

MESSAGE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MARCH 6, 2022

John Ortberg, Guest Speaker



This week John Ortberg, well-known author and pastor, taught from a story of healing and restoration in the gospels. Jesus was being tested about healing on the Sabbath, believing it was against their man-made rules. But Jesus knows God's power is not constricted by human laws, and chose this time to demonstrate his power in our human weakness. Jesus called out a man who had a withered hand, which would be a life sentence of shame because of how it limited his participation in daily activities. Jesus drew attention to the man's shame and weakness because it was what controlled his life up until this point. Then he asked him to stretch out his hand. What God asks us to do, is precisely what we cannot do. Shame can be hidden or healed but not both. If we keep our weaknesses and failures to ourselves, we cannot be healed, we cannot be fully loved. You can only be loved to the extent that you are known. You can only be fully loved if you are fully known. The church, our brothers and sisters in Christ ought to be the first place we can disclose our sins, our shame, our weaknesses. Some of us are better at hiding our withered hands, and until we are ready to show it, we cannot be restored. Stretch out your hand. Be known, be loved, be healed.

SCRIPTURE

LUKE 6:6-11 NIV

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.

MARK 3:1-5 NET

Then Jesus entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ² They watched Jesus closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they could accuse him. ³ So he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Stand up among all these people." ⁴ Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath, or evil, to save a life or destroy it?" But they were silent. ⁵ After looking around at them in anger, grieved by the hardness of their hearts, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9-11 NIV

⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out from John's message?
2. Read Luke 6:6-11 and Mark 3:1-5. Who is present while Jesus is in the synagogue and what is their reason for being there?
3. What do you learn about the man who encountered Jesus? Be specific. What can you surmise about his life from his description?
4. Why do you think Jesus asked him to stand in front of everyone and then to extend his hand? What benefit was there to do this publicly?
5. How do people hide their "withered hands" or secrets/vulnerabilities/shame? What is the danger of that?
6. What benefit is there for you to be vulnerable and bring whatever has shamed you to light with another trusted person?
7. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-11. What help do you find in this passage?
8. How can we pray for you?

PRAYER

Admit to God that you carry hurt, pain, anger, and weakness you cannot solve. Ask him to help you to step into the light of his forgiving love, where you can be loved and healed – fully known and fully loved.