



Mighty Hand of God

June Newbury, Toronto, Ontario

Jesus used his hands on many occasions to communicate his love to others. One such time was when some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch them and bless them. The Gospel of Mark 10:13-16 records that encounter. The disciples were not happy and told the parents not to disturb Jesus. But when Jesus saw what was happening he said, *“Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”*

Jesus proceeded to take the children in His arms and placed His hands on their heads and blessed them. His hands communicated love and gentleness into the hearts of the children. He desires to do the same for us today.

The prophet Isaiah says in 49:16: *“See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.”*

In Isaiah’s day, some servants inscribed the names of their masters on their hands; however, the masters did not write the names of their servants on their hands. How different it is, spiritually to think that our Master and Lord says to us, “See,

I have engraved you on the palm of my hands. You are mine forever. You are not just on my heart rather, you are in my heart.”

From the beginning of time the hand of God has been at work in our world. In creation, God created the earth and sky with all its beauty. Then He created Adam and Eve with all their beauty. I have experienced the healing, comforting and forgiving hand of God in my life. Facing the realities of life while placing my hand in His has brought the deep love of the Father close and has given my heart a deep understanding of His grace. There isn’t anything we face that God’s hand can not bring His touch of healing to the brokenness of heart, mind and spirit.

As we take some time this week to focus on “The Mighty Hand of God” you will be blessed if you allow the hand of God to deeply touch your life as His Spirit speaks into your heart. I would encourage your response to be that of giving your life into the Potter’s hands to be molded and shaped into His likeness.

Hands in Action

Nancy Turley, Bracebridge, Ontario

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might ...”
Ecclesiastes 9:10

Take a look at your hand for a moment. We take it for granted because it's there every day, and usually does the things we want it to do. Your hand is one of the most delicate, yet complex parts of your body. There are six different muscle groups in your hand, and over 65 different muscles, 27 bones, 35 joints, nerves, blood vessels, and ligaments, all working together in complete harmony doing numerous tasks day in and day out. Your hand allows you to open up a book, hold a cup of coffee, or open and shut doors without even thinking. It's too complicated for scientists to perfectly reproduce with machines. The human hand reflects the amazing creativity of our Creator.

We use our hands more than any other part of the body. The hands symbolize action. There are very few things that we do without our hands. We work with our hands, talk with our hands, and minister with our hands. We greet each other with a handshake. We use our hands to sign contracts, to adjust the microscope or play the piano. We use our hands to show joy or dismay. We use our hands to serve God through serving one another.

Your hands will reveal something about you. . . dish pan hands, carpenter's hands, the blacksmith's hands. They all say something. Someone once said that the position of the hands is symbolic to the position of the heart.

Our verse for today starts with the word “Whatever.” The ‘Whatever’ here is not the expression we use at the end of a debate with our parents; rather it means that every part of our lives belongs to God. Therefore, we must look at



everything we do in that light. Our time, talents, treasures are to be given into the hands of God to be used for His glory. When the position of our hearts finds it's obedience to the leading of the Lord, we will find plenty for our hands to do.

The Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:23 encouraged action with the hands as well. *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men . . .”*

What Paul is really saying? Don't just do enough to get by! Go beyond the call of duty to work at everything so our BEST comes out.

Mother Teresa once said that if at the end of the day you want to examine your conscience, just look at your hands. What have your hands done today? Whom have they served?

