his people!’ And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country” (Luke 7:11-17; see also Mark 5:35-43; John 11).

### **Let’s talk a minute about death:**

Mankind’s biggest fear! We try to clean it up. We try to be removed from it. We certainly don’t want to scare a single one of you with talking about death. But by not talking about it we can’t understand how Jesus saw it. Humans have always feared death. Several polls list the fear of death as the second greatest fear Americans have.

### **What Jesus Knew About Death**

Now let’s talk a minute about Jesus and death: It doesn’t take long to see that Jesus was not afraid to talk about death and that His view of it was really different than ours!

Jesus’ view of death:

1<sup>st</sup> notice that He spoke freely about His own death-and without fear-in fact positively Matthew 17:9; 20:18-19; 26:24; Mark 10:33; 14:21; Luke 22:22; 24:46.

2<sup>nd</sup> notice that He felt differently about those that died than we do-it was just a sleep, something He could fix. Mark 5:23; John 6:58; John 8:21; Matthew 9:24.

3<sup>rd</sup> Jesus taught that death could have two verdicts: Luke 12:20; 16:19-ff; John 11:25.

4<sup>th</sup> Jesus taught that God was the God of the living: Matthew 22:31-33.

5<sup>th</sup> Jesus taught that He was the answer to death: John 5:21-25; 6:49-59; 8:51; 11:25; 12:32.

The reason Jesus touched the dead was to show He was over the dead-to show he could touch the spiritually dead.

Funerals were a challenge for Jesus because He knows a whole lot more than we do! See, we think of funerals as an end, a separation, with finality and fear. But to Him death is nothing more than sleep that one will awake from. He knows that His children will awake to more joy and more glory than they could ever experience in many life-times here. To Him it is the time He gets to give our rewards, heavenly “at-a-boys,” awards, crowns, stars, mansions and well - liquid joy! A joy beyond anything we can conceive of here. A joy that is rich and full and never-ending and that “does not fade away” or shift like sand with circumstances.

Jesus knew this was just sleep-and that He could wake anyone out of it anytime He wanted to and that ultimately He would be the one who would raise all from the dead (John 5:27-28): Those He brought

#### **Just a side note here**

Please don’t think we are minimizing your pain in any loss you have had. We have wept beside many a casket and more than that, Jesus was touched by pain of those who experienced loss. He knew the pain it caused and wept with and for those who grieved (John 11:35).

back from the dead while He was ministering were to make the point He was over the grave (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

What's the point?

1. And the point is that Jesus is bigger than our worst fear-death! He's bigger and stronger than any of your worries.
2. There's something worse than physical death. Spiritual death!

The fact is that Jesus came to save us from the second not the first. Hebrews 9:27 states the simple truth that everybody is going to die physically (unless Jesus returns first). Jesus could have raised every dead person and could keep anyone from dying but that is not why He came. Luke 19:10 states His reason for coming clearly, "For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost." He also said that He came that we might have LIFE (John 10:10)! That life is IN HIM.

He could save anyone from dying physically but that is not His purpose. He can also save anyone from the worst death, spiritual death, and that IS why He came. Now, don't you want to know more about Jesus? To have a Friend like Him?

So, for just a minute let's look at how He saves people and how He can save you. He came and lived a perfect life so that He could be the perfect sacrifice for your sins (Romans 5:6-8).

He now only asks that you keep His commands (John 14:15).

He commands that you believe He is the Son of God (John 6:29; Mark 16:15-16).

He commands that you confess that He is the Son of God (Matthew 10:32-33).

He commands that you turn from your sin and live for Him (Luke 13:3-5; Acts 2:38).

He commands that you be baptized (Matthew 28:18-19; Acts 2:38).

We (your counselor, teacher, camp director, every staff member here this week) are here to help you get into Him. To help you become His child. So if you have any questions or are ready to become a Christian, just ask. That is the MOST important thing we do this week.

