

# Unclean

*From Scripts of Hope & Restoration*

BY SEAN GAFFNEY

Can be performed with "Kingdom Prayer,"  
"Jesus, Pray for Me," and "No Need to Fear"

**Running Time:** Approximately 4 minutes

**Themes:** Healing, comfort, discouragement, cleansing, burdens, prayer

**Scripture References:** Isaiah 53:4-5 (NIV); Mark 5:25-34 (NIV); Luke 4:18-21 (NIV), 8:43-48 (NIV)

**Synopsis:** Four individuals in four different places and times reach out to God in their moment of desperation: the woman made unclean by a hemorrhaging disease; a man dying of cancer; a woman dealing with being a victim of a past sexual violation; and a young girl ready to commit suicide.

**Cast:**

BERENICE—Middle aged

FRED—40s, hair thinned from chemotherapy, or wearing a ball cap

VERONICA—30s, modestly attired

LAURA—Late teens or early twenties, thin

**Setting:** Limbo setting, each character in their own part of the stage

**Costumes:** Berenice should be in biblical garb; the others in modern dress.

**Props:** None

*(Three women and one man are positioned around the stage, each in their own area. BERENICE is dressed in biblical attire, the rest—FRED, VERONICA, and LAURA—are dressed modern. They are unaware of each other, and do not respond to the other's comments.)*

BERENICE: Of course I had heard of Him. Everyone talks about Him. I didn't think I'd ever have a chance . . .

FRED: I loved going to church. The whole feel of the thing. Especially the music, I guess.

VERONICA: It's not that I hadn't heard of You, it's that I didn't want to have anything to do with You. Or anyone.

LAURA: Or more to the point, I didn't think You would want to have anything to do with me.

FRED: That was before—

BERENICE: —before I became ill. How long ago was that? Twelve years.

LAURA: Twelve years old and I remember already hating what the mirror showed me.

FRED: Twelve months to live. Or twelve years. Didn't matter. When the doc said "cancer," my life was over either way.

VERONICA: Twelve shameful minutes that I can't stop reliving. I was sixteen. And stupid. But when older boys show an interest . . . you know. So I went to the party.

BERENICE: Saw all kinds of doctors . . . with their bleedings, and potions. Don't know which was worse—

FRED: —the sickness or the cure. Radiation, now there's a treat. And the drugs.

VERONICA: The drugs must have been in the soda. They tried to get me to take a beer, but I said no. But I did drink a soda.

LAURA: If I told you I was fat, you'd say, no, I'm too skinny. If I said I was ugly, well, you'd keep on lying to me.

FRED: I stopped going to church . . . didn't want to explain the hair loss. I wasn't ready for people to know, you know?

BERENICE: It's the bleeding. I'm unclean, you see. I'm not allowed to "socialize," to be near anyone.

FRED: Unwell.

LAURA: Unlovable.

VERONICA: Untouchable.

FRED: Haven't even told work. You see, I'd stacked up a bunch of vacation days, and I just use them for appointments and what-not. Don't know why. Feel stupid, I guess.

VERONICA: I don't remember the party. Or going home. I remember my mom taking me to the doctor. I remember the police asking questions. I told them nothing happened.

LAURA: It's not envy. And it's not the magazines, it's me. I eat too much. No matter how much I purge, I still gain weight.

BERENICE: I can't keep food down. Which is good, since I can no longer afford food, thanks to all those doctors.

FRED: It's been so long since I've gone anywhere. Church included. So Rob, he's one of those Stephen people, he suggests bringing church to me!

BERENICE: So when someone like Him was in town, others got hope. Not me. I couldn't go to Him. I was unclean. Bloody.

LAURA: There's only so much you can take. Only so hard you can try.

VERONICA: That was a long time ago. I should be over it, right? But tonight, after my date with Andy, from work—well, at the door, he tried to kiss me. Just a kiss, that's all.

BERENICE: Unclean. Filthy, inside and out.

VERONICA: I couldn't . . . just a kiss, on the cheek. But I can't let myself be touched . . . by anyone.

BERENICE: Unclean.

LAURA: And so alone I want to die.

FRED: There are three of us here. Rob, Caleb, and Pete. Caleb has a guitar. No one says anything about my hair or my IV drip or points out I'm dying. We just sing.

LAURA: I bought a new razor. And I have a towel. They say women are like that, neat. Concerned about the cleanup after.

VERONICA: What's wrong with me? Why don't I feel anything?

BERENICE: I can't see Him. But maybe I can get to Him anyway. Just touch His hem. He won't have to know. If I can push through this crowd.

FRED: I stayed away from people. Why did I stay away from You?

LAURA: Even if I don't cut myself, I'm already dead.

VERONICA: I think I died when I was sixteen.

BERENICE: Let them punish me. I'm already dying.

FRED: I'm a fool, arms in the air, singing. I don't care.

LAURA: If Mom heard me now, talking, praying, she'd think I was crazy. I am crazy.

BERENICE: Insane. Pushing my way to You. Insane.

VERONICA: Asking someone without a body to hold me. But I need to be held by tender arms.

FRED: So here I am, singing, in Your presence again.

BERENICE: So here I am, pushing through the crowd.

VERONICA: So here I am, God. Needing to talk to You.

LAURA: So here I am, unable to lift my head for the shame.

FRED: My Lord before me.

BERENICE: The Nazarene passing by me.

VERONICA: Alone, but for You, God.

LAURA: At the end . . . are You there?

*(Music cue for "Kingdom Prayer")*

FRED *(lifting his hands high)*: I lift my hands to You!

*(Music cue for "Jesus, Pray for Me")*

BERENICE *(stretching her arm out)*: I reach, just the hem of Your garment—

VERONICA *(spreading her arms wide)*: Hoping to feel Your touch, Your gentle touch—

LAURA *(sinking to her knees)*: I feel, I feel—in His love?

*(BERENICE clutches with her outstretched hand, as if grabbing the hem of Jesus' garment. Blackout and freeze. Music cue for "No Need to Fear.")*



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