Prayer:

*Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee
Take my moments and my days
Let them flow in ceaseless praise*

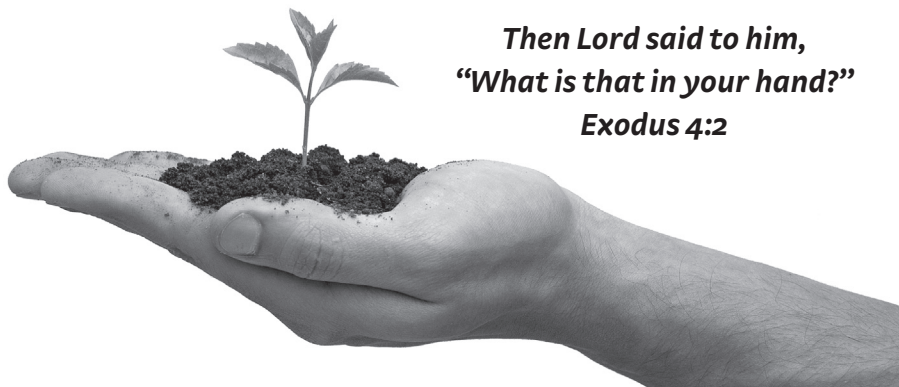
Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-79)

What Is That In Your Hand?

Read: Exodus 4:1-5

**Then Lord said to him,
“What is that in your hand?”**

Exodus 4:2



Moses displayed great apprehension and reluctance about the task that God had prepared him to do. In response to Moses' doubt about his own ability to fulfill God's calling on his life, God does not coddle Moses with platitudes, but rather asks him a simple question. . . "What is that in your hand?" God knew it was Moses' staff. . . an ordinary shepherd's staff which Moses had used for the past 40 years.

A Shepherd's staff was commonly a three-to six-foot wooden rod with a curved hook at the top. The shepherd used it for walking, guiding his sheep, killing snakes, and many other tasks. Still, it was just a stick. But God used the simple shepherd's rod Moses carried to teach him an important lesson. In time, Moses realized that his ordinary staff would be used to unfold the deliverance of his people out of Egypt.

On many occasions, the Lord has used what people had in their hands to prove His power and authority in their lives. Miriam had a tambourine which she used in leading the people to praise God. David had a sling, which he used to defeat Goliath. The widow had enough food for one meal, but she offered it to Elijah. A little boy had a small lunch, but God used it to feed 5,000. Mary had a jar of perfume which she used to bless Jesus.

The widow had only two coins, but her memory carries on.

Even today, God takes joy in using the ordinary things in our lives – our voice, a pen, a hammer, a broom, or a musical instrument to show you His power and authority.

So what do you have in your hand today? There are three things to remember about what you may have. First God cannot use anything in our hands until we let go of it. When we willingly offer it to him, He will do great things with whatever we have to offer. Secondly, just as God did not ask Moses to use something he did not have, He will not demand from us what we do not have. Thirdly, we will never know the full potential of the gifts we do have until we allow God to have full control. What do you have in your hand today?

Ask God to take all that you have and use for His glory in your family, your church and community. Miracles will happen, just as they did for Moses!

Prayer:

Take my hands, and let them move

At the impulse of thy love;

Take my feet, and I will be

Swift and beautiful for thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-79)

Open Hands

Read: John 20:24-28

“Unless I see the nail marks in His hands..” John 20: 25b



As a rule, most new-born babies have their little fists clenched for the first few weeks. As we all go through life, we must learn to open our hands to be able to give as well as receive.

One of the first things we learn about the hands of Jesus is that they were always open. Henri Nouwen wrote a book titled, “With Open Hands”. This was a book on prayer and in it, he wrote that it is impossible to pray with clenched fists. Our hands must be open to receive the goodness that God has to offer. Clenched fists are a sign of bitterness, disappointment, and hate. We cannot approach God with clenched fists; rather, we must only approach God with open hands to receive all that He has to give. Nouwen states that the hands of Jesus were “painfully open.”

Jesus could not have been crucified with clenched fists. His nail scars could only be seen when His hands were completely open. Jesus invited the sins of the world into His hands and heart.

His hands were always open and inviting. They were painfully open, because His openness

was greeted with misunderstanding, hostility, unfairness, belligerence, anger, and sin. His love was greeted with hatred. His gentleness was welcomed with violence. His self-giving was received with self-centeredness. Jesus painfully opened His hands to the executioner’s nails, so that we all might have our sins forgiven.

