

When We Cannot Do What Jesus Did

John 20:26-29

Introduction:

As we talk about being the hands of Jesus, someone might be misled to think that we intend for Christians to do the impossible.

There were quite a bit of things Jesus did that we are not capable of doing.

So, as the person reads the accounts of Jesus working with his hands, the conclusion might be, "I cannot do what he did."

Let us look at three possible situations in which this line of thinking may occur and see what can be learned about the hands of Jesus that we can imitate.

I. The Hands of Jesus Brought Healing.

Luke chapter 4 records a triad of miracles done by Jesus.

He healed a demon-possessed man with a rebuking command (Luke 4:35).

Next, Jesus healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law by rebuking a fever (Luke 4:38 and 39).

Finally, he healed the multitudes.

Luke 4:40 and 41, "While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them. Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, 'You are the Son of God!' But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ."

Jesus laid his hands on the sick and brought healing to them.

The sick people were brought to Jesus by concerned family or friends.

The report was, "all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to [Jesus]."

Lest we focus on the healing and miss an important point, let it be stated, the hands of Jesus received the people brought to him.

The synoptic gospels (referring to Matthew, Mark, and Luke) include the record of Jesus cleansing a leper.

The three gospel writers present the same report in similar words.

Mark's account of this event is slightly longer, so go to Mark 1.

Combining details from the three writings, it is concluded that Jesus has finished the sermon on the mount (Matthew chapters 5-7), He has come down from the mountain with large crowds following Him (Matthew 8:1), and He is in one of the cities (Luke 5:12).

Mark 1:40 reveals, "a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, 'If You are willing, You can make me clean.'"

Verse 41 reveals how Jesus felt about this man; "Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched Him, and said to him, 'I am willing; be cleansed.'"

Acknowledging the difficulty of the text, James A. Brooks wrote, "Whether Jesus was 'filled with compassion' or 'moved to anger,' he displayed human emotion."¹

¹ James A. Brooks, *Mark*, vol. 23, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 55.

“Jesus stretched out His hand and touched Him,” He did what others would avoid doing.

Jesus was willing to help the man; Jesus was willing to cleanse the man.

Now, verse 42 tells, “Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.”

Then, Jesus “sternly warned him and immediately sent him away, and [Jesus] said to him, ‘See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.’”

Jesus helped people who were otherwise avoided.

Jesus raised a little girl back to life when he took her by the hand and instructed her to rise.

Mark 5:21 and following has synoptic parallels in Matthew 9 and Luke 8.

A ruler of the synagogue, Jairus, had a young daughter who was “at the point of death” (Mark 5:23).

Jesus was approached and the request was made for him to come lay hands on the man’s daughter.

“And he went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him” (Mark 5:24).

“While [Jesus] was still speaking (taking care of another situation that had come up), they came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, ‘Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore’” (Mark 5:35)?

Jesus overheard what was being said to the synagogue official, so he said, “Do not be afraid any longer, only keep on believing.”

Jesus allowed Peter, James, and John to go with him, and when they arrived at the official’s house there was a commotion and weeping.

After putting the people out, Jesus took the child’s parents, and the three men he allowed to come with him, “and entered the room where the child was.”

“Taking the child by the hand (v. 41), [Jesus] said to her, ‘Talitha kum!’ (which translated means, ‘Little girl, I say to you, get up or rise!’).”

The girl immediately got up and began to walk; the people were astounded, and Jesus said, “something should be given her to eat.”

Jesus gave attention to the ruler of the synagogue and his daughter.

The same attention he gave to the ruler and his daughter, Jesus gave to the woman in the interrupting situation (Mark 5:25-34).

Cleansing the sick, making people whole, and raising the dead are outside our abilities.

The hands of Jesus brought healing that we cannot bring, but his hands received the people brought to him, he was touched emotionally by various things about the people, he did what others would avoid doing, and he gave attention to those who needed him.

II. The Hands of Jesus Brought Blessings.

Jesus blessed the little children.

In Mark 10:13, people were bringing children to Jesus.

The Greek term used for “Children” includes a range of ages from eight days to twelve years.

The parent(s) wanted Jesus to touch their child(ren).

The term “touch” is equivalent to “lay hands on” with the purpose of blessing.

The disciples rebuked the people who were bringing their children to Jesus.

The disciples did not consider the children to be important.

