

Stretch out your hand

Mark 3

Pray

1 And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had **a withered hand**.
2 So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.
3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, **Step forward.**
4 Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent.

The ministry of Jesus had attracted the attention and the suspicion of the religious leaders.

- Jesus had recently performed a miracle in the healing of a man who was paralyzed.
 - But during that healing, **Jesus also claimed to be able to forgive sins**,
 - which is something only God can do.
- Another concern of the religious leaders was that Jesus kept company with sinners!
 - He had even recently called a tax collector to be one of his disciples.

And if that wasn't enough to disturb the religious leaders,

- Jesus also consistently violated the traditions of men that surrounded the Sabbath
 - claiming that He himself was the Lord of the Sabbath.

It is with that backdrop that we find Jesus once again in the synagogue!

- And the religious leaders are watching Him like a HAWK!!!!

the New Testament mentions synagogues over 60 times,

- largely in connection with the ministry of Jesus and his disciples.

A **synagogue** is a Jewish building designed for worship similar to a church building today.

- On the Sabbath, local Jews within a community would meet in that synagogue
 - for prayer and for the reading of Old Testament scripture.
- And its awesome to know Jesus was a church-going man
 - who would go to the synagogue on the Sabbath
- In Luke's account of this same story,
 - Luke tells us that **Jesus was teaching at this service**.
- And there was within that audience was a man with a withered hand

When it says that this man had a **withered hand**,

- it's a word that means **shriveled, dried up, stiff**, it didn't function properly!
 - And we don't know what caused the withering. The Bible doesn't say.
 - It could have been an accident or disease.
 - he may have been born in this condition.

But even though this man had a withered hand, I love how he was still in the synagogue

- where God's word was taught and God ministered to Him as He saw him hurting!

And this man could have easily said, "You know what? I'm not going to church.

- Because my hand is withered and I'm embarrassed.
 - I don't want anybody to know about it & I'm mad at God for my condition,
 - but he went to the synagogue b/c God's word encouraged him.
- He didn't stay home and say, "I can't go to church. I'm withered. He went anyway."

Don't you think this guy was Glad he went to the synagogue and sought God!

- Who do you think wants to keep people from fellowshipping and going to church?
 - the devil.

And when you come & you press in = God will meet you, transform you & bless you!

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Jesus looks for those who are in need. He's the physician for the sick.

- You may be thinking, "I am so withered. I'm so dried up. I'm so beaten down."
 - But you're the very person that Jesus wants to minister to.
 - No matter what has caused this withered condition in your life,
 - He wants to help you.

Psalm 34:18 The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart,
And saves such as have a contrite spirit.

Jesus called the man with the withered hand forward

- and he asked the religious leaders a theological question

"Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?"

Although the Sabbath was a day of rest from normal work,

- did the Sabbath make allowance to do something good?

Did the Sabbath day prohibit helping someone who was in need if you were able to do so?

Traditionally the religious leaders taught that if a man was bleeding to death,

- you could apply a tourniquet, but you couldn't apply any healing balm
 - you can put a Band-Aid on but no Neosporin on the cut
- or surgery until after the Sabbath, So we're going to stop the bleeding.
 - Tomorrow we'll fix you up, but it's the Sabbath & we're resting.
 - it's silly what they actually taught.

The religious leaders knew a man could rescue his sheep

- on the Sabbath if it fell into a pit as the law declared that in the Old Testament.
 - But the problem was these men developed a bunch of man-made regulations
 - That did not line up with scripture.
- So when Jesus poses this question, they had no reply....
 - because they would have incriminated themselves so they didn't answer.

nowhere in the Bible does it say that Jesus shouldn't

- heal a man on the Sabbath day
 - but they interpreted healing someone as work
 - that shouldn't be done on the Sabbath

they watched Jesus Closely

- now normally you'd think that's a wonderful thing watching Jesus closely
 - I want to watch him closely

but they were looking for something to criticize in him and accuse him of

it's a brilliant question, Jesus is saying how can there be a wrong day to do something good

- I'm going to heal this guy and Jesus says it's no work at all for me = it glorifies God

⁵ And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

While Jesus looked at them, he knew exactly what they were thinking

- and he was both angry and he was grieved."

He was sad that they were missing out on the Messiah.

- And that their hearts were so hard, unkind and resistant to Him!

But the hardness of their hearts and their resistance didn't stop Jesus from working.

Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."

- And he stretched it out and his hand was, and I love this word,
 - **RESTORED as whole** as the other.

Jesus **restored** this man's withered hand & He can restore our withered condition also!