The fact is that most of you will probably live a long time and if you think you only need Jesus when you die, you would really have no reason to follow Him now. But the truth is Jesus came to give LIFE! And if you want to live the best life this side of eternity it is with Jesus. A life with less fear, less regret, less catastrophic blunders, less of all the stuff that brings stress and distress in the lives of most people. Since God invented life He ought to know the best way to live it. Since Jesus perfected life He ought to be the best example of how to enjoy it. Jesus wasn't some weird guru who walked around in flowing robes chanting and meditating. To paraphrase Matthew's writing - the Son of Man came enjoying life. He spent time at weddings and celebrations, enjoying children and food. As we noted, He even brought joy to the funerals He went to. You need Jesus in your life to show you how to live as a 10 year old or a 13 year old or an 18 year old! His way is always best - 100% guaranteed.

So, Jesus went to three funerals, and He ruined every one of them. All three funerals ended in resurrection. I sure hope that Jesus comes to my funeral, don't you?

## **GOT QUESTIONS:**

Why do we not like to talk about death?

Talk about the five things listed about what Jesus knew about death.  
What can we learn from these?

## How to Touch Your Enemies

KEY TEXT: Luke 22:47-54

I want to tell you a sad truth about Disney World. Things there seem real, but they are not. The rides seem risky, they are even named that way (Legend of the Forbidden Mountain, Dinosaur, Summit Plummet, Tower of Terror) but they're actually quite safe. And while Main Street USA is the idea of perfect living...they make you go home at the end of the day. No one actually lives there - not even Mickey and Minnie.

Some view the church that way. A nice place to visit on Sunday with great attractions (songs, sermons, classes, friends, events) but nobody really lives there. The lessons taught, the way to treat others, the attitudes and actions - they all sound real but they are no more reality than Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin. Nobody really lives that way!

But we all live in a very real world. A world with challenges and heartaches and hurt and chaos. And when we just play church and on Sunday afternoon leave it in the rearview mirror like Orlando after a dream vacation, we end up not being able to have the best resources to deal with real life.

We live in a real world. And sometimes we get at odds with others and sometimes we have enemies. The Bible doesn't sugar coat it (Matthew 5:44; John 16:33; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12; John 15:20)..

What the Bible does teach us is how to handle the real world. But it's non-this-world thinking. Love your enemies, go the second mile, share with others, love unconditionally, be good to those who try to hurt you - those are not easy truisms to swallow, nor are they for the weak. These take some real effort to live by. They take real strength and self-control.

When most people think of touching their enemies - they think of touching them with their fist! They think of Robert Connor - "Go

How does the knowledge that Jesus is bigger than your greatest fear help you?

Talk about what Jesus commands a person to do. What would keep a person from obeying what Jesus says about becoming His person?

How is the Christian life the best life?

ahead, knock this battery off my shoulder, I dare you..." (It's an old person thing - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr-oLQgvcuk>) Or of the school-yard line in the sand: "I dare you to step across this line."

The way of most in dealing with their enemies is to use influence, power, intimidation, gruff language, and some even misuse the Bible.

Christians are to be different. We are to be different in how we deal with our enemies because Jesus, our Master was different. There are four key texts that show us Jesus touching His enemies and how He dealt with them. And there are some specific lessons we can learn from these to help us in dealing with those who might be our enemies today.

***1. We touch our enemies to help (heal) and to eventually make the our friends:*** Before we discuss this "touching" get your Bible ready and let's go back up in the text and do some background work. Luke 22.

Vs. 1 – The chief priests and scribes are looking to kill Jesus, but know they have to be careful because they are afraid if they do it will cause an uprising.

Vss. 21-22 – As they are eating the Passover (i.e. the most important Jewish holiday) Jesus institutes His Supper and predicts His betrayal. While it was secretive this deal has already been completed between the leaders and Judas (back in vss. 3-6).

