



FEBRUARY 6, 2022 | PASTOR MINHO SONG

“Behold, My Servant Whom I Have Chosen” (Matthew 12:9-21)

⁹ Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, ¹⁰ and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to bring charges against Jesus, they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”

¹¹ He 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? ¹² How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”

¹³ Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. ¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

God’s Chosen Servant

¹⁵ Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. A large crowd followed him, and he healed all who were ill. ¹⁶ He warned them not to tell others about him. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁸ “Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry out;
no one will hear his voice in the streets.

²⁰ A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
till he has brought justice through to victory.

²¹ In his name the nations will put their hope.”[a]



Welcome back to in-person worship! I pray that the LORD will be merciful to us and grant us a full release from this dreadful pandemic soon.

Church experts tell us that this pandemic has done a lot of damage to our spiritual life. They say that the pandemic has polarized people's spirituality. The pandemic turned out to be a blessing in disguise, like a refining fire for some. Their faith became more resilient. For others, the pandemic pushed them over the threshold, resulting in abandoning their faith.

My prayer is that your faith will get stronger when we come out of the pandemic. It is not going to be far from now when all this is over. To ensure our spiritual fervor, we should be asking these questions:

- Who are we?
- What are we on earth for?
- What should we be pursuing during this tumultuous time?

These are important questions because they help us examine our perspectives on life, calling, and ministry as people of God.

After all, we are God's people. We follow Jesus' teaching, and we should be Jesus' hands and feet. It is critical that we understand what is on Jesus' mind.

What is on Jesus' mind?

In today's text, Jesus entered a synagogue. Inside, he found a man with a shriveled hand. You get the impression that the man did not happen to be there; no, he was most likely brought in, so that the Pharisees could trap Jesus into healing him on Sabbath.

What would Jesus do for this man? Would he heal him, ignoring the traditions of the strict Sabbath law (man-made)? Or would he go ahead and heal this man and ignore whatever the tradition that says he is not supposed to 'work' on the Sabbath?



The Pharisees were notorious for imposing all sorts of prohibitions on the Sabbath. For example, people were not allowed to walk more than 800 meters. Anything more than that was considered traveling, which one could not do on Sabbath. They had to prepare their food before the Sabbath as no cooking was allowed on Sabbath. What would Jesus do?

Before we go further, we should examine the situation from the disabled man's perspective. Here he was, with Jesus in the synagogue. What an opportunity to be healed by Jesus! His life would then be restored. No more stigma about having a shriveled hand, no more worries about making a living on his own! The Pharisees could not care less about what the man thought. His wholeness was not their concern. What they cared the most was whether Jesus was going to honor the rules and traditions of their community concerning the Sabbath.

No healing, no work on Sabbath. They had no sympathy, no compassion, no answer for the suffering man.

What was Jesus' response?

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? How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath. (vv. 11-12).

If you had an ounce of compassion (or common sense), this would be a no brainer.

Jesus' response was firm. He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' It was the beginning of a new life for the man. No more stigma, no more shame, no more isolation. Now he could earn living with his hands.

Jesus made it clear that man's tradition is not important. He could always do good to others, including healing a man on the Sabbath. After all, the purpose of keeping the Sabbath is 1) rest and 2) restoration with God. For this man, being healed on the Sabbath was ultimate form of restoration with God.



The next passage is significant (Matt. 12:15-21). It shows who Jesus is. Matthew cites the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the Suffering Servant (Isa. 42:1-4).

Jesus is God's chosen one.
God will put His Spirit on him (power and authority)
He will proclaim justice to the nations.

How will he go about proclaiming justice? "He will not quarrel or cry out; No one will hear his voice in the street" (vs. 19). It means Jesus will go about doing his job quietly and humbly. He will not protest or make a loud noise. No, he went to the cross on Calvary in all humility and quietness. He took up our sins and sorrows on his shoulders.

"A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory." (vs. 20).

This verse shows how much he will continue to care for those who are weak and hurt. Jesus is indeed the champion for the weak. That is what we need to learn from Jesus. We must have the heart of Jesus!

We must walk in his steps

The healing of a man in today's text shows us how important we are to have compassion for fellow human beings.

I had an intense toothache for a month. For some reason the pain would not go away, even though I went to the dentist several times. I woke up in the middle of nights for pain. Then, one day I thought about cancer patients who must suffer not one month, but many months and years. How I wish I had more compassion for those who suffer!

Yes, we need compassion for the poor and the weak. That is where Jesus' heart is. Remember that this pandemic will go away soon. What kind of people should we be, emerging out of the pandemic? We should be in tune with Jesus, being where Jesus' heart is.

In his name the nations will put their hope. (vs. 21)



Our commitment to bring the good news of Jesus Christ must be global. We must be committed to Kyrgyzstan, to Bihar, India, to Cambodia and many other places.

When you see someone in distress, please reach out to them. It is possible that the LORD is asking you to be his hand and feet. The Parable of the Good Samaritan should remind us of the importance of compassion. We must walk in his steps.