



DAY I: WHY SHOWING UP MATTERS

DEVOTIONAL:

Think about the last time you walked into church. What was on your mind? What were you carrying? What were you hoping for? In Mark 3, three groups of people walked into the same room. Jesus was there to worship. A man with a withered hand was there with a desperate need. And the Pharisees were there with an agenda, watching and waiting to find fault. Same room. Same moment. Completely different postures. It is easy to read that and immediately identify with the man in need or with Jesus. But if we are honest, there are days when we walk into worship more like the Pharisees than we would like to admit. Distracted. Guarded. Going through the motions. Here is the encouraging truth: God meets you where you are, but He loves you too much to leave you there. The man with the withered hand did not have a polished prayer or a perfect plan. He just showed up. And that was enough for Jesus to work with. Your posture matters. Not because God is keeping score, but because an open heart is one that can actually receive what God has for you. You cannot encounter something you are not paying attention to. Show up with expectation. Show up with need. Show up ready to be surprised by what God wants to do.

BIBLE VERSE:

"And he entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand."
- Mark 3:1

REFLECTION QUESTION:

When you come to God in prayer or worship, which of the three postures do you most often bring, and what would it look like to come with greater openness this week?

SERMON QUOTE:

"You've got three groups there - one worship intended, one need focused, and one agenda driven."

PRAYER:

Lord, help me come to You with an open and expectant heart. Forgive me for the times I have gone through the motions and missed what You had for me. I want to truly encounter You. Amen.

NOTES:



DAY 2: HARDENED HEARTS IN HOLY PLACES

DEVOTIONAL:

There is something deeply sobering about the Pharisees in Mark 3. These were not careless people. They were devoted to Scripture, committed to religious practice, and present in the synagogue every Sabbath. And yet, when the Son of God stood right in front of them, they could not see Him for who He was. They were not watching to see if Jesus could heal the man with the withered hand. They already knew He could. They were watching to see if He would do it on the Sabbath. Their concern was not the man. It was their system. This is what a hardened heart looks like. It is not always loud or obvious. Sometimes it hides behind religious language and sincere-sounding conviction. But at its core, a hardened heart is more interested in being right than being transformed. Jesus looked at them with both anger and grief. Not one or the other. Both. He was grieved because He loved them, and He could see what their hardness was costing them. Here is the challenge: the same tendency lives in all of us. We can become so committed to our own understanding of how God should work that we miss Him when He actually shows up. Keep your heart soft. Stay curious before God. The moment we think we have Him figured out is often the moment we stop truly following Him.

BIBLE VERSE:

"So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him." - Mark 3:2

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Is there an area of your faith where you have become more focused on being right than remaining open to what God might be doing?

SERMON QUOTE:

"The irony is, standing in front of them is the answer to all the prayers that they have prayed and the focus of all the scriptures they had read."

PRAYER:

God, search my heart and reveal any hardness that has crept in. I do not want to be so committed to my own understanding that I miss You. Keep me soft and teachable. Amen.

NOTES:



MIGHTIER

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

DAY 3: STAND UP BEFORE YOU FEEL READY

DEVOTIONAL:

Jesus asked the man with the withered hand to do something uncomfortable before He did anything miraculous. He told him to stand up and come to the center of the room. In front of everyone. That is not a small ask. This man was likely used to staying on the edges. His hand was the thing that defined him in the eyes of others. And now Jesus was asking Him to step into the spotlight before anything had changed. Faith often works this way. God rarely asks us to act after the miracle. He asks us to act before it. Standing up in that room meant becoming a target. It meant every eye in the place was now on him. It meant the people who opposed Jesus were now watching Him too. But he stood anyway. There are moments in all of our lives when standing with Jesus means standing out. It might be in a conversation where your faith is not welcome. It might be a decision that does not make sense to the people around you. It might simply be choosing to trust God when everything in you wants to wait for more certainty first. Courage is not the absence of fear. It is taking the step anyway because you trust the One who called you forward. When Jesus calls you to stand, stand. He already knows what He is about to do.

