

Withered Hand and Withered Hearts
Mark 3:1-6
Christ our Focus

1. The condition of a man's heart can be seen by the things he says and the things he does.
 - a. Christ put it this way,
 - i. **Matthew 15:18-20** But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. (19) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. (20) These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone."
 - b. I want you to compare the words and deeds of Christ as compared to that of the Pharisees.

2. Verse 1 – Jesus is attending the synagogue and he is being expected
 - a. The stricter view of Judaism is waiting for Jesus to show up.
 - b. They know that there is a man that has a withered hand that regularly attends the congregation.
 - c. This man's life as he knows it is at stake.

3. Verse 2 – They watched
 - a. They knew the character of Jesus that He is merciful.
 - b. They knew that this man was hoping with expectation of a great miracle
 - c. They have their understanding which stated that no medicinal therapy could be practiced on the Sabbath.
 - d. Their hearts are full of evil intent – malice
 - i. Malice disguised as religious fervor is the most dangerous of things – The Christian should never disguise malice with the cloak religiosity
 1. **Ephesians 4:31-32** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. (32) Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

4. Verse 3 – Christ's actions

- a. Christ takes the offensive
- b. Jesus knows what these religious men are thinking.
- c. Christ does not allow their religious misunderstanding to stop him from showing the mercy of God to those in need.
- d. Jesus calls him in an audacious move
- e. They think that they will have something by which to accuse Christ.

5. Verse 4 – Is it Lawful?

- a. Christ turns the tables on them and teaches what the Law of God truly means.
- b. To the professors of the law he asks:
 - i. Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm
 - 1. **3 John 1:11** Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.
 - 2. **1 Peter 2:15** For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.
 - ii. Is it lawful on the Sabbath to save life or to kill
 - 1. They were killing this man and Jesus in their hearts.
 - 2. Does God do good on the Sabbath?
 - 3. Is it in the nature of God to do good?
 - 4. As children of God, shouldn't we do good?
 - 5. To leave this man in this condition in order to observe the traditions that were not the law of God, would have been harmful!
 - 6. **Isaiah 58:6-11** "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? (7) Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? (8) Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. (9) Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall

cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, (10) if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. (11) And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail

- c. **We must remember the value of Human Beings – Matthew 12:9-12** He went on from there and entered their synagogue. (10) And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"--so that they might accuse him. (11) He said to them, "Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? (12) Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

6. Verse 5 – The anger of God demonstrated

- a. They refuse to answer.
- b. They refuse to admit that they are wrong.
- c. They have been confronted by the truth and yet remain unrepentant.
- d. This is not the anger of men that leads to murder
- e. This is anger at the injustice, stubbornness, and evil that can be found within man.
- f. Christ heals this man openly – in plain sight.
 - i. If they would not repent, then he would heal without apology.

7. Verse 6 – Leaving in huff

- a. We must notice that they remain unaffected by the great mercy of God.
- b. The Pharisees have been embarrassed
- c. They were furious
 - i. **Luke 6:11** But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.
 - ii. Angry that their traditionalism had suffered a great defeat

iii. Difference between both anger

1. Christ's anger

- a. The anger of Christ was unselfish—it was for the welfare of another.
- b. The anger of the Pharisees was selfish—they line themselves with the most unholy and sanctimonious of sacrilege

8. Benediction –

- a. **1 Peter 2:21-23** For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. (22) He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (23) When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.