

Showing Up at the Wrong Funeral

Tony Campolo is a popular sociologist, pastor, author and public speaker who was a former spiritual advisor to President Bill Clinton.

He tells of going to a funeral home to pay his respects to the family of an acquaintance. By mistake, he ended up in the wrong parlor.

It held the body of an elderly man, and his widow was the only mourner present. She seemed so lonely that Campolo decided to stay for the funeral. He even drove her to the cemetery.

At the end of the graveside service, as he and the woman were driving away, Campolo confessed to her that he had not known her husband.



“I thought as much,” said the widow. “I didn’t recognize you. But it doesn’t really matter.”

She squeezed his arm so hard it hurt. “You’ll never, ever know what this means to me,” she told Campolo.

And it did mean more to her than she could express.

Burdens are so much lighter when someone else helps us bear them.

The fifth chapter of the Gospel of Mark has an account of people coming from all around to see and hear Jesus, who had attained celebrity status. In the midst of the crowd was a woman who had been seeping blood for 12 years – what doctors would call a hemorrhage. She was considered “unclean.” No one was supposed to touch her as long as the bleeding continued. Her condition would prevent her from getting married. She was not even supposed to go into the temple for worship. She was a despised and solitary woman.

The gospel writer tells us that she had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors, and had spent all she had, but grew worse. The woman gets close enough to Jesus to touch His cloak, and immediately her bleeding stops. She is freed from her suffering. Jesus turns around and asks who touched His clothes. The woman comes forward, falls to His feet and confesses. Trembling with fear, she tells Jesus the whole truth.

(more)

“Daughter,” Jesus said, “your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

Maybe you are suffering – physically or emotionally. Is there someone you can turn to? Someone who will not break your confidence? Someone who will listen sympathetically without judging? Jesus knows about your situation, but sometimes it helps to share the hurt with at least one other person. And don't forget your faith. It was central to this woman's healing.

So that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God
(1 Corinthians 2:5 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter