

Luke 6:7-8



⁷And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.

⁸But he knew their thoughts and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

Picture yourself in the scene. As you walk into the synagogue, you see Jesus on one side, the man with the withered hand near him, and a group of Pharisees watching closely. Jesus apparently knew what the Pharisees were thinking. He knew that they were watching and was waiting for an opportunity to accuse him. The situation seems tense. What do you think Jesus should do?

He healed the man.

Now, let's pause there to think what we would have done at this point.

Most of us would have stopped right before the healing and would have said that the circumstances were not right for the healing. If one of our disciples would have asked us, we would have probably quoted the scriptures "to be shrewd as snakes and innocent as wolves" (Matt 10:16). Most of us would have said that healing at that point, would not have done any good to the furtherance of the gospel.

But not Jesus.

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The Motivation of Jesus

What motivated Jesus? He knew the ruckus that would follow the healing. Of course, He could have waited for another guy with a withered hand somewhere, on a day other than Sabbath to heal without much issue. Crowds would have gathered, and the Pharisees would not have a chance to accuse Him, and He would not have to deal with all these petty arguments. But why today of all days? Poor Jesus! Maybe He

didn't have the benefit of our practical evangelism training?

Jesus was motivated in love. He knew all the circumstances and the consequences of His actions, but He was motivated to heal the person, purely out of love for that person. We read Jesus healing people many times purely out of compassion. Clearly, it breaks His heart to see someone suffering due to an illness. Yes, it's true that if he had waited for some other day, he would have found another person with a withered hand, on a day other than Sabbath, but still, it would not be that person! Healing is an expression of God's love working through us. Remember, He is the shepherd who left the 99 seeking for one. And we have been asked to be Jesus to the world (John 20:21).

Neglecting the One in Pursuit of the Ninety-nine

Many of us have been guilty of treating people as projects. We have been guilty of neglecting that one sheep in the pursuit of 99. With goals to further the gospel, we have voiced and advocated shrewdness, and tactics in our ministries. We have treated souls like mere "numbers". Shrewdness and tactics cannot further the gospel. And trust me, people sense when they are treated as projects.

Let's get back to the basics. We need to see gospel the way Jesus did. As an expression of love. They are more than a number in a report, they are souls. When love is the motivation to share the gospel, it brings great joy in us to see one life changed. Think of how dramatically beautiful and awesome their life would be when they receive the gospel. Just like Jesus, we can all say that

Luke 4:18

¹⁸*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free".*

It is not about us. It's about them. Maybe you don't get to show "millions" when you share and "do" the gospel as an expression of love, but even Jesus started with 12.