Vss. 23-24 – It appears to me that their discussion of who would betray Jesus leads to who loves Him the most and who will be most important to Him. Or to who would be greatest in His Kingdom. Jesus promises a Kingdom and thrones for each of them.

Vss. 35-36 – He reminds them of the limited commission (It's back in Luke 9, a short mission to just Jewish people) and then tells them a different day is coming. He mentions a sword. Indicating to them that trouble is coming. The disciples would face an entirely new set of circumstances and would need a new outlook. Jesus quotes Isa. 53:12 to show that He would be treated like a criminal and people would treat His followers the same way. Warren Weirsbe wrote:

"What He said about the sword was only a metaphor for the dangers they faced, but the men took it literally." I think he is right.

Vs. 38 – Here are two swords. Some of the disciples were a part of a group called the Zealots, a Jewish underground group who wanted to overthrow Rome. John McArthur says about the Zealots: "The Zealots, as their name implies, were the most vocal and active proponents of deliverance (from Rome). Many of them expected the Messiah to come as a powerful, irresistible military leader who would conquer Rome in the same way that Rome had conquered them. They were not, however, waiting passively for their Deliverer, but were determined that, whenever and however He might come, they would do their part to make His job easier... In Jesus' day the aggressive, rebellious Zealots were not many in number, but they had the sympathy and moral support of many of the people, who wanted Rome to be overthrown, however it was done." The Zealots would have had a sword.

Vs. 38 – Jesus said: "It is enough." He was not suggesting that two swords were enough but "enough of this foolish talk about swords." The fact is if they were going to take on Rome with military might they would need a whole lot more than two swords. But Jesus was going to take over Rome and the whole world without any political force! And if He had wanted a fight HE would not have needed a single sword (just read 2 Thessalonians 2:8).

Vs. 45 - But they still didn't get it. "When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, 'Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.' And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, 'Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?' When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, 'Lord, shall we strike with the sword?' And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear" (vss. 45-50).

Vs. 49 - They're still thinking earthly kingdom, earthly might. It's time to take the kingdom now! "Shall we strike with our swords."

Notice that this story is in all four Gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). John is the only one who tells us the names of the people involved: Peter, Malchus. Vincent's Word Studies suggests that John "adds the names of Peter and of Malchus since probably both were dead by that time and Peter would not be involved in trouble."

And while all the Gospel accounts record the story of Peter lopping off the ear, only Luke records Jesus restoring it. Why? Maybe it's Dr. Luke's knowledge coming through by showing The Great Physician healed people to the end. He also mentions it's the right ear. The healing of the slave's ear was our Jesus' last miracle before the cross. Peter's rash action got him into trouble later (John 18:25-27).

What can we learn from this?

- Political activism! Peter's going to eventually learn that the "the sword of the Spirit" is a much better and more effective weapon (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12). Avoid violence! It is disgusting when a church that claims Jesus has preached hatred so much that one of it's members commits some crime against another in the name of Christ and political activism.

But to our main point we learn that Jesus teaches us to even touch those who would harm us, to heal and help them. In healing Malchus, Jesus was practicing what He had preached to others (Matthew 5:38-48) and giving us an example of love and forgiveness.

I wonder how we touch our enemies? Ignoring them may sound like solid advice but our enemies have a soul. We need to touch them with the Gospel. We need to introduce them to our friend, Jesus, so that they will have the opportunity to become our friends! Here is an enemy with a need and Jesus helped him!

**2. We touch our enemies to meet their needs:** In Matthew 5:38-48 Jesus taught: "You have heard that it was said, '*An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*'" That's the world's way of touching enemies. They hurt me, I will hurt them back. Retaliate. Might equals

right. *But Jesus said:* "I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have *your* cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. You have heard that it was said, '*You shall love your neighbor* and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

One guy wrote Jesus words this way: "Here's another old saying that deserves a second look: 'Eye for eye, tooth for tooth.' Is that going to get us anywhere? Here's what I propose: 'Don't hit back at all.' If someone strikes you, stand there and take it. If someone drags you into court and sues for the shirt off your back, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. And if someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously. You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that. In a word, what I'm saying is, *Grow up*. You are kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you" (The Message).

