

Concern

Wednesday 22nd January



James Tissot (1836-1902), The Man with the Withered Hand (L'homme à la main desséchée), (Opaque watercolour over graphite on grey wove paper, c. 1890) © Brooklyn Museum, Purchased by public subscription, 00.159.95, 2025

Scripture: Mark 3.1-6

Again Jesus entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Come forward.' Then he said to them, 'Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?' But they were silent.

He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

To reflect

In today's Gospel reading Jesus is concerned about curing the man with the withered hand – a demonstration of his divinity and manifestation of God made human. Others present are more concerned with whether it was lawful to healing – work – doing good or bad on the Sabbath.

Jesus is concerned with the person in front of him not the Sabbath laws, Jesus is concerned with healing, wholeness and helping someone.

What are the concerns of the world and your community this day? You're invited to offer these concerns to God in prayer.

A Prayer for Hope

When evil darkens our world, give us light.
When despair numbs our souls, give us hope.
When we stumble and fall, lift us up.
When doubts assail us, give us faith.
When nothing seems sure, give us trust.
When ideals fade, give us vision.
When we lose our way, be our guide!
That we may find serenity in Your presence,
and purpose in doing Your will.

[John D. Rayner via Grace Cathedral San Francisco]

A Prayer for Penitential Seasons and at Other Times

O GOD, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive:
Receive our humble petitions;
and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins,
yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us;
for the honour of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate.
Amen.

[From the Scottish Prayer Book 1929]

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOiQY3q78Rf2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587>)

- 'Break Our Hearts' by Vicky Beeching, this worship song asks that our hearts are broken by the same things that break God's, that the concerns of God will become our concerns.
- 'Lord of the Dance' by Sydney Carter, one version is by the Choir of Salisbury Cathedral. This hymn speaks of Jesus' work and his life.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.