- Jesus is the same **yesterday, today, and forever.**
- But sometimes we don't want to step forward when God calls us
 - And go all in for Jesus! Fully Abandoned & take that step of faith
 - I have decided to Follow Jesus & no turning back!

this man obeyed Jesus and he was restored.

I love what the Bible says in **Psalm 23:3** **He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.** CAST SHEEP

- I'm sure if I were to ask all of you here, how has God restored your life?
 - You would have tons of responses.

He has restored me in so many ways!

- And it's amazing that we serve a God who loves to restore.
 - **And that's why are testimonies are so powerful**

God restored my mind. For others, God restored your health. God restored your marriage.

- God has ways of restoring us. **It's a work that ONLY He is able to do.**
 - But He'll call you forward and say, TAKE A STEP OF FAITH. Follow my lead
- he would have remained withered if he didn't take a step of faith & obey Jesus

And I wonder how many areas remain withered in our lives

- **because we refused to just do what God has told us to do.**

I believe that God wants to restore things that are withered in our lives,

Jesus gave an impossible command, and whenever he gives a command,

- he gives the power to fulfill the command.
 - **Jesus' commandments are always Jesus' enablement's.**

Remember when Jesus said to Peter, " you want to walk on the water? Come on out Do it."

- Peter did it. with the command came the enablement.

He was able to do it because there was power in his command & His word.

Following this wonderful healing of this withered hand,

- you think the religious leaders would have said that was amazing. Wow. Praise God.

- Let's all celebrate. No. No, it doesn't say that in the next verse

He had a hardened hand; they had hardened hearts which was far worse.

⁶Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

Here we see The Pharisees assembled this unlikely alliance,

- they joined forces with the Herodians,
 - which shows us the persecution of Jesus was intensifying and organizing.

These two groups, Pharisees, Herodians, never would they come together.

- They were polar opposites. The Pharisees were religiously minded
 - where the Herodians were political connected to wicked Herod.
 - And yet they found a common cause, the destruction of Jesus.
 - They began to plot how they might put Jesus to death.

on one hand you have this tremendous Fame and popularity that Jesus is attracting

- on the other hand we are seeing increased opposition toward Jesus

And they don't want to kill him just because he heals people on the Sabbath day,

- they want kill him because He was claiming to be God

Its interesting how Jesus brings people together doesn't He...

- it's true in a good way I mean look at us here this morning
 - what do we have in common we're from different backgrounds
 - but here we are together because we are apart of the family of God
 - and we have common ground in Jesus

but he also brings people together in the bad way as people unite together against Jesus

- and that's what the Pharisees and the herodians are doing

verse six is a very dramatic turning point in the ministry of Jesus

- as there is officially a plot to kill him

if we were making a movie of this, at this point the music would get more intense

- because now there are people out to kill him

⁷ But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a **great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea⁸ and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him.**

People made long journeys because they heard about Jesus

- So they came to get something from him—
 - Lots of people with lots of needs equals lots of pressure.

So what does Jesus do?

- He got away from the crowd to get recharged

⁹ So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him.

It would be like saying, "Keep a car nearby with the engine running,"

- Just in case he needed to get out, if he felt like he would be crushed.

¹⁰ For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him.

¹¹ And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God." ¹² But He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.

Mark's gospel, unique to the other gospel writers makes note around 11 times

- that Jesus would seek to withdraw from the crowds, from the multitudes.

The demands of the ministry, they became increasingly more strenuous.

- News was traveling in every direction that ... There's a guy who heals lepers.
 - There's a guy who tells paralyzed people to get up and walk.
 - He heals people withered hands, opened eyes of the blind.

And so people are now coming, bringing their sick & possessed relatives,

- He feeds multitudes with little resources. Let's go get some lunch.
 - they were just coming from everywhere. And as they were coming,
 - they were wanting to get near him. Great multitudes.

The people just did not stop coming. The flow of people was consistent and growing.

thousands of people came traveling a hundred miles in their journey

- And they weren't going to be denied. We're going to get close to Jesus.
 - We traveled all this way. They're wanting to get right up in the front.

The diseased, the demon possessed, and the list went on.

- Now, I want you to imagine thousands of afflicted people pressing in
 - all trying to get near Jesus.

Jesus said to his disciples, "keep a boat ready for me, Less the crowd crush me."

- That's very practical! Some feel that being practical is a lack of being spiritual.
 - God gives us a brain. He gives us wisdom and discernment.
 - to prepare for things that could arise.

And it's not a lack of faith to prepare practically. That's wisdom.