As you sit quietly with open hands, ask God to reveal the areas of your life that are filled with hostility, unfairness and anger. No matter how painful these areas are to touch, allow the hand of God, with His deep love for you, speak into your pain so that the hands of your heart are totally open and ready to receive. Be willing to release anything and everything that hinders God’s life unfolding in you.

Prayer:

Take my will and make it thine

It shall be no longer mine

Take my heart, it is thine own

It shall be thy royal throne

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-79)

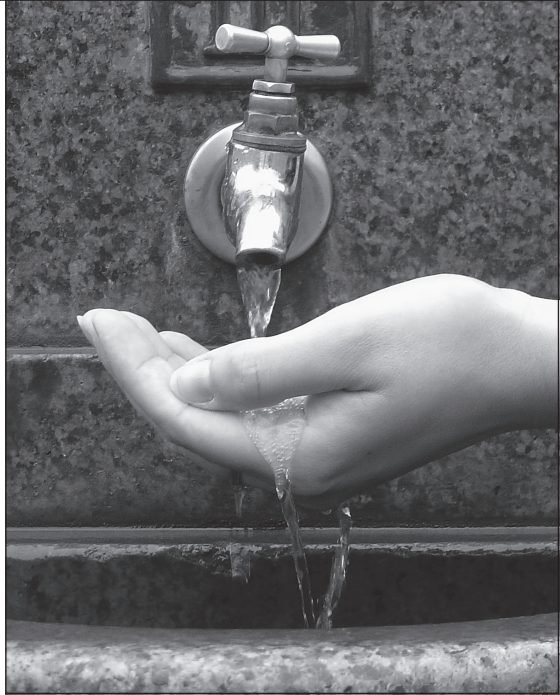
Clean Hands

Read: Psalm 24

**“Who may ascend
the hill of the LORD?
Who may stand in
His holy place?
He who has clean hands
and a pure heart ...”
Psalm 24: 3-4a**

It is believed that this Psalm was sung as the pilgrims and procession of worshipers approached the hill of Zion. When they came to the foot of the hill, they stopped and the priest intoned the question as found in verse three. Who may ascend the hill of the Lord and stand in His holy place? This is a question that, as Christians, we need to ask ourselves. What do I need to do to stand in His presence? The answer is very clear — have clean hands and a pure heart. Clean hands alone are not enough. When Jesus was handed over to be crucified, Pilate attempted to wash his hands of his actions, hoping to absolve himself of the responsibility he had in placing the sin of the world upon Jesus. But, Pilate did not realize that clean hands without a pure heart did not allow him to ascend the hill of the Lord or stand in His presence.

It is easy to think that because our hands are clean we will experience the presence of God in all that we do. Spiritually, our hands have an intimate connection to our hearts. We are reminded that the cleansing of our hands begins with hearts that are free from sin. The ministry of our hands is only possible when we have clean hands and a pure



heart. Examine your spiritual hands and ask God to reveal to you anything that will compromise your mission today. Remember that clean hands and a pure heart speak of our relationship to Christ.

Ask God to show you anything that has stained your hands and limited your awareness of God's presence in your life.

Pray:

*“If on my soul a trace of sin remaineth,
If on my hands a stain may yet be seen;
If one dark thought a wearied mind retaineth,
O wash me Lord, till every part be clean.
For I would live that men may see thyself in me,
I would in faith ascend they holy hill,
And with my thoughts in tune with they divinity,
would learn how best to do they holy will.”*

Hands of Compassion

Read: Matthew 20:29-34

**“Filled with compassion,
Jesus reached out His
hand and touched
the man. ‘I am willing,’
he said ‘Be clean!’”**

Matthew 25: 34

Our hands can be a blessing or a curse. The hands of Jesus reached out filled with compassion. Whomever His touched blessing flowed in abundance. The man with leprosy experienced the compassionate hands of Jesus. Mark 1:41 says Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “*I am willing,*” he said. “*Be clean*”. These words changed this mans life forever. There was nothing that Jesus touched that did not change. There is still power to change the pain of our lives when we experience the touch of the Master.

