
One among the Crowd

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Of the Seventy

Let us quietly and resolutely press forward to the Savior, having faith that He cares about us and has the power to heal and save us.



In the book of Luke we read of a woman who for 12 long years had suffered from a bleeding condition. She had exhausted her means in search of a medical solution but had found none. In a crowd of people, the woman approached the Savior from behind and touched the hem of His garment. Jesus wanted to know who had touched Him because He felt that power had gone out of Him. The Apostles could not understand the question and asked, “Master, the multitude throng[s] thee and press[es] thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?”¹ The woman then with great fear and trembling confessed that it was

she who had approached Him and had been immediately healed. The Savior sent her away in peace, telling her that her faith had made her whole.

There is much to learn and ponder in this interesting little story.

I picture the crowd itself. It must have been fairly large, as people were pressing in on Jesus. It might even have been a noisy crowd, as people pushed and shoved trying to get a better look at Him. I wonder why they were there. Most, I think, came out of curiosity. Wherever He went, news of His arrival and stories of His miracles preceded Him. Perhaps they expected to see something out of the ordinary, an event not to be missed. Though not mentioned, there were likely Pharisees in the crowd, who always seemed to be close by, watching for opportunity to entrap, embarrass, or find something with which they could condemn Jesus. Could it be possible that some in the crowd even came to mock?

Among the crowd was a woman. I see a humble woman, perhaps even a timid woman, approaching the Savior from behind and then with embarrassment confessing that she had touched the hem of His garment. She was a woman exhausted and impoverished by her difficulties. She was desperate for help. Outwardly, there was little to



distinguish her from any other person in the crowd. No one tried to stop her from moving toward Jesus. Certainly, the Apostles neither noticed her nor made any attempt to stop her. But there was something that set her apart from all others in the crowd that day. Though buried among the thronging mass, she resolutely and quietly pressed forward with a single purpose in mind: to come to the Savior, having faith that He had the power to heal her, that He cared about her and would respond to her need. In this one thing she set herself apart from the crowd. The crowd came to see, but the woman came to be healed.

There are other interesting accounts in the scriptures of one faithful person among a crowd. Alma

was among the wicked priests of King Noah. These were men described as being lifted up in the pride of their hearts, lazy and idolatrous, who spoke lying and vain words to the people.² They had perverted the ways of the Lord because they had not applied their hearts to understanding.³ When Abinadi delivered his message of repentance, they mocked him and finally put him to death. This was indeed an evil crowd. Yet as the scriptures point out, “there was one among them”⁴ who believed. Alma alone took to heart what Abinadi had taught. With courage he stepped away from the crowd to follow the Lord. The influence of this one man among the crowd on the course of Nephite history is immeasurable.

One of the most well-known crowds in the Book of Mormon is the one that occupies the great and spacious building in Lehi’s vision of the tree of life. The building was filled with people, old and young, male and female, who were mocking and pointing their fingers toward those who were partaking of the fruit of the tree.⁵ Unfortunately, some who had tasted of the fruit listened to the crowd and “fell away into forbidden paths and were lost.”⁶ There were others, however, who partook of the fruit and paid no heed to the crowd.⁷ These were the ones who enjoyed the full blessings of the tree of life.

In reality these stories are not about crowds but individuals among those crowds. They are really about you and me. All of us are among the crowds of this world. Almost all of us are like the woman who, despite the crowd, comes to the Savior. We all have faith that just a touch will bring healing to our aching souls and relief to our innermost needs.⁸ New members of the Church in many lands are often like Alma. They hear the words of life when no one else in their family or circle of friends does. Yet they still have the courage to accept the gospel and chart a course through the crowds. I think each one of us understands what it means to partake of the fulfilling fruit of the tree of life within sight and sound of those who mock and what it means to exert every courageous effort to pay them no heed.

Struggling through the crowds of the world can be lonely and hard. Their pull and tug on the individual who wishes to step away to something better can be very strong and very difficult to overcome.

Who better than the Savior can reach, support, and ultimately rescue the one among the crowd? He understands what it is to persevere among a disrespectful crowd and still remain true. The worldly crowds do not recognize Him, saying that “he hath no

form nor comeliness” and that “there is no beauty that we should desire him.”⁹ King Benjamin says that the world “shall consider him a man.”¹⁰ Isaiah further describes Christ’s place among the crowds of the world with these words:

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief . . . ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”¹¹

Nephi writes that “the world, because of their iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of naught.”¹²

Yet ultimately this Firstborn Son of God, who is so often misjudged and misunderstood, will emerge from being one among the crowd as the Anointed One, the Savior and Redeemer of the world. This emergence is humbly predicted in the Savior’s own statement to certain chief priests and elders that “the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.”¹³

My dear brothers and sisters, I pray that each one of us can pass safely through the crowds of this world. In all of life’s circumstances let us quietly and resolutely press forward to the Savior, having faith that He cares about us and has the power to heal and save us. Let us heed His words of life and partake fully, continually, and courageously of the fruit that comes therefrom. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. Luke 8:45.
2. See Mosiah 11:5–11.
3. See Mosiah 12:25–27.
4. Mosiah 17:2.
5. See 1 Nephi 8:27.
6. 1 Nephi 8:28.
7. See 1 Nephi 8:33.
8. See Luke 4:18.
9. Isaiah 53:2.
10. Mosiah 3:9.
11. Isaiah 53:3–4.
12. 1 Nephi 19:9.
13. Matthew 21:42.