Jesus became indignant, feeling and showing anger or annoyance at their unfair treatment of the children; He welcomed all the children.

“Permit (let with consent or permission) the children to come to Me,” Jesus said to the disciples; “do not hinder them (do not prevent or forbid the children); for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Mark 10:14).

Jesus continued, “Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.”

God will rule over people who welcome God as their ruler, just as children welcome him.

Their humble dependence, receptivity, and their acceptance of themselves along with their position in life is a pattern to be followed.

“And He took them (the children) in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them” (Mark 10:16).

Jesus invoked God’s blessings upon the children one...at...a...time.

I love what Warren Wiersbe wrote on this pericope [per-rick-i-p], “We tell the children to behave like adults, but Jesus tells the adults to model themselves after the children!”²

The hands of Jesus brought a blessing to children and a blessing of understanding to the adults.

Jesus blessed his apostles.

Just before his ascension, Jesus led his apostles “out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them” (Luke 24:50).

Jesus “lifted up His hands” a usual gesture of prayer.

This time it was done to request a blessing from God.

“While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven” (Luke 24:51).

In a special way, Jesus brought the blessing of the Holy Spirit to his apostles.

The lesson today is that Jesus prayed for the people who would continue his work.

The hands of Jesus brought blessings through his prayers.

Blessing children and followers of Jesus in the way Jesus did is often beyond our abilities.

But providing care or praying for others will bring blessings to them.

III. The Hands of Jesus Brought Salvation.

As Jesus entered Jerusalem during the triumphal entry a parade of people lined the roadside to welcome him.

As Ederd mentioned this morning, most of the people knew Jesus and they praised him as he entered the city.

In accord with one of the comments given on Facebook this morning, the people shouted, “Hosanna in the Highest” (Matthew 21:9)!

But all of that quickly changed.

The Pharisees were furious over Jesus’ popularity.

However, God said with a loud voice from heaven that He had and would glorify His name (John 12:28).

² Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 145.

Jesus told the Passover crowd He would save men by way of the cross; these are his words in John 12:32, “‘And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.’ But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.”

Jesus would be lifted up on a cross by having his hands and feet nailed to it.

After his resurrection, Jesus showed his pierced body to ten of his disciples, Thomas being absent when Jesus appeared to them this time.

Thomas was reluctant to believe the wonderful report, so he said, as read in John 20:25, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

Follow along, as John 20:26-29 are read.

The hands of Jesus brought salvation.

The hands of Jesus brought belief to Thomas and many more who have not seen him.

Jesus was “delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God” to be “nailed to a cross by the hands of godless (or lawless) men” who “put Him to death” (Acts 2:23).

“But” (Acts 2:24) “God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.”

We cannot give salvation from sins to ourselves or anyone else.

The hands of Jesus though provided proof of his resurrection to eyewitnesses who saw him die.

The hands of Jesus have brought salvation to everyone who believes, those who saw him and those who have not yet seen him.

We can bring this message to the world.

Application:

There are a lot of lessons, several will be shared, to be learned from the hands of Jesus and what he did that we ourselves cannot do.

When we cannot do what Jesus did...we need to take a closer look at what Jesus was teaching by what he did and do those things.

Work to bring people to Jesus, so he can heal them.

Receive the people who come.

Know that it is ok to experience and even show emotion.

Do what other people avoid doing.

Unlike the instructions given to the leper, we have been instructed to go and talk about Jesus.

Like the leper, we should show others the change that Jesus brought about in our lives.

Give attention to those who need attention and those who are looking for help.

View everyone as important, even the smallest of children.

Pray for the people who will continue the work of our Lord; pray for God to flood his blessings upon them.

Share the gospel with everyone for “it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.”

Conclusion:

Jesus wants nothing more than to heal the broken people and the hurting, to bless everyone of any age, and to give salvation to those who believe with a broken and contrite spirit.

Therefore, Jesus instructs...

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Luke 8:8).

“He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16).

“Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).

“Everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32).

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

Being born again, specifically being born of the Spirit, is impossible for us to explain, but God says he does it (John 1:13) so we can be saved (John 3:1-21), and it happens in baptism when we are born of water (Matthew 3:16).

We take him at his word and obey him.

Then, Jesus instructs, “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

Come to Jesus for healing, blessings, and salvation which no one else can give...as we stand and sing!