Jesus spent three years on earth using His hands to meet the needs of others. We need to learn from the hands of our Savior. When we reach out to touch the lives of others we must make sure we are filled with compassion. Our love and practical care when others are hurting can be the touch that Christ uses to bring comfort and healing to the brokenness of hearts.

Compassion isn't pity! Compassion isn't sympathy! Compassion isn't charity! It is suffering with someone. Standing in another's place. It means deep caring for another when the pain of loss is great. It means a silent visit when words just won't bring answers.

My greatest hope is that we might learn how to be the hands of Christ in this world. Billions of people need to be introduced to Christ. Multitudes



need to be offered the healing ministries of the church. Massive numbers of people need to know that there are people who really do care. A whole generation needs to know the love of Christ.

As our daily work days unfold may we offer ourselves as the very hands of Christ touching the lives of the young, mid-aged and the children of our world.

Everyday we meet people who are wounded by life, wounded by hurts of the past and the present. Everyday we are given opportunities to reach out with hearts of compassion.

Ask the Lord to open your heart to the wounds of others.

Ask the Lord to give you a compassionate heart.

Prayer:

*Except I am moved with compassion,
How dwelleth they spirit in me?*

In word and in deed;

Burning love is my need;

I know I can find this in thee.

Albert Orsborn (1886 – 1967)

Holding Hands

Read: Exodus 17: 8-13

“When Moses’ hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up — one on one side, one on the other — so that his hands remained steady till sunset.”

Exodus 17:12

John Donne (1572-1631) a Jacobean poet and preacher is credited with the line. “No man is an island entire of itself”; “every man or woman is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.” This phrase is an example of uniting with others. We often say, ‘there is strength in numbers’ but allow me to suggest there is strength in belonging.

We need each other. If we are going to take this journey of life with deep meaning we must be a part of each others lives. In the midst of family life and work responsibilities, we need to belong. It is vital that life is lived out in a meaningful community. In the good times, we need each other; In times of weariness, we need each other. Holding hands goes deeper than standing in a circle and holding hands physically, it means holding hands of the heart.

I was recently reminded that when babies are at the point of learning how to walk they depend on a holding hand of support for courage to take the next step. Likewise, we need the same. It’s interesting to note that Moses, called by God realized he could not be an island unto himself — he needed the hands of others to support him.

From today’s Scripture Exodus 17:8-13 we see clearly that Moses grew tired and his hands grew heavy, so for his mission to be accomplished, for this battle to be won, Moses needed to depend on those around him to give strength when he felt

weak. This group of unlikely heroes were prepared to do whatever necessary to help one another.

By holding up Moses’ hands, Aaron and Hur made a difference in the outcome. Their support helped to alleviate Moses’ weariness. They supplemented Moses’ weakness with their strength. They seemed to understand that by carrying one another’s burdens, the law of Christ is fulfilled (Galatians 6:2)



By holding up Moses’ hands, Aaron and Hur enabled Moses to endure much longer than he would have on his own. This act of support also facilitated the victory for the entire group, not just for Joshua.

It was the practical service (providing a stone for Moses to sit on) and their continuous support that brought triumph in this battle. It also took time and commitment from those around him.

When the battle was won, Moses was very quick to build an altar in thanksgiving to God, as he recalled his petition to God. With hands held high through the support of his friends, the power of God was displayed.

Reflection question: When and how have you needed your faith propped up?

Reflection Action: Ask the Lord to reveal how you can be of support to others.

Hands of Surrender

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1-8

***“I want men everywhere
to lift up holy hands in prayer,
without anger or disputing.”***

1 Timothy 2:8

Lifting hands is a universal act signifying surrender. It says...“I give up”. As Christians, our hands must be open and lifted to God in surrender. Hands open with a longing for all of God in abandonment.

