

# Week 13

## Supernaturally Transformed Series

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September 14, 2024

### Opening Monologue

Welcome new guests and AVC Family members. We are continuing our Summer Sermon Series: Supernaturally Transformed. You can watch all the sermons on our YouTube channel and get all the notes on the APP.

In the sermon this week I tell a story about a high school principal who was “trying to get me” LOL! I admit I was not a perfect little angel.

The Religious Leaders hated Jesus so much, they sent spy's to most public places he went. Jesus didn't care as he was doing God the Father's work. As you may know Jesus didn't pull any punches with their hypocrisy; and called them out in front of the crowds at times. (Mt.23)

Sadly, the Religious Leaders cared more about power and control than doing what is righteous and right in God's eyes. They elevated their extra biblical traditions higher than the Lords actual word... or at least held them, equal as. On the Sabbath they forbid starting a fire, cooking, carrying a mat .... and even healing a person. (BTW- this is the short list: APP Commentary lists more)

Jesus of course knew all of this and one Sabbath day a man with a deformed hand entered the house of worship. Jesus was there and took notice. He said to the man, “stand up in front of everyone and stretch out your hand.” (Mark 3:3&5) Of course, Jesus always finishes what he starts, and the man's hand was completely healed. You better believe his life was never the same again... supernatural transformation!

You would think that the Religious Leaders would be praising God for

this miracle. Nope... not them, they went off instead to plot Jesus' murder. Yes... you read that right... they wanted to kill him!

Here is what Jesus said about them: "He looked around them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts..." (Mark 3:5). It's hard to believe, isn't it? Friends, we would do ourselves some good to make sure we too are not holding onto any stubbornness.

This week's Sermon will reveal so much more... along with the APP Commentary, Sermon Notes and Devotional Questions below.

Blessings in Christ!

Rev. Brad Standfest

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**To Listen to this week's Sermon: "Week 13 - Supernaturally Transformed" Go to the Sermon tab here in our APP or use the links to our website or YouTube Channel where you can also listen to our Sermons:**

**Web:** <https://www.almontvineyardchurch.org/media>

**You Tube:** <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch>

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## **Key Sermon Text**

### **Matthew 23:13-15**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2023%3A13-15&version=NIV>

### **Revelation 22:18-19**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022%3A18-19&version=NIV>

### **Mark 3:1-6**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%203%3A1-6&version=NIV>

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## **Background on Jewish Traditions Christ was Opposed to**

The Talmud, a central text of Rabbinic Judaism, expands significantly

on the biblical injunction to rest on the Sabbath. The Torah states, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,” and “in it you shall not do any work” (Exodus 20:8-10), setting the foundation. The Talmud elaborates on what constitutes “work” by listing 39 categories of melachah (labor) that are prohibited on the Sabbath. These categories include various forms of work related to agriculture, textile production, writing, cooking, building, and kindling fire, among others.

The Talmud’s discussion on these matters is extensive, providing both legal and ethical guidance for observing the Sabbath. It emphasizes the importance of rest, reflection, and spiritual renewal, encouraging a break from the daily routines of labor and commerce to focus on family, community, and spiritual growth. The Rabbinic sages, through the Talmud, seek to guard the sanctity of the Sabbath by defining the boundaries of what is considered work, thereby helping the Jewish community to observe this day in a way that honors the intention of the biblical commandment.

The concept of the 39 categories of forbidden labor on the Sabbath comes from the Oral Torah, which is further elaborated in the Talmud. These categories were derived from the tasks involved in the construction of the Tabernacle as described in the Torah. They are considered a blueprint for understanding what forms of work are prohibited on the Sabbath, guiding the observance of the day’s sanctity through rest and abstinence from creative work. Here are the 39 categories: Please note... this DO NOT cover all the Oral and other writings in the Talmud and other Jewish sources.

