

2020.3.22 Sunday Sermon <Stretch Out Your Hand!> (Luke 6:6-11)

Scripture for the Sermon - Today's scripture is coming from **Luke 6:6-11**. Wherever we may be, let us recite these words together.

⁶ On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. ⁷ The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. ⁸ But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." So he got up and stood there.

⁹ Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" ¹⁰ He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored. ¹¹ But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.

My fellow brothers and sisters - today we are giving an on-line worship. I pray that the Lord's grace will be with our church and our families at this time.

Let's start this sermon with an image where Jesus is teaching at the synagogue and he heals a man's shriveled hand. Just as Jesus visited synagogues to preach the word of God, let him be with us at this moment to teach us. And let Him show us how to move forward in this fearful and shriveled reality we are currently facing.

Key point #1. Jesus Sees Our Situation

- As we look back to the scripture, the Jesus teaches in the synagogue and selects one man from the crowd - the man with shriveled hand. Jesus knew what situation this man was facing and that is why he specifically selected him from the crowd.
- When we look at Luke 13, we see a similar situation where Jesus on a Sabbath Day, heals a crippled woman for eighteen years. Again, Jesus knew what situation this woman was facing and healed her crippled body.
Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath
¹⁰ On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, ¹¹ and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." ¹³ Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.
- Just as Jesus saw the their situations, He sees all of our situations - not only our bodies, but our hearts and minds. And particularly the environment we are currently faced with due to this virus. Jesus sees the crippled and shriveled reality we are dealing with.
- As we look to Hymn 410 - *I Know not Why God's Wondrous Grace*, we see the following lyrics... "I know not why God's wondrous grace to me. He hath made know, nor why, unworthy, Christ in love redeemed me for His own. But I know Whom I have believed. And am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed. Unto Him against that day."
- Just as the lyrics tells us, Jesus knows my situation, our situation, church's situation and the nation's situation.
- As of today in the news, U.S. has the most confirmed cases next to China and Italy. We become to wonder - how many more cases will be confirmed in next days or weeks...Even as a pastor, seeing the numbers of confirmed cases make me fearful.
- My loving brothers and sisters, Jesus sees our shriveled situation. He knows what we are dealing with. At this time, we need to reach out and pour our hearts to Jesus and become one with him.
- As we look through the chapters of the Bible, we read so many unbelievable situations the Bible characters have faced. And in every situation, the Lord sees them and watches over them. Of all the Bible characters, the one that stands the most to me is Hagar.
- In Genesis 21, Our Father see the difficult situation of Abraham and Hagar. After distressing about Sarah

and Hagar, Abraham brought Hagar and Ishmael out together. Abraham gave Hagar bread and water then sent them into the wilderness of Beersheba. She and her son wandered aimlessly until their water was completely consumed. In a moment of despair, she burst into tears. God heard her and her son crying and came to rescue them. The angel opened Hagar's eyes and she saw a well of water. He also told Hagar that God would "make a great nation" of Ishmael.

- Just as the Lord knew the situation of Hagar and Ishmael, He knows what we are faced with at this time. Let us reach out to the Lord - just as Hagar cried out to - and let us cry out and hold unto Him.

