

The Withered Hand - Mark 3:5

by Jon Courson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to the command of Christ in receiving power and victory in our lives, and that the solution to our withered lives lies in simply obeying the Word.

Scripture: Matthew 18:20, Luke 15:4, Romans 6:11, Ephesians 4:25, Ephesians 5:25, 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Topics: "Divine Healing", "Spiritual Wholeness"

Description

Jon Courson delves into the timeless account of the man with the withered hand, highlighting how Jesus always shows up where people are hurting and in need, ready to heal, restore, and bring strength. He emphasizes that Jesus desires to meet individuals in their weakness and provide miraculous touch and transformation, challenging the notion that substitutes like counseling or seminars are necessary for encountering God's power. Courson emphasizes the power of obeying God's commands, stating that in obedience, one finds the enablement and strength to overcome struggles and experience true wholeness.

Transcript

Focus with me on four elements of this timeless account . . .

The Withered Hand

The historian Jerome tells us there is strong traditional evidence that the man with the paralyzed hand was a stone mason. If so, his paralysis would have very definitely affected his income, and, consequently, the well-being of his entire family. In addition, medicine being in the state that it was, there would have been no painkillers to help alleviate the pain he undoubtedly felt in his arm and through his chest.

Although our medicine and workmen's compensation are more sophisticated than in Jesus' day, our society is filled with people who feel as though they're paralyzed relationally, wounded financially, or withered emotionally. Thus, this account is as impacting today as it was then.

The Wicked Plan

Hearing stories about the Man from Galilee Who worked wonders and miracles, the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem grew concerned, for it seemed as though He was getting far too much attention. So they sent a delegation composed of scribes and Pharisees -- those devoted to interpreting the Law, and those devoted to keeping its most minute detail -- to Capernaum in order to check out the situation.

How did they know where to find Jesus? Could it be that, knowing this man with the paralyzed arm would be in that particular synagogue on the Sabbath, they figured Jesus would be there as well?

The scribes and Pharisees did not come to worship. They came to watch. They did not come to commune with the Lord, but to confront the Lord. They did not come to find fruit, but to find fault. And they sat there, waiting -- knowing Jesus, moved with compassion, would surely do something which would violate their Sabbath rules.

The Wonderful Man

Jesus always shows up where people are hurting and needy. Such is the heart of our Lord. He desires to heal the hurts, to bind the wounds, to restore strength, to straighten out situations. The Lord is always present in the place of hurting, and He'll always move towards the one who is hurting the most.

If you're hurting today, the Lord will find His way to where you're sitting and come alongside of you especially, singularly, particularly.

Jesus likened Himself to the shepherd who leaves 99 of his flock in order to find the one that's lost (Luke 15). That's our Lord. Jesus told us that wherever 2 or 3 are gathered in His Name, He's in their midst (Matthew 18:20). Thus, He is here.

And yet why is it in the Christian community that, although we believe this theoretically, we refer people away from the Church consistently? If a person battles alcohol, we refer him to AA. If a marriage is in danger, we refer the couple to a seminar. If parents are having troubles with their teenagers, we refer them to counseling.

While I am not against any of these things, I suggest that they have become substitutes because people no longer believe they can come into church with their withered hand and that Jesus will meet them there and touch them miraculously. Instead, they believe they must go through hours and hours of dialogue and deep inner searching before they can find an answer.

I suggest to you that just as Jesus was in the synagogue dealing with the man with the withered hand, He is in this place, dealing with any of us who acknowledge our weakness, our paralysis.

The Powerful Command

'Stand forth,' Jesus said to the man with the paralyzed hand, perhaps hoping to stir up some sense of compassion with the hard hearts of the Pharisees as they viewed a man whose right arm dangled helplessly at his side. And then He said something so essential when He said, 'Stretch forth thine hand.'

'Wait a minute,' the man could have said, 'That's easy for You to say. My hand is paralyzed. How can I stretch it forth?' The man could have argued with Jesus. After all, he didn't know Who Jesus was.

Instead, however, he simply obeyed. He didn't argue. He didn't debate. He simply said, 'OK,' -- and as he stretched out his hand, the Lord met him in that place because in the Lord's declaration there is dynamic.

When God speaks, power is released. In God's commandments are God's enablements. If you can grab that simple concept, the Word will become extremely exciting to you. To you who are saying, 'I'm so depressed. I've had demons cast out. I've gone for inner healing. I've had counseling. I've read every self-help book, and followed every technique -- all to no avail,' this wonderful Man comes and says,

'Rejoice evermore. This is the will of God,' (I Thessalonians 5:16).

You can either argue with Him, or you can say, 'If the Word tells me to rejoice evermore, I will now start rejoicing.' And in the very act of beginning to rejoice, you'll find reason to continue to rejoice.

The Word says, 'Husbands, love your wives,' (Ephesians 5:25). 'Oh, but you don't know my wife. You don't know what we've been through,' you might say. You can argue and debate and go to seminars and read books until you're blue in the face -- or you can say, 'The apostle Paul, inspired by the Spirit of God, simply tells me to love my wife. So I will love my wife.' And because you're doing it, God will give you the power to carry it out. 'Wives, submit to your husbands,' (Ephesians 5:22).

You can argue and say 'Why, this is impossible!' Or you can say, 'Lord, in Your commandment is Your enablement. I will do it today.' And you will receive power.

If you're struggling with drugs, alcohol, pornography, the Lord would say to you today, 'Reckon yourself dead unto sin, but to alive to Jesus Christ,' (Romans 6:11). Therefore, if you go home, throw it away and say, 'I'm going to obey the command of Christ,' you'll find power and victory. Maybe you have a problem exaggerating or lying. 'Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth to his neighbor,' the Word says (Ephesians 4:25). Simply do it today.

Dear, precious people -- every one of us is withered in some area of our lives. We know that. But the solution does not lie in seminars or books.

The solution is simply to obey the command of Christ. And as you do, He'll meet you at that point and give you the power to carry it out.

Once I quit saying why I can't; once I quit arguing with the Word and saying, 'It's not that easy'; once I quit saying, 'I'm an exception to the rule,' and instead say, 'Lord, if You say it, I'll do it. Period.' -- He meets me there and a miracle takes place.

The choice is yours. Stand forth. Stretch out your hand. And be made whole.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jon-courson/the-withered-hand-mark-35/>

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