

Restoration and Rage

Luke 6:6-11

Luke says this miracle occurred on ‘another Sabbath.’ It’s almost like he is saying, “Here we go again!” It is evident that Jesus pressed on in ministry, regardless of the Pharisaical opposition directed at Him. I’d like for you to pay close attention to the restoration of the man, followed by the rage of the religious.

I. The restoration of the withered hand perfectly portrays the deliverance Jesus brings His followers.

This miracle is in all three of the synoptic gospels. The word translated “withered” (*exerammenen*) designates a condition of recent origins. The passive verb (i.e. “whose right hand *was* withered”) seems to indicate that the man was not born with this deformity, but it was caused by an accident. The apocryphal *Gospel of Hebrews* tells us the man was a stone mason, and he asks Jesus to heal him that he might resume working. Luke, the physician, points out it was the man’s right hand. In the Jewish mind, the right hand was a symbol of power and strength. It was used for greetings and to bestow blessings. The right hand was the “clean hand” meaning a good Jew always ate with his right hand. The left hand was used for bodily functions. The left hand was considered “unclean.”

(A) Jesus will begin to move in your life when you sense the loss of your own personal power.

Those who rely on physical beauty are scarred. Those who are so powerful lose their positions. Those who believe they are in control find themselves spinning out of control. Like the stone mason who relies on his right hand, Jesus will often begin to move in lives that are withering. “For *Christ's* sake, I *delight* in weaknesses...for when I’m weak, then I’m strong” (II Cor. 12:10).

(B). Jesus will only move in your life when you sense your own uncleanness and worthlessness.

I intend no offense to those of you who are ‘left-handed.’ Remember, I’m drawing an allegory and a spiritual parable from a real miracle. It’s just a fact that most people are right handed. In the ancient days, to be left handed was not something you desired. The left hand was the hand used by everyone to wipe themselves. They washed, but that hand was universally ‘unclean.’ “*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves my full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to deliver sinners--of whom I am the worst*” (I Timothy 1:15). One of the reasons the power of Jesus in your life is not felt is possibly because you have never felt yourself personally unclean. Or, possibly you have felt your ‘left-handedness’ but you have propped up and staged yourself.

(C). When Jesus moves in your life He restores your power and cleanliness, but it is all of Him!

When the mason stretched forth his withered, right hand, Jesus fully restored him! So, when the mason went back to work, Jesus was in his heart, on his mind, and spoken of from His lips. “*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*” (Gal. 2:20). Jesus delivers you from self-trust and grants the ability to recognize His power and goodness.

II. The rage resulting from the restoration of the withered hand is a perfect picture of Phariseeism.

Phariseeism is technically not a word – but it is like any other ism (religion), it is the promotion of self. The Pharisees were very proud that they fasted often, prayed even more, and followed Sabbath rules. Everybody’s right hand is withered; Phariseeism is the use of spiritual prosthetics to hide that fact.

(A). Folly (foolishness) is the word translated ‘rage.’ “They were filled with rage (folly)” (v. 11).

It is foolish when we allow our religious traditions and customs get in the way of real restoration.

(B). Foolish people will often make those focused on *restoration* the issue.

“They discussed what they might do to Jesus” (v. 11). Phariseeism will attack those who restore.

(C). The foundation of foolishness is a withered right hand not yet healed.

When I taste and see that the Lord is good, I refuse to take refuge in anything but Him (Ps. 34:8).