Notice these key terms: Not to resist, turn to him the other also, let him have your coat, go the second mile, give, love, bless, do

good, pray. There are nine action verbs in that group! All of this and then He springs the reason to act this way: “that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.” Who do you want to be like?

Do you want to be like the bully who pushes his way to strength or like the strongest who ever was? He sends rain on the rebellious and sunshine on those who killed His Son (Matthew 5:45). I want you to want to be like God! He loves-so we love (1 John 4:19).

It’s amazing to me how we can treat others when our Lord was so clear about how we are supposed to treat others. It is easy for Christians to act more like the world than the Lord. We can act without thinking. We should be best supporters of each other, but I sometimes hear of squabbles between parents, of people who claim Christ died for them yet who count offenses and hold grudges. I hear of parents who are Christians but jealous of each other, of people who don’t celebrate the success of others, of folks who gossip about each other over personalities, of Christians who aren’t patient, who won’t forgive over and over and over and over – yet have to make their own fresh start every day (I know I do).

Can I call you out on this? Can I challenge you to think this week at Maywood about learning to live differently than everybody else? How do you treat others? There is nothing you can do about how others, feel about, treat, speak to or speak about you – but you can do something about how you respond! That’s what Jesus is saying here. You will have enemies (and sometimes friends who are hard to handle), but how you treat them is your decision. God decided before they were born how He’d treat them. (Couldn’t we do the same?)

**3. We touch our enemies to defend others:** Somebody (some zealot) out there is thinking “you left out Jesus and His violence toward enemies.” I mean, Jesus went in and ripped them up. He turned over their tables in the Temple and used a scourge against them. Let me caution you to not misuse the text.

“Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, “It is written, *‘My house shall be called a house of prayer;* but you have made it a *‘den of thieves.’* Then *the* blind and *the* lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.” (Matthew 21:12-14).

Listen carefully: Jesus use of force was NEVER self-serving. These thieves in the Temple were robbing the poor and making a mockery out of God’s house. With Jesus there was never retaliation for personal offenses. People could spit on Him, call Him Satan’s servant, slap Him and He would not react at all. But let them misuse God’s Temple, rob widows, bruise the wounded, mistreat children and He got His dander up. There’s nothing wrong with getting angry, but we better not misplace our anger.

**4. We touch our enemies to teach:** Paul uses Jesus words in Romans 12:19-21 to teach another lesson-that we touch to overcome or to teach. “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, *‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’* says the Lord. Therefore *‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’* Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Don’t let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good. Don’t let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good.

1 Peter 3:8-9 “Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds. Don’t repay evil for evil. Don’t retaliate when people say unkind things about you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God wants you to do, and he will bless you for it.”

If we want to change this world we will touch our neighbors, even our enemies with kindness.

## GOT QUESTIONS? We do:

In what ways does it hurt the church when Christians play at it instead of live the life Christ modeled?

How does someone become your enemy?

How does the world teach us to deal with our enemies?

How can we help those who try to harm us today?

How do we meet the needs of our enemies today?

Ultimately what is the reason we treat our enemies differently than the world would teach us?

What should we do if we feel like someone is becoming our enemy who is also a Christian?

DAY 4

## God's People - In Touch

KEY TEXTS: Matthew 8; Mark 1:39-45; Luke 14:36; Mark 6:5-6

We've talked this week about what Jesus touched and what touched Jesus and the results of both. And some of you have made the decision to allow Jesus to touch your life and move you from Spiritual Death to Spiritual Life. But what's next?

For those of us who believe that Jesus is the Son of God and have decided to give our lives to Him we have a responsibility and an example.