It's interesting how There's an increase of demonic activity

- when we get to the New Testament.
 - We don't see much of it in the Old Testament

We come to the New Testament, we find lots of demon-possessed people everywhere,

- which makes perfect sense. Jesus Christ is the long-awaited Messiah.
 - The promise was made back in Genesis, chapter 3,

that the seed of the woman will eventually be born who will crush the head,

- the kingdom, the dominion of Satan, and so there was reaction in the demonic world.

in the New Testament they recognize: "Here is the one who is going to conquer us."

- And so there was this outburst of demonic activity.

great Crowds Are following him but they seem to be more interested in the spectacular

- things not the spiritual things

and it's this critical time in Jesus's Ministry what does he do?

- he picks men to pour his life into and to train and to raise up for leadership
 - look at it here verse 13

¹³ And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those **He Himself wanted**. And they came to Him. ¹⁴ Then He appointed twelve, ^{that} that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, ¹⁵ and to have ^{power} ^{to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons:}

at this critical point in Jesus's Ministry according to Luke 6 which kind of fills in the details

- tells us that **Jesus did this after spending an entire night in prayer**
 - and after spending that whole night in prayer he chose his 12 disciples
 - **which shows us Before a major decision, Jesus prayed.**

there was nothing more important in Jesus's three years of ministry before the cross

- **than what he did right here because these men would carry on what he started**
 - and without them the work of Jesus would never extend to the whole world

I love that He wanted them. He called them. Why? Because he wanted them.

- They were desired by the Lord. **You know The Lord wants you as well. He loves you.**
 - when you desire to be with someone, it implies you love them.

But I love also their response. **They came to him.** He wanted them, but they came to him.

- That's relationship. Jesus didn't say, "You will be my apostles. That's it. Come now."
 - they came because they wanted to be with him also.
- Relationship was the first thing.
 - Service was the second thing.
- **God first and foremost calls us because he wants relationship with us.**
 - **He wants to be with you in heaven with Him.**

remember the Lord said to the nation of Israel in **Deuteronomy 7:7-8** **The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples;** ⁸ but because the Lord loves you,

- their purpose was First, to be with Him.
 - Then it was to give them a purpose serving him spreading the gospel
- **he has a plan that he wants to reveal to us.**

What kind of plan are we talking about?

- God's plan is so much better than what I could have mapped out for myself.

The Bible says in **Jeremiah 29:11**, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you a future and a hope.

I just love how the first job of the disciples was **to be with Jesus** before He sent them out...

- **now a disciple is a student like being an apprentice**
 - and how does an apprentice learn his job by hanging out w/ the master expert

if you're an apprentice carpenter you learn by spending time with your journeyman

- and he teaches you & that's how we are to follow Jesus as his students
- **we stick with Jesus we learn from him you're his disciple you're his student**

the 2nd job of the disciples we see here was that he might send them out to preach & minister

- Jesus said I'm going to train you to do what I do and that's what he did
- he poured his life into these men so that they could pour it into others
 - so that they could pour it into other people and other people beyond that
- he said that's how we're going to Multiply by disciples making disciples

Matthew 28:19 Jesus said **Go into all the World and make disciples**

Jesus calls each of us to follow after His footsteps, and be His disciple also!

- now if you're wondering if you're qualified for this
 - let me put your heart at ease here

let's take a look at the collection of guys he chose

¹⁶ [g]Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; ¹⁷ James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"; ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.

The list of "the twelve" appear four places in the New Testament:

- Matthew, Mark, Luke; not in the Gospel of John,
 - but they appear again in the book of Acts.
 - Peter is always mentioned first,
 - Judas Iscariot is always mentioned last because he betrayed Jesus,
 - James always appears before John, they were brothers—
 - those are the three things you notice in all of the lists.
 - He selected 12. There are 12 tribes of Israel.

Notice the first one. **Simon**, to whom he gave the name **Peter**.

- He was always saying things that he shouldn't say
 - But Jesus changed Peter and changed his name & called him rock.
- But he wasn't a rock when he started out. Far from it. He was more like shifting sand.

Peter was the guy in the garden who took out the sword and went after the high priest

- and cut his ear off. And Jesus had to say, "Put your sword away,

Peter eventually denied Jesus, but was restored,

- and went on to be a great leader in the church.

I smile every time I read this section of the people he picked, and that Peter is first.

- It just gives me encouragement
 - because it shows me the kind of patience the Lord has

Peter wrote a couple books, First and Second Peter.

- Jesus spent more time with Peter than anyone else
- I think it's because he was a bit of a problem child and he needed extra attention
 - no other apostle is corrected as many times as Peter was

Peter just blurted out whatever he was thinking

- church tradition tells us that Peter was crucified upside down

One of my favorite stories of Peter is when Jesus gathered them in the upper room

- and we read that he began to wash the disciples feet and he came to Peter

- and peter said lord you can't wash my feet
 - and the reason for this is normally that's the job of a servant

Jesus says if I don't wash your feet you have no part with me

- peter says oh well could you give me a bath then

then there was **Andrew**, Peter's brother.

