

Mark 3: 1-6 (New International Version)

(context) Mark 2: ²³One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. ²⁴The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

²⁵He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? ²⁶In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions."

²⁷Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

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¹Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. ²Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. ³Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

⁴Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

(Mt. 12: 11-12 includes: ¹¹He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? ¹²How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.")

⁵He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. ⁶Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

OASIS: Creative Goodness, Mark 3: 1-6

Possible Starter question: What are some reasons that people seek to “do good”?
What are some reasons why people “don’t do good”?

Transitional comment: No doubt, it really is a mixed bag. Some noble reasons; and some very understandable constraints. Our passage today allows us to consider the “creative goodness” that flowed from Jesus. (We will focus on 3: 1-6, and glance at the larger context.)

- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s leading (if you haven’t already prayed)
- Now let’s listen/follow along as someone reads our passage aloud.

First section (vs. 1-3):

- O Let’s describe the scene (when? where?)
- O Who are the different people in this scene?
(n.b. the phrase is v. 2, “some of them”, relates back to 2:24)
- I And why do you think that each of them is at the synagogue?
(n.b. even if the text doesn’t state why, use common sense)
- I Let’s stop and take a moment to think about/identify with the man with the withered (shriveled or maimed) hand. What would it have been like at that time for him? Limitations, drawbacks, realities?
 - A If you had been he, what would you find most frustrating or discouraging about your disability/condition?
- I What do you imagine was on Jesus’ mind as he began to address the man?
What do you think was going on in the man’s head?

Second section (v.4):

- O What is the essence or core of Jesus question to the Pharisees?
- O What is their answer?
 - I Any sense of why silence was their only response at that moment?
- C The parallel text in Matthew’s Gospel includes several other comments from Jesus:
¹¹He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? ¹²How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."
- O What insights are added or emphasized?

Third section (vs. 5-6):

O What does Jesus perceive about condition of this group of Pharisees?
What are their misunderstandings and problems?

A What are the life situations when we tend to act similarly?

O How does Jesus respond to them? (How could he have responded?)

O How does Jesus respond to the man with the disability? What difference does Jesus make?

O So what is the ironic or twisted reaction of the Pharisees to Jesus?
(n.b. Pharisees--a non-professional segment of the Jewish leadership that specialized in focusing on and obeying the Scriptures. Herodians—seem to have been a secular group of Jews who supported the often despised Herodian dynasty.)

Summary/conclusion:

I Do you think Jesus would have healed the man's hand, even if the Pharisees had not been there?

O What do we learn about God's agenda for restoration?

A Think of someone in or around your life that has sort of "a withered hand," even if that is only a metaphor.

A How can you extend "creative goodness" to her or him?
...to serve that person and seek restoration in her/his life?

A Let's pray for one another accordingly!

Text is on other page or www.Biblegateway.com

- a. BIG idea: Jesus' activity to restore people is unlimited, an example of creative goodness
- b. Key ideas: **withered hands, stubborn hearts, and restoration**
- c. KEY: O = Observation; I = Interpretation; A = Application (and C = Correlation).

Advice to study leaders:

- d. Complement your OIA questions with "process questions" (what else? what more? What do others of you see/think?)
- e. Determine the core questions you'll ask (know which ones to skip if pressed for time.
- f. Always reword questions in language/word choice that is comfortable for you (and, if the question doesn't make sense to you, then discard it.)
- g. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. How long do you wait? Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- h. Timing: allocate your time and move forward gently but steadily.
- i. Pace the study—move on—conclude with "difference making" application.
- j. Secondary texts—be very sparing in your usage of other texts, even though they may be relevant. That tends to push you more into the "teaching" role, rather than the role of facilitator. It can cause some people to feel distracted or de-powered.
- k. If you are utilizing this "on-line" study and not part of the OASIS course, I recommend that you get the IVP one volume commentary entitled New Bible Commentary, Revised (21st Century Edition). It is well worth the \$40.