1. Sowing - Planting or sowing seeds in the ground.
2. Plowing - Preparing the earth for planting.
3. Reaping - Cutting or harvesting plants from the ground.
4. Binding sheaves - Gathering and tying cut plants into bundles.
5. Threshing - Separating grains or seeds from the husks and straw.
6. Winnowing - Using the wind to separate the chaff from the grain.
7. Selecting - Removing undesirable parts from desirable parts by hand.
8. Grinding - Breaking down a substance into smaller pieces or powder.
9. Sifting - Separating fine particles from coarser ones with a sieve.

10. Kneading - Working dough or clay into a uniform mixture.
11. Baking/cooking - Using heat to prepare food.
12. Shearing wool - Cutting or shaving wool from animals.
13. Bleaching - Whitening fabric by removing its color.
14. Beating wool - Softening and cleaning wool fibers.
15. Dyeing - Changing the color of materials.
16. Spinning - Twisting fibers into thread or yarn.
17. Weaving - Creating fabric by interlacing threads.
18. Making two loops - Creating loops in weaving.
19. Weaving two threads - The act of weaving two threads through the warp.
20. Separating two threads - Removing threads from a woven material.
21. Tying a knot - Making a loop in a string or rope that tightens when pulled.
22. Untying a knot - Loosening and opening a knot.
23. Sewing two stitches - Making two stitches with needle and thread.
24. Tearing in order to sew two stitches - Ripping fabric with the intent to repair it by sewing.
25. Trapping - Capturing or ensnaring animals.
26. Slaughtering - Killing animals for food or other purposes.
27. Skinning - Removing the skin from an animal.
28. Tanning - Processing animal hides into leather.
29. Scraping hide - Cleaning or smoothing hides during leather production.
30. Marking hides - Making cuts or marks on leather as part of its processing.
31. Cutting to shape - Cutting materials to a specific size or shape.
32. Writing two letters - Writing two or more letters.
33. Erasing in order to write two letters - Removing writing for the purpose of rewriting.
34. Building - Constructing or adding to structures.
35. Demolishing - Tearing down structures or parts of them.
36. Extinguishing a fire - Putting out a fire.
37. Kindling a fire - Lighting a fire.
38. Putting the finishing touch on an object - Completing an object's manufacturing process.
39. Transferring between domains - Moving objects from private to

public spaces or vice versa.

These categories serve as a framework for understanding the breadth of activities that are refrained from on the Sabbath to honor the commandment of rest and holiness.

Jesus is depicted as being particularly forthright in His criticism of the religious leaders of His time, especially the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. This criticism, however, was rooted in a deep concern for genuine faithfulness and the well-being of the people, whom He saw as being led astray by leaders more concerned with outward appearances than with the heart of God's law.

One of the clearest examples of Jesus' direct approach is found in Matthew 23, where He pronounces a series of "woes" against the scribes and Pharisees, calling them out for hypocrisy and legalism:

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. [...] Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean." (Matthew 23:13, 25-26, NIV)

These rebukes highlight a central theme of Jesus' ministry: the importance of inner purity and righteousness over mere external compliance with religious rituals and customs. Jesus criticized the religious leaders not because He opposed the Law—indeed, He affirmed the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17)—but because their interpretation and application of the Law often missed its core intent, which is love, justice, and mercy (Matthew 23:23).

Jesus' interactions with the religious leaders were also marked by His compassion for the people, whom He saw as being like "sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). His critiques were aimed at correcting the misguided priorities of the leaders and pointing them, and all who followed their teachings, towards the heart of God's desires for His people.

Despite His harsh words, Jesus' ultimate goal was redemption and transformation. He invited everyone, including the religious leaders, to repentance and to a deeper, more authentic relationship with God. This is evident in His lament over Jerusalem and His desire to gather its people as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, a metaphor for His protective love and desire for their salvation (Matthew 23:37).

