

Stretch forth your Hand - Mark 3:1-6 Transcendent Series

Well today is Super Bowl Sunday and upwards of 100 million people will watch the game today

A) How many of you? Game or commercials?
49ers or Chief's?

B) If you watch the game today – you are going to see Athletes who are uniquely gifted to perform.. level

C) The Chief's QB – Patrick Mahomes is a freak
1) "A can't miss hall of famer."

D) Those Athletes are physically capable of doing things that we are not able or equipped to do

But that is the interesting thing about being a follower of Jesus Christ

A) Jesus is constantly asking us to do things – that we are physically and emotionally incapable of doing.

B) But it is in our response to those promptings that we experience a wonderful Biblical principle
1) God's commandments are God's enablements

C) We see a wonderful example of that in the encounter with Jesus we are looking at today.

D) Mark 3 is our text – Jesus is still in the town of Capernaum – It is the Sabbath –

1) He is in the synagogue – Like you He is at church on the Lord's day!

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. 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.

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

Today as we look at this encounter of Christ – I want to key in on 4 things.

#1 The man with the withered hand

A) Jesus is drawn to this guy – He always sees those who are hurting

B) Jesus was always drawn to the one with the greatest need!

C) Still true today: This sanctuary – this gathering
1) Goodnews – Right now over here – that is me – greatest need.

D) No one knows – Jesus does! – His heart is drawn toward you today.

Now because of this man's withered hand – his life would have been affected on at least 2 levels

A) 1st PHYSICALLY – Vocationally

B) The historian Jerome tells us there is strong traditional evidence that the man with the shriveled and deformed hand, previously was a **stone mason.**

C) Now if that is true and most believe it is – his vocation would have been radically affected.

1) He would have been unable to provide for his family - **Almost impossible to make a living.**

D) Therefore the wellbeing of his entire family would have been affected.

#2 Emotionally

A) Men have the tendency to find our sense of worth in what we do!

B) Most men naturally and gladly carry the weight of taking care of our families.

C) Not being able to do that for most men is discouraging – even cause for depression

D) Recent times my dad was released from the hospital – In bed – incapable doing anything

1) I climbed into bed with him – lay there – "Hey bud anything you need – anything I can do for you...."

2) **Engrained in his DNA – take care of family**
Same with this man in our story. His life affected on an emotional level.

A) It would have been Harder for him to do things around the house –

B) harder to play with his kids – dad let's play catch
Dad – can you help me carry.....

C) So his life would have been impacted
Vocationally
Emotionally

Note were this guy is though – At Church

A) Right place to be when you are hurting!

B) Time you need to be here the most is when you least feel like being here.

1) Giving God that opportunity to speak and work

C) **On this day this man's life would be forever changed**

So first we are drawn to the man with the withered hand - #2 Watchful Clan: Scribes & Pharisees

² So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, **so that they might accuse Him.**

A) Now I think it says a lot about Jesus that they knew he would be drawn to this man – His need.

B) **Remember what we looked at last time – the Paralytic – forgiven - they reasoned in their hearts**

C) And it was ok for them to reason

1) But Then Jesus heals the guy – they don't get glad they get mad.

D) They are looking for reasons to come against him

E) Looking for reasons to accuse Him.

It was the Sabbath – They believed it was Wrong to heal on the Sabbath

A) Their problem - They were obsessed with laws:

B) A big one was the Sabbath – A day of rest and a day devoted to the Lord

C) Awesome that God – Put in his top ten – Take a day off - **He knows that we need it!**

D) But the religious leaders turned this day of rest into a day of Burden-

In the Talmud- a book describing the Jewish civil and ceremonial law.

A) Rabbi's took what God instructed Moses to write in Exodus, Leviticus and Duet. –

B) They sought to give commentary and explanation on what it meant to keep those laws

So God said: I want you to take one day in 7 off! Sabbath day:

A) They wrote a book (that devoted 24 chapters to what it meant to keep the Sabbath.) 24 chapters!

B) They had **39 different violations** and a host of categories that went along with those violations

C) According to the Talmud - **On the Sabbath day all work was forbidden and to heal was to work.**

The Jewish law was definite and detailed about this.

A) Medical attention could be given only if a life was in danger.

B) Some examples:

- a woman in childbirth might be helped on the Sabbath;
- an infection of the throat might be treated;
- if a wall fell on anyone, enough might be cleared away to see whether he was dead or alive;

C) if he was alive he might be helped, if he was dead the body must be left until the next day.

