

**THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND** Page 1 of 3



**Passages to Study:** Luke 6:6-11, Mark 3:1-12, Matthew 12:9-14.

**Read with the class:** Luke 6:6-11.

**Texts for memorization:**

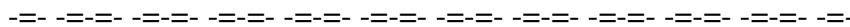
**Younger:** Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."

**Older** Titus 3:5.



**OBJECTIVES: To show that:**

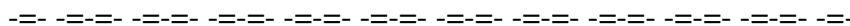
1. The Lord extends His mercy to those who listen and obey His Word.
2. The Lord performs miracles in the life of people to enable them to be useful.
3. God's wrath is directed against people whose hardness of heart is manifest in their stubbornness and unbelief.
4. A wrong attitude towards Christ as a merciful Saviour produces insensitivity towards those in need.



**SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS. In the synagogue, figures of Christ standing before a group of men. Among them is a man with his right hand paralysed or withered.**

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day to teach and finds among those present a man whose right hand is atrophied.
- The Lord had previously declared Himself to be "Lord also of the Sabbath," a statement that bothered the Jewish religious leaders.
- Jesus had shown kindness to all who came to him, but His goodness did not please the Jews. They had placed limits on Sabbath day activities, even forbidding acts of mercy.
- Cns.** The Jews had added to the law of God. (Matt. 23:1-23).
- The Pharisees watched Jesus constantly, for they knew that He had power to heal and do miracles. They did not ask if He **could** heal the man but rather, whether He was going to do so.
- Lsn.** The man with the withered hand was to be made an object of divine mercy.
- Cns.** Some students, while listening to the Word and through the instruction being given, have discovered that they also are objects of mercy.
- The scribes and Pharisees present in the synagogue had motivations different from those of the Lord Jesus.
- They were more concerned about the letter of the law than about the need of one man. They were looking for a reason to accuse the Lord of wrongdoing.
- **"THAT THEY MIGHT FIND AN ACCUSATION AGAINST HIM."** Their motives were cruel and selfish.
- The accusation would be made before the judges and officials. Some of those watching Him in the synagogue would be members of that group of judges.
- Cns.** Jesus' objective was to show that He had come to seek and to save the lost.
- The presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and the signs He did presented a challenge that required an answer from the people. Either they believed in Him or they did not.
- Unbelief was a sign of rejection of the Saviour and the same holds true at the present time.



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**SCENE No. 2. VISUAL AIDS. Figures of the same congregation in the synagogue with the man with the withered hand standing before Jesus.**

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- Jesus could have avoided a problem by withholding the good He had the power to perform.
  - Jesus called the man to stand up and come forward where all could see him.
- Cmt.** These public acts, carried out in the presence of onlookers, would later be used by Jesus to prove how open and above board He was in all He did. See John 18:10.
- The Pharisees sought to trap Jesus in His words, for they asked Him if it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. (Matt. 12:10).
  - Jesus replied by asking them a question. (Matt. 12:11).
  - As an argument, He used the treatment of animals based on what they considered correct behaviour, that is, giving help to animals that were in difficulty.
- Ccl.** The Pharisees had more consideration for an animal than for a man.
- They gave no reply. Those who opposed Him did not want Jesus to do good, but by remaining silent, they avoided saying that He do nothing.
  - By directing this question to the Pharisees, Jesus revealed their hypocrisy.
  - If they could rescue a sheep on the Sabbath day, why would they not be concerned about a handicapped man?
  - The Lord's omniscience enabled Him to know what was in the heart of those who opposed Him.
  - Seeing their hardness of heart, the Lord was angry, pained by their attitude. See Mark 3:5.
- Cns. ANGER:** Disgust and distress on account of their hardness. **Cns.** Justifiable anger. (Ephesians 4:26).
- Cns.** Jesus was not angry because of their wickedness towards Himself, but because of their hardness of heart when faced with the suffering of others. They had no pity.
- Cmt.** God loves the sinner, but He is angry over his sin.
- When the people continued to make no reply, Jesus turned to the man and commanded him to stretch out his hand, something he had been unable to do.
  - **“STRETCH FORTH THY HAND”** The man responds in faith to the simple command the Lord gave him.
- Cns.** Jesus could not be accused of breaking any law, for He only instructed the man to stretch out his hand.
- Cmt.** It is insolent for a person to think he can condemn God.
- The Pharisees considered that Jesus had undermined their teachings, which were like laws for the common people.
  - Both by word and deed Jesus invalidated the demands the Pharisees laid upon the people.
- Cns.** v.11 They sought a way to rid themselves of the Lord. Instead of recognising their error, they became even more hardened.
- Sug.** Use the case of the man with the withered hand to illustrate that through the Lord Jesus, a sinner can become useful to God.
- Cns. “RIGHT HAND”** His paralysed hand hindered the man from working. It was useless, dead.
- Those who are knowledgeable in the original languages of the Bible suggest that it was not a genetic problem that affected this man but the result of an accident.
  - The word spoken by the Lord was obeyed and the man recovered the use of his hand.
- Lsn.** The restoration of his hand was the result of **OBEDIENCE** to the Lord's command.
- Cmt.** It would be well to emphasise the need to obey the Word of God communicated through the gospel. John 3:36; 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1:8.

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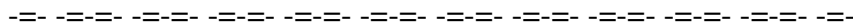


**Apl.** "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ" is a command.

**SCENE No. 3 VISUAL AIDS.** Using the same figures and background, change the figure of the man to one of him now happy, with his hand healed.

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- The man who had been healed had the joy of knowing that from now on he could do many more things than before.
  - It did not in the least matter to the Pharisees that a man, once handicapped, was now a capable person.
  - What mattered to them was their interpretation of the law, not the happiness of another.
- Cns.** The Pharisees' heart was not in tune with the heart of God, whom they professed to honour.
- The Pharisees went out to take counsel with the Herodians. (Mark 3:6) This was a political party contrary to the Pharisees and favouring Rome. These two groups united against Christ.
- Cmt.** These Pharisees deceived themselves with the idea that they were serving God. Their motives were envy and selfishness.
- Having been present when this miracle was carried out, the people had the opportunity to recognise Jesus as the Christ, their Messiah.
- Cns.** Would any of those present dare to identify themselves with Christ? It costs to follow Him.
- Cns.** In the study of the miracles, leprosy represents the filthiness of sin. Paralysis shows that a sinner is incapable of serving God, but through the Lord Jesus, he can be enabled to serve Him.



**NOTES:**

The **HERODIANS** had influence with Herod Antipas, king in Galilee, to seek a death sentence against Jesus.

**Cns.** They looked to a secular power for help. Nevertheless, the Herodians were not much in agreement with the Jewish law.

The Herodians had at one time tried to declare Herod the Great as a Messiah. They were on friendly terms with Rome and promoted the Gentile influence, and the construction of idol temples and pagan amphitheatres for entertainment and for sporting events.

**Lsn.** Although the Pharisees detested the Herodians, their hatred of Jesus led them to form an alliance with the other party to put Jesus to death. Their real reason: envy. Their apparent reason: zeal for the law, although that was merely a pretext.

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