Thus, Jesus' criticisms of the religious leaders were part of His broader mission to reveal God's true character and to call all people to live in accordance with God's will, emphasizing mercy, faithfulness, and love above ritual and tradition.

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## **Commentary: Mark 3**

### **JESUS HEALS A MAN'S HAND ON THE SABBATH / 3:1-6**

This episode completes a set of five escalating confrontations between Jesus and the religious leaders. Together they summarize the points of tension leading to Jesus' rejection. Jesus committed the following "indiscretions":

- He spoke as though he were God because he forgave sins (2:1-12).
- He consorted with known sinners (2:13-17).
- He dared to question long-standing traditions like required fasting (2:18-22).
- He refused to call picking grain on the Sabbath an act of work (2:23-28).

The Pharisees were watching Jesus' actions on the Sabbath, anticipating that he might do something that would allow them to condemn him. Jesus thwarted their plan by involving them in the decision to heal the man. Their anger drove the Pharisees to break the Sabbath by plotting Jesus' murder. They committed the very sin they wanted to pin on him.

**3:1 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand.** As was his regular custom (noted by the word "again"), Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath (see 3:2). The definite article "the" is not present in the Greek, so this could be any synagogue in Galilee, although it was most likely in Capernaum (1:21). As Jesus entered, he saw a man who had a withered hand. He

may have been born with this defect or acquired it by an accident or disease. In any case, the hand was useless. Luke adds the detail that it was the man's right hand (Luke 6:6).

**3:2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath.** Some of them refers to the Pharisees (3:6). These men were following Jesus everywhere, looking for a reason to accuse him (see 2:6–7, 16, 24). In this particular situation, they watched Jesus' encounter with the man who had a withered hand. As they followed Jesus, the Pharisees made sure to stay aloof from the crowd. They were there, but they were separate. They were spying on Jesus with the intention of finding some fault in his actions that would discredit his claim as the Messiah.

Jesus' reputation for healing (even on the Sabbath, see 1:21–26) preceded him, but would he dare heal on the Sabbath with the Pharisees watching? God's law prohibited work on the seventh day of the week (Exodus 31:14–17); thus, the religious leaders allowed no healing to be done on the Sabbath unless the person's life was in danger. Healing, they argued, was practicing medicine, and a person could not practice his or her profession on the Sabbath.

The Pharisees did not see a man in need; they saw only an opportunity to accuse Jesus as a Sabbath-breaker. It was more important for them to protect their laws than to free a person from suffering. The man's condition was not life threatening; he could have waited until the next day to be healed—Jesus could have told the man to see him the next day for healing. But Jesus, as Lord of the Sabbath, had the authority to overrule the Pharisees' traditions and regulations.

God's law for the Sabbath was never meant to keep people in bondage. When Jesus saw a need, he filled it, no matter what day it was. Healing the man not only revealed Jesus' authority over the Sabbath but showed that in the new kingdom, every day is holy, that salvation and healing can come to anyone on any day. The Sabbath, while an important day given to God's people as a day of rest and worship, was also a day to be merciful and kind to those in need. And that is exactly what Jesus intended to show the Pharisees when he spoke to the man.

In Matthew's account, the Pharisees directly asked Jesus whether or not it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. Jesus answered, "Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath" (Matthew 12:11-12 NRSV).

### **WHO'S WATCHING?**

Famous people have always had to endure the watching eye of the crowd. News media and rumor mills plague their lives. People were constantly reporting on Jesus' religious opinions and observing his moral behavior. They were looking for a way to trip him up and discredit him. Not every Christian is famous or under the scrutiny of the news media, but people are watching to see if we really believe what we say we do. People are watching, and curious watchers become eager listeners. Living faith will draw a crowd. Witness to God's truth and power by your robust living (worshiping God and serving people) and humble, clear speech (sharing the message, the Good News).