- A fracture could not be attended to.
- Cold water might not be poured on a sprained hand or foot.
- A cut finger might be bandaged with a plain bandage but not with ointment.

D) The rule was basically this: an injury could be kept from getting worse;

1) But it must not be made better.

Back to our story – here is this man who obviously did not have a life threatening need.

A) Watching – what would Jesus do – if he heals him he is disobeying the TALMUD

B)Note: The Talmud – not the law of God!

C)But they are closely watching – looking for reasons to accuse him.

#3 The Wisdom of the Son of Man

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.

A)Now if we look back to the end of chapter 2 we see that Jesus had just had a conversation with these guys about the Sabbath

²³ Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. **Snack** ²⁴ And the Pharisees said to Him, “Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?”

B)Pluck grain – working – breaking the Sabbath

²⁵ But He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: ²⁶ how he went into the house of God *in the days* of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?”

²⁷ And He said to them, **“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”** ²⁸ Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

The Sabbath was made for man - - the Sabbath was meant to bless man – to serve man

A)Not man for the Sabbath – the Sabbath was not meant to be a ball and chain for man

B)Man wasn’t made to serve the Sabbath the Sabbath was made to serve man/ Bless man

C)Jesus uses the analogy of David – taking the bread that was meant of the Priest

D)Principle: “Human need always supersedes religious ritual.”

E)Principle - When religious ritual ignores human need – it is always wrong.

In Matthew 12:11-12 -Jesus added this analogy

“What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? 12 Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath .”

A)Here is the point – It is not wrong to do good on the Sabbath - “Human need always supersedes religious ritual.”

B)So we see the Wisdom of Jesus – He gets to the point of what the Sabbath was really about

**C)A day that was meant to be a blessing to man – not a burden –
1)a day to enrich man in his relationship to God**

So they are watching Jesus closely – knowing that he would be drawn to this man/ his need.

A)Notice -V.3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward."

B)It is interesting to me that the Lord separated the man from **the crowd and brought his disability into view**

C) Why did he do that? – I am not sure – but I do know God will often do that with us –

D)He will bring an area of weakness or struggle into view

1)He exposes our weakness – so He can glorified in our weakness – by showing himself strong on our behalf

E)So Jesus called the man front and center:

#4 A Powerful Command – Stretch forth your hand

A)Think about this: Jesus was asking this man to do something he was incapable of doing.

B)His hand was withered – shriveled up – deformed

1)**It was physically impossible** for this man to stretch forth his hand

C)In fact Some might have considered it mean or insensitive – **Jesus asking this man to do what he couldn’t do –**

D) Like asking a blind person to look at a picture

1) That would be cruel

E) But Jesus makes this request of the man -

“Jesus always brings man face to face with the impossible and lays upon them a command that in their own strength they cannot obey” Morgan

Now this man could have argued with Jesus.

A) *‘That’s easy for You to say. Look at my hand - . How can I stretch it forth?’*

B) He could have argued why he was unable to do what Jesus was asking -

C) He didn’t do that - Instead, he simply obeyed. **He didn’t argue. He didn’t debate.**

D) He simply said, ‘OK,’ — **and as he stretched out his hand, the Lord met him in that place.**

This reminds us of a powerful and important biblical principle. Mentioned earlier

A) God’s commandments are God’s enablements

B) When God speaks, power is released.

1) If you can grab that simple concept, the Word will become extremely exciting to you.

C) Now If I am looking at myself alone – **His commands are impossible and unreasonable.**

D) But **when I see** that the power of God is behind the command – it becomes both possible/ reasonable

Maybe you are here today saying: I am really depressed –

A) I have been prayed for / I’ve read all the self help books / followed all the techniques – to no avail

B) The Lord’s word to you today is simply: **‘Rejoice evermore... For this is the will of God, in Christ Jesus concerning you.’**
(I Thessalonians 5:16).

C) Now you can argue and give 101 reason why you can’t do that – can’t rejoice

1) or you can say, **‘If the Word tells me to rejoice evermore, I will now start rejoicing.’**

D) And in the very act of beginning to rejoice, you’ll find reason & power to continue to rejoice. Maybe your struggle is w/ bitterness & unforgiveness.