Back long ago, roughly 2,000 years, the first Followers of Jesus began to be called Christians (Acts 11:26). To make it really simple people were saying these people were "little Christ" running around the world (Romans 8:29). The years that followed were amazing: People were astounded by these people (Acts 2:42). They helped people (vs. 45). They changed lives (1 John 3:2). They made an impact on there communities (Acts 19:19). They went all over the world in about 20 years (Colossians 1:23). Everywhere they went marvelous things happened, they turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6).

It's been an unending chain. It's never stopped. For 2,000 years people devoted to loving Christ and following Him have continued to make an impact. People who believe He is who He says He is, have made monumental impressions on others. People have lived quiet peaceable, attractive, and full lives. People have served faithfully through big persecutions and little frustrations - come what may.

This shouldn't surprise us. It was part of God's prophecies (Daniel 2:44) and of Christ's promises (Matthew 16:16-18).

At times some have gotten off course. Sometimes we all do. When that happens what are we to do? If you look around at "your

church” and wonder how to get back on track, how to be a Church that Touches People Like Jesus?

## HOW JESUS TOUCH AFFECTED OTHERS:

We’ve looked at some of the people Jesus and lessons we could learn from that. But it’s not just what Jesus, did it’s what the people did **when** they were touched by Jesus. And if we want to recapture what often seems to be missing as a person of Jesus looking at how the people who were touched by Jesus reacted would certainly help.

1. **They rejoiced:** They were moved to rejoice. Joy seems to follow every encounter with Jesus.
2. **They served:** In Matthew 8 when Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law the text says that she got up and began to serve. The fact is that Jesus moved people to action. When our lives are touched by Jesus we will become servants. You just have to! Paul was not, the desire was so great he had to do something.
3. Mark 1:39-45 “So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, ‘If you are willing, you can make me clean.’ Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured. Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: “See that you don’t tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them.” Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.” **The people who were touched by Jesus became evangelists.** That word has come in most people’s mind to mean a preacher but it is a much richer concept than that. When people were touched by Jesus, they were moved to share the news. They went out and told about

Him. And when our lives have been affected by Jesus in a real way, we can’t keep quiet either. What’s the greatest news you’ve ever received — a state championship, signs, rings. A sign in a yard of a new baby. This is better!

4. **People touched by Jesus were moved to worship** (Luke 14:36). The natural reaction to who Jesus really is, is to worship. And when our lives have been really touched by Jesus we can’t help but praise His name! Worship is the ultimate sign of thankfulness. John 9 is one great story of Jesus healing for many reasons. Take a few minutes and review the attitudes of the man born blind and watch those attitudes as they change.

5. **Some touched by Jesus were unmoved.** Mark 6:5-6 says “Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed *them*. And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.” It is hard to imagine but some of them saw His power and didn’t do anything about it! Can you imagine such being greeted with apathy. But it is true today that some who claim belief in Jesus lead lives of apathy.

Let’s note carefully how to become a church that has been touched by Jesus and results.

Simply worded: Act like Jesus! Act out of love for others. Care about people who are hurting. Start to look like Him when there is conflict. Be concerned about truth deeper than their own opinions or emotions. Be in touch with the community. Do more than just “play church” be people of passion about serving the Lord with all your heart.

Listen: The God who wants to touch people - wants you to touch others!

## GOT QUESTIONS? We do:

Has the church ever disappeared from the earth? Will it? Why or why not?

Discuss the five ways the people who were touched by Jesus reacted. What can WE learn from these?

When we say to touch others like Jesus we must act like Jesus what does that mean in a practical way?

- What does it mean at school?

- What does it mean at church?

- What does it mean in our home?

- What does it mean in dealing with others?