**3:3 He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come forward."** Jesus didn't avoid a confrontation with his adversaries; instead, he made a public display of this healing. Jesus needed to make the important point that he would not be bound by the Pharisees' burdensome laws and that, as God, he would perform an act of kindness and healing, even on the Sabbath. So Jesus commanded the man with the withered hand to "Come forward" to the center of the crowd so everyone could see him and his deformity. The Pharisees would not miss anything of what Jesus was about to do.

**3:4 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.** Actually, the Pharisees could have given an answer because they knew that it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath if someone's disease was life threatening. In this case, the man's disease wasn't endangering his life; so it is remarkable that the Pharisees remained silent.

To Jesus it didn't matter that this man's life was not threatened by the



condition of his hand; it didn't matter that he could have waited until the next day to perform this healing legally. If Jesus had waited until another day, he would have been submitting to the Pharisees' authority, showing that their petty rules were equal to God's law. If he healed the man on the Sabbath, the Pharisees could claim that because Jesus broke their rules, his power was not from God. But Jesus revealed clearly that their rules were ridiculous and petty. God is a God of people, not of rules. The best time to reach out to someone is when he or she needs help.

So Jesus asked a rhetorical question: "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But the Pharisees kept silent, for to answer would have left them without an accusation to pin on Jesus. Their own laws allowed people to do good and to save life on the Sabbath—the farmer who could rescue his only lamb from a pit on the Sabbath knew that. How absurd, then, to refuse to allow a person to do good to another person on the Sabbath. The Pharisees, by their silence, showed that they were refusing to debate with Jesus. They saw only the legal obligations; Jesus looked from his perspective of authority and morality. They were on different ground and refused to budge. The verb "kept silent" is imperfect, meaning that they kept on being quiet. In other words, Jesus asked his question and then allowed for an embarrassingly long silence on their part.

**3:5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."** The religious leaders, the guardians of the Jewish faith, the keepers of the law, the teachers of the people—these men with their stubborn hearts were so spiritually and morally blind and hardened that they could not see who Jesus really was, and they could not even acknowledge a man's need and rejoice in his healing. No wonder Jesus was angry and distressed. Jesus looked at the stubborn Pharisees with anger (divine justice) and distress or grief (divine love).

### **Religious Rules**

Christian faith involves rules that are meant to be governed by love. That makes love the highest rule, but it also moves Christians toward personal sacrifice, discipline, and responsibility—scarce resources in

today's world.

Does love govern the rules you follow? Ask yourself:

1. Does the rule serve God's purposes?
2. Does the rule reveal God's character—mercy, justice, and compassion?
3. Does the rule help people get into God's family, or keep people out?
4. Does the rule have strong biblical roots?

Good rules pass all four tests.

"Stubborn hearts" is also translated "hard-hearted" or "hardness of heart." The Pharisees exhibited this, and it greatly angered and grieved Jesus; many Jews were hard-hearted in their refusal to believe in Jesus (John 12:37-40); and even his disciples at times revealed hard hearts in their lack of understanding (6:52; 16:14). Hard-heartedness generally refers to a callous and uncaring attitude. To the Jews, it meant a stubborn refusal to submit to God's will, a persistent resistance to his call. Hard-heartedness can be dangerous, for it is rooted in pride and can lead a person away from God. It is the very opposite of servanthood. This explains Jesus' anger and grief at the hard-heartedness of these religious leaders.

But the Pharisees' stubbornness didn't matter. Jesus planned to make his point and to kindly heal this man. So Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand.

### **He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.**

In response to Jesus' command and with all eyes focused on him, the man stretched his hand out in front of him. The moment he did so, his hand was completely restored; that is, it became like it had been before. As with the leper (1:42) and the paralytic (2:11-12), Jesus gave this man his life back. He could work again, and he no longer had to face the embarrassment of his deformity.