A) The Lord’s word to you today is simply

Ephesians 4:31-32

“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

B) Now again you can come up with 1000 reasons why you can’t do that – or why you shouldn’t do that

1) Or you can say – if the word tells me to not be bitter and to forgive

C) God’s commandments are God’s enablements

1) Today I am going to stretch forth my withered hand and forgive – speak what is right

See Here is what we need to remember about forgiveness

A) **Forgiveness is an action not a feeling – forgiveness is really about my heart.**

B) Giving that situation and that person to Jesus

1) Forgiveness takes one – me my heart – not allow myself to get bitter

C) Reconciliation takes two – based on repentance – person owning their sin

D) Trust takes time/ Consistent behavior

But it starts with me forgiving – and I can do that – God’s commandments are his enablements

A) I choose to forgive that person today – walk in forgiveness – treat kindly –

B) Their name comes up – hold my tongue not speak poorly – I can pray for them

C) Then tomorrow – I wake up all over again – feeling man – bitterness again

1) I have to forgive all over again – might take days months – years – everyday

D) God’s commandments are God’s enablements

1) Today – walk in forgiveness

E) Here is what has happened in my life... hurt me that process – no longer mad or bitter

1) The emotion I feel now is pity – Pity for them – they are trapped in wrongful behavior

Problem in your marriage?

A) The word to us Husbands - **'Husbands, love your wives..... (Ephesians 5:25)**

B) Now you can argue – but Lord you don't know my wife 'You don't know what we've been through,'

C) You can come up with a myriad of reasons why that is impossible and unreasonable request

D) Or you can say – Lord your word tells me to love my wife. So I will love my wife.'

E) And because you're doing it, God will give you the power to carry it out.

'Wives, submit to your husbands,' (Ephesians 5:22).

A) You can argue and say why this is impossible.

B) Or you can say, 'Lord, in Your commandment is Your enablement. I will do it today.'

1) And you will receive power today to help you to show respect to your husband – even doesn't deserve it

Addiction

A) If you're struggling with **drugs, alcohol, pornography**, the Lord would say to you today,

Reckon yourself dead unto sin, but alive to Jesus Christ,' (Romans 6:11).

C) So if you go home, throw it away and say, **'I'm going to obey the command of Christ,'** you'll find power and victory.

D) **Daily you ask** the Lord to help you do that reckon yourself dead to those things – temptation comes....

We could go on and on – Stop here say this

A) Every one of us is withered in some area of our lives. **We know that.**

B) But we do not have to be !

C) The solution is simply to obey the command of Christ.

1) And as you do, He'll meet you at that point and give you the power to carry it out.

It really that simple – but it is not easy

A) Our flesh rebels against this – that is why it is a daily practice –

B) Where you say: Today Lord in your Power and in your strength – **ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD** – I will do what you command me to do.

C) See if I look only at myself – seems unreasonable and impossible

1) But when I take my eyes off of me and put them on to the LORD

D) **HIS power – HIS grace – HIS strength in my weakness –**

1) It becomes Possible – reasonable – RIGHT ON!

Here's ANOTHER problem: Often times we make this mistake: We say –

- I will rejoice when I stop feeling depressed.
- Or I will forgive when my bitterness goes away- **Lord take it away.**
- I will Love my spouse, when Jesus takes away my anger – **Lord please take away my anger.**
- I will quit using when –my craving for my addiction goes away – **Lord take away the craving.**

The Lord would say you have it backwards –

A) I am giving you a command to walk in a new way of life.

B) In the command is the power to carry out the command –

1) What you are desiring to take place in your life will take place as you walk in my Word.

Once I quit saying why **I can't**; once I quit arguing w/ the Word and saying, **'It's not that easy'**;

A) Once I quit saying, 'I'm an exception to the rule,'

B)and instead say, 'Lord, if You say it, I'll do it. Period.'

He meets me there and a miracle takes place.

Can I encourage you today: take the Lord up on His command and Stretch forth your hand

A)Whatever that means for you – today

B)COMMUNION TODAY – Jesus conquered sin and death for us – our place

C)So that we could be more than conquerors – through him who loved us!

I don't know what you are facing today – But I know this that the power of the Risen Jesus is in you

A)His heart is toward you today –

B)Victory is yours – healing is yours – what is He asking you to do today

1)His power is connected to His command

C)Walk in it – step out in obedience – He will meet you today.

Let's pray!