## What Touches Jesus?

KEY TEXTS: Hebrew 2:18; 4:15; Matthew 26:45-50; Luke 8:43-48  
Matthew 26:6-13

Friday's at Maywood. The level of crazy fun goes up and the memory banks begin to go into overdrive. I love it! But the week isn't over. Bible classes are still important for what we do even on a jam-packed day. Some of you are still thinking about becoming Christians - let me cast a positive vote in favor of it! Pull your teacher, counselor, or some other staff member aside and talk with them. You'll be glad you did and so will they.

We've looked at some of the people Jesus touched but there are also a number of times that people actually touched HIM! Can you imagine physically touching The Messiah? Today we are going to spend our time studying What Touches Jesus and what we can learn from those events.

I love the book of Hebrews. More than any other book in the New Testament it is the book that emphasizes the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ. More than any other book, it tells us what Jesus did after He went back to Heaven and let's us in on what He is doing now. The box on the next page lists just a few of the things about Christ Hebrews shares with us. Before you read the next paragraph look over that list.

All of that is grand, and is good information to see as we grow our faith in Jesus as the very Son of God, but today we are talking about what touches Jesus. And we find a gem of a verse (It's one of my favorite verses) in Hebrews 4:14-16. "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in

every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

The old King James

Version translates it beautifully: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” What a concept. Our hurts touch His heart! This is the only time we are told of something that so moves the Lord of Heaven. Yet, it is obvious that He was often touched or moved during His earthly ministry. Matthew 26:7-13; Luke 7:1-9; Mark 1:40-42; etc).

But for this lesson we are going to notice specifically while He was on earth in the flesh what touched Jesus physically.

**1. The feelings of our infirmities** - For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities (sympathize with our weaknesses), but who was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Yes, I know we just read that verse but there is a beautiful story that illustrates this truth. It says He is touched. This does not just mean that He cares, but that He understands everything you face. Hebrews 2:18 says it this way: “And now he can help those who are tempted, because he himself suffered and was tempted.”

The event is in Matthew 26 “I, the Son of Man, am betrayed into the hands of sinners. Up, let’s be going. See, my betrayer is

He is the final Word of God (1:1)  
He is upholding all things by the word of His power (1:3)  
He is presently seated by God’s right hand (1:3; 10:12; 12:1)  
He is the Master over all the World (2:5, 8)  
He is the captain of our salvation (2:10)  
He is the sanctifier (2:11)  
He is our brother (2:11)  
He is the destroyer of the devil (2:14)  
He is the aid for temptation (2:18)  
He is the Apostle and High Priest of our confession (3:1)  
He is the ruler of “our” House (3:6)  
He is the promiser and provider of Rest (4:1)  
He is our sympathetic High Priest (4:15)  
He is our interceder (4:16)  
He is the author of eternal salvation (5:9)  
He is our forerunner (6:20)  
He is the guarantee of a better covenant (7:22)  
He is forever (7)  
He is holy, harmless undefiled, separate from sinners and higher than the heavens (7:25)  
He is our sacrifice (7:27)  
He is our Minister (8:2)  
He is our representative before God (9:24)  
He is the Mediator of the New Covenant with God (12:24)  
He is God’s continuing voice from Heaven (12:25-27)  
He is our constant companion (13:5-6)  
He is the one through whom we offer sacrifice of Praise to God (13:15)  
He is the one works in us and through us to do every good work (13:21)

here!’ And even as he said this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a mob that was armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent out by the leading priests and other leaders of the people. Judas had given them a prearranged signal: ‘You will know which one to arrest when I go over and give him the kiss of greeting.’ So Judas came straight to Jesus. ‘Greetings, Teacher!’ he exclaimed and gave him the kiss. Jesus said, ‘My friend, go ahead and do what you have come for.’ Then the others grabbed Jesus and arrested him” (Vss. 45-50).