No particular action of Jesus is recorded; he told the man to move and with that movement, healing arrived. Jesus did nothing that could be called "work," but the Pharisees would not be swayed from their purpose. Jesus had embarrassed them. He had overruled their authority (Luke 6:11) and had exposed their evil attitudes in front of the entire crowd in the synagogue, showing that the Pharisees were more loyal to their religious system than to God. That was enough to cause them to get on with their mission of destruction.

## **CONSTRUCTIVE SOLUTIONS**

Jesus was angry about the Pharisees' uncaring attitudes. Anger itself is not wrong. It depends on what makes us angry and what we do with our anger. Too often we express our anger in selfish and harmful ways. By contrast, Jesus expressed his anger by correcting a problem— healing the man's hand. Use your anger to find constructive solutions rather than to tear people down.

**3:6 Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.** The Pharisees were outraged. Jesus had openly confronted their authority and placed himself above them. Their curiosity about Jesus turned to hatred because he had challenged and exposed their proud attitudes and dishonorable motives. In their fury, the only option they saw was to destroy Him. Ironically, the Pharisees had accused Jesus of breaking their law about healing on the Sabbath, yet they themselves were planning to kill him. Their hatred, combined with their zeal for the law, drove them to plot murder—an act that was clearly against the law. Among the Gospel writers, Mark is the only one to point out that the leaders began to plot Jesus' murder shortly after his ministry began.

In an unlikely alliance, the Pharisees plotted with the Herodians. The Herodians were a Jewish political party that hoped to restore Herod the Great's line to the throne. Thus their support of Rome's leadership over Palestine brought them into direct conflict with the Jewish religious leaders. The Pharisees and Herodians had little in common—until Jesus posed a threat to them both. Jesus threatened the Pharisees' authority over the people; Jesus threatened the Herodians' political ambitions because his talk of a "kingdom" caused them to think that this popular and powerful man was planning to set himself up as a ruler. This would jeopardize their authority derived from Herod's power. To get rid of Jesus, the Pharisees needed the support of people with some influence with the secular leaders. Thus the Pharisees and Herodians, normally enemies, joined forces to discuss how to get rid of Jesus.

Jesus demands a response from people. Either he is who he said he is, or he is a fraud. The Pharisees chose the latter. They were jealous of his popularity, his miracles, and the authority in his teaching and

actions. They valued their status in the community and their opportunity for personal gain so much that they lost sight of their goal as religious leaders—to point people toward God. Of all people, the Pharisees should have recognized the Messiah, but they refused to acknowledge him because they were not willing to give up their treasured position and power. When Jesus exposed their attitudes, he became their enemy instead of their Messiah, and they began looking for ways to destroy him.

**Resources:** Rev. Brad Standfest, David Guzik, Luke, David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible, Bruce B. Barton Luke, Life Application Bible Commentary

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## **Sermon Notes:**

**All Summer we have been journeying with Jesus reading his Supernatural stories of Transformation we will continue today...**

### **One Scholar says this about Jesus' Popularity:**

"While Jesus was drawing fire from the Religious Leaders, he was gaining great popularity among the people. People were literally coming from every direction to see Jesus. News of Christ beyond the Jordan River to the far Northern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The people came for various reasons and motives. Some were curious, some sought healing... some truly wanted to know if Jesus was the Promised Messiah. Some like the Religious Leaders were chasing after Jesus to try and trap him, to catch him in a blasphemous lie... they eventually plotted to kill him."

**Two Real Comparisons** can be made between the Religious Leaders and Jesus...

**Jesus was all about setting people Free and offering them a second chance on life... Real Supernatural Transformation**

**The Religious Leaders sought Power & Control** and liked people to live in Bondage...

**In fact, Jesus summed up their Agenda you can read all about it in Matthew 23...Here is the short Excerpt:**

**Jesus said this:** “Woe to you teachers of the law... you hypocrites and blind guides, you fools! You travel the land and sea to convert people... and when you do... you make them twice the son of hell as you are.” (Mt. 23:13-15)