Key point #2. Jesus Meets Our Needs

- As we see the image again and reference to today's scripture, not only Jesus see our situations...but He meets and fulfills our needs.
- As we look at Matthew 12 and Mark 3, we see the same story we read from Luke 6. On Matthew and Mark, it does not say which hand was shriveled. However, on Luke 6, we are specifically told that his right hand was shriveled.
- In the scripture, we can also learn that this man was a mason. So imagine being a mason with a shriveled hand and how this would have impacted his livelihood. Jesus knew this man's situation and because of this he knew how to meet the man's needs. Instead of giving some food and clothes, Jesus knew that healing his right hand will fulfill his needs to move forward with his future.
- Our Lord knows how to meet our needs. At this critical moment, He know all of our needs and how to meet our needs without us asking.
- My brothers and sisters, what did the Lord provide to Israelites as they escaped Egypt in Old Testament? Every morning to fulfill their hunger, the Lord provided manna. The Israelites may have wondered for few days if the Lord would provide manna every morning. After several weeks and months of manna being provided every morning, Israelites believed that the Lord will take care of them.
- As we may feel like we are under the dark clouds right now, at the end of the road we will see the sun light because the Lord is with us. Even when this shriveled realities will may us feel like our needs will never be met, the Lord is with us and will meet our needs.
- In 1 Kings, we learn about the drought of 3.5 years and the story of Elijah.
 1 Kings 17 is the chapter in which Elijah is first mentioned by name in the Bible. It states that he is a Tishbite from Gilead, who visited King Ahab to give him a message from God that there would be no rain in the land until he declared it. In order to avoid the wrath of the king God told Elijah to hide by the Brook Cherith where he was fed bread and meat by ravens sent from God. After a while, due to the drought, the brook dried up so God told Elijah to go to the town of Sarepta and to seek out a widow that would find him water and food. Elijah learns that the widow has a son and between them they only have enough flour and oil for one more meal before they die. Despite this the widow helps Elijah. Because she did this God caused the flour and the oil never to run out.
- The widow in above chapter, believed in the Lord and helped Elijah. That faith allowed her and son to live without worrying about their food. Just as this widow was faced with uncertain future, we are also faced with similar uncertainty due to the Coronavirus. The same Lord who met the needs of the widow, knows our situation and will meet our needs.
- One of my favorite hymn is 455 - The Trusting Heart to Jesus Clings - let's sing together.
- At this time I believe Jesus is with us.

Key point #3. Jesus Reads Our Hearts

- As Jesus saw the situation and met the needs of the shriveled hand man...He also read the man's heart. Just as we learned about the widow in 1Kings and Lord has read her heart - Jesus did the same for this man.
- As we read through today's scripture, we can see an image of the Pharisees and we can also sense their hands being shriveled. As Jesus asked what is the right thing to do during Sabbath Day and heals the man's hand...the Pharisees gathered together and discussed the plans to kill Jesus Christ. Just like the shriveled hand of the mason, their faith and their mind became shriveled. The Pharisees shriveled because they were

filled with pride.

- In the New Testament, Jesus says that those who are filled with pride...His miracles will never be provided. As we read through today's scripture, we can sense the mason would be a shy man do to his hand. And as Jesus sees him probably standing in the corner, he calls the man to come to the center and asks him what is the right thing to do. Jesus follows by saying straighten your hands. If the man was filled with pride...he would have not followed Jesus' instructions. Because he was humble...he was able to follow Jesus' instructions and Jesus was able to read the man's heart. At this time, we need to look at ourselves. We need to repent and come closer to our Lord.
- Our Lord does not look at our physical body. Our Lord does not look at our backgrounds. Our Lord does not look at our knowledge in our brains. He only looks at our hearts and He wants us to have the same heart of the man with shriveled hand.
- I want to share with you a story of Charles Sears family that was reported on *Guide Post*.

A long ago, a dangerous hurricane struck at Florida. The Sear's family with three children lived by a small lake. This hurricane caused the lake bank to collapse and locked the family in the house. Somehow they found a tree in the middle of the water. They held on to the tree and climbed to the top of the tree. The heavy rain kept blowing at them and the family slowly lost their hope to survive. The father started to doubt but the mother said to them that Jesus will protect them. The water started to rise further up and became more dangerous for the family. At that moment, the mother start to praise even as she was swallowing the water. The rest of the family joined the praise with the mother and later and started to cry out to the Lord. Later on they saw an old boat that was stationed near the small lake. The boat was slowly coming down towards them and the family was able to survive. It was Jesus who answered their prayer and read their hearts. They all survived the hurricane and was about to share this miraculous story.
- As we hear this story, we need to ask...have we forgotten Jesus? Jesus knows our situation, wants to fill our needs, and reads our hearts. Just as the Lord read the hearts of Sears' family...He will do the same for us.
- Let us look at the image - this painting is telling the story of The Bronze Snake from Numbers 21. This story tells us about Israelites complaining and the Lord sending the snake to punish them.

⁴*They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea,^[a] to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way;* ⁵*they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"* ⁶*Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died.* ⁷*The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us."* ⁸*So Moses prayed for the people.* ⁹*The Lord said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live."* ¹⁰*So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.*
- We need to repent to the Lord just like the Israelites from Numbers 21. We need to repent on our prides and complaints. We have no right to complaint...we need to take this moment to ask for repentance and seek Jesus Christ who died on the cross. Let us look at the image shown.
- Jesus Christ is telling all of us at this time to stretch out our hands to him and pray to the Lord. Let us all pray.