

# The Man with the Shriveled Hand

“Unknown by Name”



*“Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, ‘Stand up in front of everyone. Stretch out your hand.’ He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.” from Mark 3:1-6*

We don't know this gentleman's name, he had a great influence on the world as we know it today. The Pharisees had been looking at every move of Christ to see if they couldn't find something to have him imprisoned, or even better, killed. He was really causing them problems. They had ruled for many years and had taken money from the people. They were in control and then Jesus came along and was healing people and telling them about love.

Each time that Christ healed someone, the Pharisees felt a little power slip away from them. They were watching him constantly.

Christ knew this and was prepared for them. When he saw the man with the shriveled hand, we first asked the crowd there *“What kind of action suits the Sabbath best? Doing good or doing evil? Helping people or leaving them helpless?”* Mark 3:4 The people had nothing to say. Of course, he was right. Christ looked at them in anger and distressed at their stubborn hearts, but he didn't stop, he healed the man right then.

The Bible tells us that the Pharisees were furious and immediately began to plot with Herod's followers to find a way to kill Jesus. They hadn't wanted him in the synagogue to begin with but he kept going with them each Sabbath and teaching. By now, he was drawing many followers.

The man's hand was not a life and death matter, Christ could have waited until the next day to heal him, but he did it on the Sabbath for a reason. The Sabbath is for healing, either physical or spiritual. It also challenged the man made laws of the Pharisees. God is always merciful. This incident could well have been one of the catalysts that started the Pharisee to realize they had to do something to get rid of Christ. Christ had done other healings and some of them on the Sabbath but this one was one time they thought they

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*Are you part  
of the Inn  
crowd, or are  
you one of the  
Stable few*

could trap Christ. There were large crowds gathered around and they felt they had some power with the crowd. But, it backfired on them in the long run.

His name is not important, but his love for Christ and his faith gives us all the faith we need to know that Jesus was indeed the Savior who had come to save each one of us from our sins. By the way, have you ever stopped to realize that we do not know the name of the thief on the cross and he certainly taught us about God's grace and our salvation. His name is not known to us, but we know that it is known to God just as ours is.

Where does our faith stand. We don't know the name of this man, the thief on the cross, the lady at the well, or the inn keeper, but they are all known to God. Then how could we ever think that we are not also known to him. We are told he even knows the number of hairs on our head!

There is a story, perhaps fictional, that Abraham Lincoln met with Harriet Beecher Stowe in Washington. When Lincoln met her, he supposedly

said "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war!" Perhaps her book, Uncle Tom's Cabin, did have something to do with the feelings of many people in The United States but it didn't start the war all by itself. There were many venues going on at the time. This story has never been totally documented, but our story of the man with the healing has been written for us in the book we know is inspired by God.

This one story could have been the catalyst that caused some of the leaders to start planning to crucify Christ. We can ask why Christ didn't wait until the next day to heal the man. We can ask why he talked with the Pharisees and those around him with a question instead of just telling them about their sins. He had just healed another name whose name we do not know. He was blind and Christ healed his blindness at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath. He had picked a little grain as he was walking through the field on a Sabbath. The Pharisees were certainly upset. He was breaking their man-made rules one right after another and just waiting for them to challenge him.

Each day we are asked a question. We have a choice to follow Christ or go our own way. We have free will. Christ asked the man with the crippled hand to stand where everyone could see him. I can think that the man may have wanted to run from all the Pharisees glaring at him. Instead he stood firm and the Pharisees were the ones that

left as soon as they could. The blind man proclaimed to everyone that he could see. Sometimes each of us is challenged to stand up for what we believe. It isn't easy and we are usually in the presence of other Christians not around a group of people who rule over us and would just as soon kill us as speak to us. Jesus gave them abundant opportunity to accuse him. He had set them up as we would say today.

As I study these people who are not given a particular name in the Bible, I am thankful that I know my name is known to God as theirs were. I also realize that His knowing me carries an obligation on my part to seek to do His will every day and sometimes I need all of His grace and mercy to get me through.

God's grace is amazing! We're saved by grace - God's undeserved favor - and we live by grace, which is also God's power in our lives to do what we could never do in our own strength. And it's all because God is love, and He loves us unconditionally, constantly and completely.  
~ Joyce Meyer



Father, You don't always heal us in the way we want to be healed. Sometimes we don't understand why You can't wipe out the cancer in our loved one's body or heal the heart that is aching. Help us to seek to understand that You are doing what is best for us and for our loved ones even though we don't understand. Help us to accept Your truth as given to the Corinthians that now we know in part and see only dimly but some day we will see You face to face and know the wonderful gift of salvation fully. Amen.

1. Why did Christ have to heal the people on a Sunday?
2. Do we ever allow man made laws to interfere with our following God's rules?
3. Do we sometimes need to be the catalyst that makes things happen in a positive way?
4. What does God have planned for you in the future on this earth so that you can serve Him better?
5. Do you believe everybody's name is known to God?

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