God is looking for nothing less than total surrender. He is looking for complete dependence upon Him alone. He is looking for total commitment. As a follower of Jesus, we can have world-changing influence but this must begin with absolute surrender. It begins with our letting go to ‘LET’ God. Our lack of willingness to surrender everything to God will hinder what God can accomplish in our lives.

God’s desire is to empower us, mold and shape us into the women that He has created us to be. True surrender begins with our repentance. Repentance is about surrender, about admitting our helplessness and turning to God for His Spirit to change us.

So often we hang on to things which cause our own will to override God’s will for us. Holding tightly to things not of God weighs us down and prevents our hands from being raised in surrender to Him.

When we surrender all that we are into the hands of God we experience release from the concerns and burdens of our struggles. When we surrender the sin and hurts of our past and present we find ourselves experiencing freedom in Christ instead of bondage. These same hands are



then able to receive from God His grace, joy, love, purpose, forgiveness and healing. Surrendered hands indicate a surrendered heart.

Using the a words Bill Himes – “All that I am” – spend a few moments in reflection and ask the Lord to give you courage to raise your hands in surrender to His plan for your life.

*All that I am, all I can be, all that I have,
all that is me;
Accept and use, Lord, as You would choose,
Lord,
Right now, today.
Take every passion, every skill,
take all my dreams,
And bend them to Your will.
My all I give, Lord.
For You I’ll live, Lord, come what may.*

Hands That Create

June Newbury, Toronto, Ontario. Adapted from a variety of resources and the Australian Eastern Territory

Preparation/Introduction:

Invite ladies to bring handmade items to create a table display. Ask the ladies to share the story of their creation and how God has enabled them to use their talents for Him.

Songs:

- 48 SASB/TB 150 *God's Love To Me Is Wonderful*
- 337 SASB/TB 381 *By His Hand I'm Safely Led*
- 371 SASB/TB 666 *O What A Wonderful Day*
- 727 SASB/TB 21 *He Leadeth Me! O Blessed Thought*

Working with your hands:

Give every lady a piece of clay and ask them to create something to represent a spiritual experience.

Scripture quiz:

Answers have the word 'hand' in the Bible

- It is sometimes used to mean "power" - Exodus 15:6
- To pour water on anyone's hands, meant to serve Him - 2 Kings 3:11
- To wash one's hands, denoted that the person was innocent of crime - Matthew 27:24
- To lift up one's hands is a way of taking an oath - Genesis 14:22,23
- To lift one's hands is also a posture used in praying a blessing - Leviticus 9:22
- To give one's hand is to swear friendship, to promise security, to make alliance - 2 Kings 10:15
- Scripture generally gives to God's Right Hand all the effects of His all powerfulness - Psalm 17:7
- To be at one's right hand signifies to defend, protect, support. - Psalm 16:8,11



What are your hands saying?

With the hands, an artist creates beauty, a magician entertains, a surgeon relieves suffering, a musician makes music, a chef prepares food. Look at your hands. Do you remember the commercial for dishwashing liquid that asked us whose hands belonged to the thirty-year-old and whose hands belonged to the sixteen-year-old? We are given lots of advice as to how to keep our hands soft, beautiful, and young looking. We are equally encouraged to strengthen our hands and there are exercises to be done to do just that. Strong hands can be useful hands.

But what do your hands say? No doubt they speak almost as loudly as your tongue. They can help or hinder, for the movement of the hand is often an expression of the heart. They can push aside or draw closer. They can show impatience or tenderness. They can move abruptly or sympathetically.

Shake hands with someone near you. What did you feel? Was it a finger tip shake or a whole hand type? Was it sincere or shallow, firm or limp?

Hands speak volumes to little ones. Even very premature babies need touching for bonding to begin. For one-year-olds who have not yet developed language, touching provides an important means of communication. Children know by the way they are handled, whether they are loved or not. This is also especially true for the elderly or very ill.