Jesus was touched by many people that night, but a couple stand out. In these verses, Judas, greeting his rabbi with a customary greeting that veiled momentarily his shameless hypocrisy (The Word *kissed* is used only 5 times in New Testament: Luke 7:38, the woman who repeatedly kissed Jesus feet; Luke 15:20, the father [representing God] at the return of the prodigal; Acts 20:37, Paul’s emotional moment as he leaves elders from Ephesus for last time; and here in Matthew 26:49 and it’s companion Mark 14:45).

Also touching Jesus that night is Peter. A little later in the crucifixion trials and account he will deny Jesus with words unbecoming one following Christ. I suggest that Jesus is touched at the **failures of our lives**. He is touched by our sin (both Judas and Peter touched him that night with their sin. Our sin causes Him pain. In fact Hebrews 6 says that our sin of turning away from God is like crucifying Jesus again. Jesus is touched, hurt by our sin. Just that fact ought to make us want to live differently.

**2. The frustrations of our concerns:** Luke 8:43-48 says “And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind *him*, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchd. And Jesus said, ‘Who touched me?’ When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, ‘Master, the multitude throng thee and press *thee*, and sayest thou, “Who touched me?”’ And Jesus said, ‘Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.’ And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had

touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, ‘Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.’”

What frustrations are you carrying around with you? There are some people who would minimize the “worries” of a 10 year old or a young teen saying, “Just wait till you grow up then you’ll know what real stress is.” But He cares about and is touched by every one. Your smallest worry is His great concern. He understands what it’s like to give and give and feel the power leave and feel like no one notices or appreciates it. He is touched by your every frustration in life!

3. Matthew 26:6-13 says: “And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured *it* on His head as He sat *at the table*. But when His disciples saw *it*, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to *the poor*.” But when Jesus was aware of *it*, He said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did *it* for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

Jesus was touched both physically and emotionally in this story. It is one of my favorite stories because of Jesus’ reaction to this simply beautiful gesture. ***The faith of our heart touched Jesus.*** The thing that sets Jesus apart is that He can read hearts-this does not negate the significance of obedience-but obedience can be done for wrong motives. Jesus can see past the sins of His children to their desires. I desire to live right, but sin dwells in me (Rom 7:17)-through Christ, God knows my desire as a Christian.

Jesus made many appearances after His resurrection – I count 16 (Guards report to Jewish authorities Matt. 28:11-15; Appearance to two on road to Emmaus Mk. 16:12, 13; Lk. 24:13-32; Appearance to Simon Peter Lk. 24:33-35; I Cor. 15:5; Appearance to disciples without Thomas Mk. 16:14; Lk. 24:36-43; Jn. 20:19-25; Appearance to Thomas and the disciples Jn. 20:26-31; I Cor. 15:5;

Appearance to the seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee John 21; Appearance to over 500 in Galilee Mk. 16:15-18; Matt. 28:16-20; I Cor. 15:6 ; Appearance to James, the brother of Jesus 1 Cor. 15:7; Appearance to disciples with another commission Lk. 24:44-49; Acts 1:3-8).

While books are written on each of these, one says more to US than the rest. That is the one in John 20:24-31 when Jesus appears to Thomas. I love John 20:24-31 “Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.” And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.” And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed.”

***Jesus is touched, it appears by the faith that is unsteady.*** Some of your struggle with an unsteady faith; you try and try and you think no one understands or can appreciate how hard it is. You come to Maywood every year or go to CYC or a retreat or some other spiritually meaningful event and hit the re-set button yet again. And even the having to restart over and over adds to your personal guilt. Notice that Jesus he was touched by Thomas. By Thomas’ unsteady faith. Jesus doesn’t rebuke Thomas, but it’s what He says next that strikes my heart.

”And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:30-31).

**GOT QUESTIONS? We do:**

What have you learned at camp this week that is going to help you be a better Christian?

What have you learned at camp this week that is going to help you be a better friend?

What have you learned at camp this week that is going to help you live for God when it's tough to live for Him?

What are you going to do over the next year that will help you to grow your faith when you are not at camp?

Share cell numbers and keep in touch in a positive way!