- every time Andrew is mentioned in scripture,
 - he's always bringing somebody to Jesus. It's great to be known for that.

Tradition tells us that Andrew was actually martyred, being crucified on a cross,

- shaped like an ex. They call it Saint Andrew's cross.

then there was **James** and **John** mentioned here. The sons of thunder.

Because they were so intense. They had anger volatile outbursts explosive violent tempers.

- These guys, at one point when Jesus was rejected in a particular city said,
 - "Do you want us to call down fire from heaven
 - and consume these people right now because we will do it? "

Jesus said, "You don't even know what spirit you're of. What are you doing?

- I'm here to save people, not fry people. "
 - they started out as the nuclear boys. But they changed in time.
- John became known as the tender apostle of love. He changed.
 - Started out thundering, fiery, but he became loving and gracious.

And in his epistles over and over, he would say, "Love one another. Love one another."

- he will go on to write 5 books: the gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John,
 - And the book of Revelation

Then there was **Philip** and little is known of Philip.

then there was **Bartholomew**, also known as Nathaniel.

then there was **Thomas**, he's remembered for when he doubted the Lord's resurrection.

- but what people fail to remember is Thomas was the first one to say
 - concerning Jesus, my Lord and my God.

Thomas was very loyal. I like to think of Thomas as "loyal Thomas."

Remember in John, 11, when Jesus' friend Lazarus died

- and his sisters Mary and Martha said "The one whom you love is sick."

And Jesus said, "Let's go up to Jerusalem.

- And the disciples said, "Lord, they wanted to kill you last time."
 - Thomas said, "Let's go with him that we may die with him."

Now that's a loyal statement. "If he's going to die, let's go with him and we'll die with him."

- Loyal to the end.

Matthew, we talked about him last time, former tax collector, eventual gospel writer.

- Very wealthy man = great style as his name was Levi
 - Probably wore Levi jeans

Then there was **James** the younger one, different from the other James.

Then there was **Thaddeus**. He was the brother of James the younger.

- Thaddeus means big hearted.

Then there was **Simon** referred to as the zealot.

- In Luke's gospel, zealots were part of this radical political party
 - that was seeking to overthrow the Romans in Israel. These guys were radical.
 - Jesus said, "I'll take that guy." & Jesus transformed his life.

And then of course, there was **Judas** Escariat who betrayed Jesus

- He is always listed last
- these were just ordinary men available for God.
 - When Jesus called, they responded.

The world would look at them and say, "Man, that's a bunch of losers.

- Why would you pick those guys? They're not the cream of the crop.
 - That's more like the bottom of the barrel. Why those guys?

I believe that the Lord selected them so that he might get the glory

- when he worked through them.

a lot of times he calls ordinary people like us, just people who are available for God

- so that he can empower us, that he can use us.

I love what DL Moody once said, "The world has yet to see what God can do through a man whose life is completely surrendered to the Lord." "By the grace of God, I will seek to be that man."

- these men, turned the world right side up
 - as they allowed Jesus to change them from the inside out.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. ²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹ that no flesh should glory in His presence.

²⁰ Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. ²¹ But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "He is out of His mind." ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons." ²³ So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan?" ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end.

27 No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.

Jesus is saying, ", I'm not doing what I'm doing by the power of Satan.

- This is the power of God because I'm binding the strong man through God's power and I'm delivering people from Satan I'm setting people free.

If Satan is casting out Satan's demons, what's happening to his kingdom? It's deteriorating.

- If Jesus was working with the devil and he's out casting out the devil's demons,
- he's fighting against himself. A civil war weakens any nation.

The strong man is Satan and Jesus is saying, He is stronger than the strong man.

- Because He is setting free those who are bound by Satan."

28 "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; **29** but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation"— **30** because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

there is one singular sin that is unforgivable,

- the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. what's that?

the role of the Spirit of God is to convince people—you need Jesus Christ.

- So when a person says no to Jesus, no to Jesus, no to Jesus, he is resisting,
- and if he dies resisting, he dies blaspheming the work that the Holy Spirit

31 Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. **32** And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers **[b]** are outside seeking You." **33** But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?"**34** And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! **35** For **whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.**"

What is the will of God? first of all, that you have a relationship with God when we become christians we're placed in a new family the family of god

the bible says in **John 1:12** **For as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:**

Pray & Communion