

# Reach Out!



1. Those of us who struggle with addiction may have shown up here for several reasons. Our addiction or compulsive behavior began innocently, but it progressed. For some it had become the most important thing in their life. Every other priority, goal and relationship was pushed aside so that we could obtain the next high, the next sexual encounter, the next experience with food, the next win or the next experience of feeling good by fixing what's wrong in others.
2. Some have ruined marriages. Some have lost jobs. Some are despised by their children and some are so depressed they have nowhere else to turn and thoughts of suicide have entered their mind. We lied to those who loved us most and we excused ourselves by saying, *"I just couldn't help it."*
3. We thought our lifestyle, excuses, manipulation and rationalization had been successful for months and even years. *But, now we have shattered homes, shattered lives, shattered health and shattered dreams.*
4. Unmanageable\_\_ Yes! If you are desperate for change. If you can't stand to walk down this path of destruction a minute longer. If you are crying out for healing then you are right where you need to be. *Reach out to God!* He's here and He desires only your healing and recovery. *"Even after your greatest failures."*

*Luke 8:43-44 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, 44 came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.*

1. Luke tells us how this woman for 12-years had gone from doctor to doctor hoping to find a cure for her chronic hemorrhage, but not one could help her. In that culture they believed this sickness was a visible symptom of internal sin, so this sick woman was also shamed by her community.
2. She heard that Jesus the one who had miraculous healing powers was coming through her town. She joined the crowd around Him and when He walked by, *in faith and believing* that if she could just touch the hem of his clothing she would be healed. *She came from behind, touched the border of His garment and immediately her flow of blood stopped!*
3. Her faith wasn't well informed and she didn't know much about this Preacher. But, in desperation to be healed, by her courage to try anything to be healed and by even her mustard seed faith, *"God's power did the impossible."* So, why not try *"Reaching Out"*
4. She could have walked away with her needs miraculously met, but that wasn't enough for Jesus. He wanted a relationship with her. Even though He was in a hurry to go somewhere else He stopped, He turned and found her in the crowd and spent time talking to her.
5. How do you think she may have felt when Jesus stopped and walked back toward her? How do you think she felt as Jesus looked into her eyes and showed how much He cared for her as a person?
6. What would it mean for you (in your shame and pain as an alcoholic or addict) to realize that Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords wants to spend time with you to show how much He loves you? How just *"Reaching out to Him"* in faith you too could be healed.

7. Some of us have lived in this condition for many years and others have spent great amounts of money and resources in order to find healing from active addiction and its dysfunctional lifestyle. We must follow the example of this woman because we can no longer afford to stand back or run from doctor to doctor or program to program hoping for “*That Worldly Cure.*”

*Luke 5:12-13 And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 13 Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him.*

1. Leprosy is a progressive, contagious and crippling skin disease. Lepers often faced a slow, painful and disgraceful death. Since there was no cure they were made outcasts from society. (*Leviticus 13*) In ancient times, it was often considered a form of divine retribution (*Numbers 12:9-10*)
2. Jesus' healing of the leper demonstrated His ability to bring about instant physical healing and recovery in response to this man's faith in crying out to Him. Understand; the same Jesus who healed instantly this Leper is also the originator and perfecter of your recovery process.
3. Emotional, mental and spiritual recovery will generally involve a longer process than was the Leper's physical healing. Yet, both timetables for healing have the same starting and ending points and that is Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.
4. Addiction is as “*Life Threatening*” as leprosy. (a) Addiction is a crippling disease and it takes lives. (b) A disgraceful slow death. (c) A humiliating disease for both addict and loved ones.. (d) Addiction separates us from society. (e) We may lose everything. (f) Addiction will lead us toward the destruction of everything important. (g) We can even become an “*Out Cast*” from those who care for us most.
5. We must address our helpless cries to God, admit our powerlessness, humble ourselves and submit to the touch of God's healing hand. This in turn will enable us to deal with the past, persist in the present and find direction for the future by depending on him for sustenance and strength.

*John 5:2-9 now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. 5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" 7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." 8 Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." 9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.*

1. Having suffered for thirty-eight years, this man had experienced prolonged disappointment at not being healed while repeatedly looking to God in hope and expectation.
2. When Jesus saw him and knew how long he had been ill, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?” This man was so crippled that he could go only so far on his own human strength...Yet, God met him by that pool and God brought him the rest of the way in healing and restoration.

3. Have you suffered in your infirmity of active addiction long enough? Do you keep asking yourself why you have not been healed? Are you having troubles getting into that pool while the waters are still stirring?
4. For some recovery begins with that feeling of hopelessness. When our life is totally out of control and crumbling around us our attempts to deny that we don't need God are futile. We must acknowledge our need and "Reach out in Faith" while being open to God and His healing power. As we humbly recognize our helplessness and our need for Him "the process of recovery can finally begin".

*Matt 9:27-30 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" 28 And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." 30 And their eyes were opened.*

*Matt 12:22 Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.*

1. Multiple scriptures throughout the Word of God tell us that Jesus was the Messiah and the source of recovery for all kinds of hurting people. No matter what the issue they recognized their need and turning to God in faith was their ultimate step to healing.
2. He made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the mute to speak and the lame to walk. He healed the leper, those tormented with unclean spirits, those that were sick with various diseases. Others were healed by Him of their infirmities. Jesus restored lives and He showed His power to help people who were living or dying. He even raised the dead to walk in new life.
3. No matter what the issue recognizing our need and turning to God in faith are the first steps in the recovery process. Why have you so little faith to not believe that He can and will heal you, too?
4. Have you found enough pain inside yourself to break your heart? Facing the fact that brokenness is part of the human condition can be crushing. But, if we have finally arrived at this point it is probably a sign that we are ready for God to both heal us of our affliction and restore us to wholeness.....First Step: "Reach out in Faith."

*Mark 5:34 "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."*

The great news is that God doesn't demand that we "Clean up our Act" before we come to Him.

No, we come to Him as broken and needy people.

We are a mess, and He cleans us up. We need healing and He heals us.

We are headed down the wrong path, but He points us in the right direction.

We come like we are and He will change us from the inside out.

*"Reach Out!" You will never know God's blessings until you do!*