BIBLE VERSE:

"He said to the man with the withered hand, 'Come forward.'" - Mark 3:3

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Is there a situation in your life right now where Jesus is asking you to step forward in faith before you feel ready or before anything has visibly changed?

SERMON QUOTE:

"Standing with Jesus when everyone else is sitting takes a little bit of courage. Because he realized, if I'm going to stand with Jesus, I immediately make myself a target of everyone else who opposes Him."

PRAYER:

Jesus, give me the courage to stand when You call me forward, even when it is uncomfortable or uncertain. I trust that You already know what You are about to do in my life. Amen.

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DAY 4: STRETCH OUT WHAT YOU CANNOT MOVE

DEVOTIONAL:

Here is the moment everything hinges on. Jesus looks at a man with a hand He cannot use and says, stretch it out. From the outside, that sounds almost cruel. Everyone in the room knew this man could not do that. His hand was withered. That was the whole point. And yet Jesus gave him an instruction that required Him to attempt the very thing He was incapable of doing. But notice what happened. The man did not argue. He did not explain his limitations. He simply began to obey. And in the act of reaching, God met His faith and restored what was broken. This is one of the most beautiful pictures of how God works. He does not wait for you to have it all together before He moves. He looks for the willingness to try, the small act of trust, the hand beginning to stretch even when it cannot stretch on its own. Salvation works the same way. You cannot save yourself. You cannot manufacture a changed heart. But when you turn toward God in faith, even imperfectly, He completes what you could never do alone. God is not asking for your perfection. He is asking for your obedience. Take the step. Reach out. And trust that the same God who restored that man's hand is more than able to meet you in your moment of need.

BIBLE VERSE:

"And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other." - Mark 3:5b

REFLECTION QUESTION:

What is the "withered hand" in your life right now, the thing that feels impossible or broken, and what would it look like to stretch it out toward God in faith today?

SERMON QUOTE:

"The very initiative, the very thought, the very effort of his faith to begin to stretch out his hand. And in that moment, God, through the power of the Spirit, met that man's faith and gave Him the ability to do something He could not otherwise do."

PRAYER:

Lord, I bring You the things in my life that feel impossible. I cannot fix them on my own, but I choose to reach toward You in faith. Meet me in my obedience and do what only You can do. Amen.

NOTES:



MIGHTIER

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

DAY 5: DO WHAT JESUS SAID

DEVOTIONAL:

After five days of sitting with this story, it all comes down to one simple question: what has Jesus told you to do? Not what you think He might do. Not what you imagine He would do in some hypothetical situation. What has He actually said to you through His Word, through prayer, through the clear prompting of His Spirit? The man with the withered hand did not overthink it. He did not poll the room or wait for the Pharisees to approve. Jesus spoke, and He obeyed. And God did something that man could never have imagined when He walked through the door that morning. That is still how God works. He speaks. We obey. He moves. Maybe you have been sitting on something for a while. A conversation you know you need to have. A step of generosity you have been putting off. A relationship that needs repair. A habit that needs to go. A commitment that needs to be made. You already know what Jesus said. The question is whether you will do it. Obedience is not about having all the answers. It is about trusting the One who does. And when you take that step, even a small one, you open the door for God to do something far greater than anything you could accomplish on your own. Stretch out your hand. He is ready to meet you there.

BIBLE VERSE:

"And when he had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, he said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.'" - Mark 3:5a

REFLECTION QUESTION:

What is one specific thing you sense God has been asking you to do that you have been hesitating on, and what is one step you can take toward obedience this week?

SERMON QUOTE:

"I'm less concerned about what you think Jesus would do, and I'm more concerned about what He told you to do."

PRAYER:

Father, I do not want to just hear Your Word and walk away unchanged. Give me the courage to do what You have said, trusting that You will meet my obedience with Your power. I take the step today. Amen.

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