**They hated Jesus to the point of death...** And were constantly chasing after him trying to get him handcuffed

**Have you ever had a Boss or a Person come after you for No good reason?**

**I went to a Small Christian High School for a time...** For a Short Season the School Changed Principals like McDonalds Flips Hamburgers

**[Short Story of High School Principals]**

**At the end she (the principal) says... My eyes are on you every day and everywhere you go... I am going to get you!!**

**This was the Religious Leaders Attitude towards Jesus... “We are going to get you!”**

**Here are the 3 Things they Hated about Jesus:**

**1.Jesus taught with authority, performed miracles, and told people their sins were forgiven**

**2.Jesus talked with sinners & marginalized people**

**3.Jesus refused to follow their traditions and their twisted views on God’s Word**

**Believe it or not the Religious Leaders Twisted God’s Word** and added their Oral Traditions to it and said it was Holy...

**God strictly warns us not to add or take away from His**

## **Word:**

**Revelation 22:18-19** I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

## **Here is what the Religious Leaders were guilty of:**

### **God's word in Exodus 20:8-10 says:**

“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy... six days you shall labor and work but on the seventh day you shall not work... it's a Sabbath day to the Lord. However, the religious establishment through Oral Traditions and Written traditions said (Get This!) ... A person shall not Cook, Write a Note, Put out a Fire, Start a Fire, Build, Plow, Sow, Pick up a Mat, Nor shall you offer any healing to a person... or practice medicine.

### **Let's get into this... Read Mark 3:1-6**

**Here is the Real & Raw thing in this text that should get all our attentions: Jesus was “deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts” (Mk 3:5)**

### **“Stubborn Heart” Greek Translation**

- Covered with a Callus
- Dulled Mental Perception
- Hardness of Heart
- Spiritual Blindness

**Here are some ways a Stubborn Heart can Play out in our everyday Lives:**

### **Stubborn Heart Characteristics:**

- Unwillingness to give someone a second chance
- Unwillingness to forgive someone or situation
- Unwillingness to admit you're wrong
- Unwillingness to make a Spiritual Change in your life
- Unwillingness to submit to God's Will

- Unwillingness to ask for Christ's Forgiveness

## **Christians may we never become Stubborn or Hard Hearted in our Attitudes!**

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### **Devotional Questions**

**As you delve into Mark 3:1-6, let the Holy Spirit guide your meditations and reflections.**

**1. Observation:** What does Jesus ask the man with the withered hand to do, and what does this action signify in the context of a synagogue service? Consider the significance of Jesus' command to "Stand up in the midst of them."

**2. Compassion and the Sabbath:** Jesus poses a question to the Pharisees, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" How does this question challenge the prevailing interpretations of Sabbath law? Reflect on how Jesus demonstrates the heart of God's law.

**3. Heart Condition:** The Pharisees' reaction to Jesus' healing reveals their heart condition. Mark notes that Jesus looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart. What does this incident reveal about the dangers of a heart hardened against God's workings and intentions?

**4. The Cost of Doing Good:** Jesus' decision to heal the man, knowing it would provoke opposition, points to the cost of doing good in a broken world. How does this passage challenge you to consider the cost of discipleship and the call to do what is right in the face of opposition?

**5. The Kingdom of God:** This miracle, like many of Jesus' miracles, is a sign of the inbreaking of the Kingdom of God. How does this act of healing on the Sabbath speak to the nature of the Kingdom Jesus came to inaugurate?

**6. Personal Reflection:** In what ways might you be challenged to act with compassion and courage, even when it's not convenient or it

challenges societal norms? How can you apply the principle of doing good to others in your own life, especially in areas where you might face misunderstanding or opposition?

**7. Prayerful Reflection:** Spend some time in prayer, asking God to reveal any areas of hardness in your own heart. Ask for the grace to see where He is working in your life and the courage to join Him in that work, especially when it calls you to step out in faith.