

Daily *Reflections*

The Divine Intervention

September 7, 2015

Scripture

Luke 6:6-11

On a certain sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered.

The scribes and the Pharisees watched him closely to see if he would cure on the sabbath so that they might discover a reason to accuse him.

But he realized their intentions and said to the man with the withered hand,

“Come up and stand before us.”

And he rose and stood there.

Then Jesus said to them,

“I ask you, is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?”

Looking around at them all, he then said to him, “Stretch out your hand.”

He did so and his hand was restored.

But they became enraged and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

Our Scripture Reflection

That poor man with the withered hand! He couldn't work, therefore, he had no means to support his family. He was considered an outcast because everyone just presumed he had committed some serious sin and was being punished by God. Oh, how desperate he was yet he was not allowed to come into the main area of the synagogue because his infirmity may have been contagious. And then Jesus walked into the room. In the front and watching His every move were the vicious and vindictive scribes and Pharisees. The Law forbade performing a healing act on the Sabbath because it would have been judged by them as "work". And then Jesus confronts their hard hearts regarding the nature of a Holy Day: Is it meant for doing good or evil?? To make His point using an "in your face" gesture, Jesus calls the afflicted man to the front of the room so ALL can see and judge. Can you imagine the lump in that poor man's throat as he makes his way to the front with knees knocking? Jesus, with abundant compassion heals him on the spot. As for the scribes and Pharisees, they need healing but their false pride and self-righteousness will not allow them to seek help from Jesus.

Food for your Journey

A businessman was asked to tell what his personal faith meant to him. He reached back to his boyhood experience. He recalled walking with his father one day, having to reach up to hold on to his hand. After a while he said, I can't hold on any longer, and you'll have to hold on to me for a while. And he remembered the moment when he felt his father's hand take over. That, he said, was the way it felt to him to have faith in God. And that was precisely an act of grace.

It is important that Christians not let grace become a universal principle or ideology. It is the grace of God of which the Bible speaks. Not the grace of some abstract principle of justice or love or acceptance. As God's grace, and not some principle of grace, God is the one who determines what it will be and where it will go.

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Please pour forth your amazing and powerful Grace upon me this day so that I may be an instrument of Your Peace in this world. Amen.