Whose Hands?

A basketball in my hands is worth about \$19.

A basketball in Michael Jordan's hands is worth about \$33 million.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A baseball in my hands is worth about \$6.

A baseball in Mark McGuire's hands is worth \$19 million.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A tennis racket is useless in my hands.

A tennis racket in Venus Williams' hands is a Wimbledon Championship.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A rod in my hands will keep away a wild animal.

A rod in Moses' hands parted the mighty sea.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

A sling shot in my hands is a kid's toy.

A sling shot in David's hand was a mighty weapon.

It depends on whose hands it's in.

Two fish and five loaves of bread in my hands is would produce a few fish sandwiches.

Two fish and five loaves of bread in God's hands fed thousands.

It depends on whose hands they're in.

Nails in my hands might produce a birdhouse.

Nails in Jesus Christ's hands produced salvation for the entire world.

It depends on whose hands they're in.

As you see now, it depends whose hands they're in.

So put your concerns, your worries, your fears, your hopes, your dreams, your families and your relationships in God's Hands because...

It depends on Whose Hands they're in.

No Prayer Goes Unheard

Often we pause and wonder

When we kneel down to pray –

Can God really hear

The prayers that we say?

But if we keep praying and talking to him

He'll brighten the soul

That was clouded and dim –

And as we continue, our burden seems lighter

Our sorrow is softened

And our outlook is brighter.

For though we feel helpless

And alone when we start,

A prayer is the key that opens the heart

And as the heart opens

The dear Lord comes in

And the prayer that we felt we could never begin

Is so easy to say,

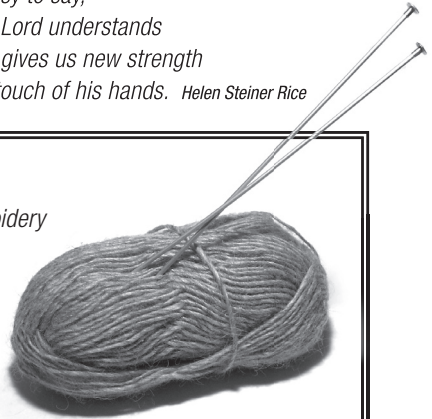
For the Lord understands

And he gives us new strength

By the touch of his hands. *Helen Steiner Rice*

“Crafty Ideas”

1. Art of working with a needle and thread ... *Embroidery*
2. Knotted lace with a shuttle ... *Tatting*
3. Hook and yarn to form loops ... *Crochet*
4. Interlace thread to form fabric ... *Weaving*
5. Pieces of cloth sewn together ... *Patchwork*
6. Small stitches holding layers together ... *Quilting*
7. Picture stitched in wool ... *Tapestry*
8. Make toys that look like people ... *Doll making*
9. Make garment using wool and long needles ... *Knitting*
10. Curled or rolled paper ... *Quilling*
11. Pictures made with layers of the same picture cut out ... *Paper tole*
12. Pictures made on linen or aida fabric ... *Cross stitch*



Sunday Worship

June Newbury, Toronto, Canada

Preparation:

Set up a Worship Table using large Praying Hands along with an open Bible (Isaiah 48: 13.) If possible use hands that are open as a symbol of receiving from the Hand of God. This will draw worshipers to a visual of how our hands need to be open before the Lord to receive His touch.

Call to Worship

"The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: "The Lord's right hand has done mighty things! The Lord's right hand is lifted high; the Lord's right hand has done mighty things!" Psalm 118: 14-16 NIV.

Theme Song: The Potters Hands

(words and Music by Darelene Zschech)

Beautiful Lord, Wonderful savior

I know for sure all of my days are held in your hands

Crafted into your perfect plan

You gently called me into your presence

Guiding me by Your Holy Spirit

Teach me dear Lord to live all of my life

Through your eyes

I'm captured by your holy calling

Set me apart. I know you're drawing me to yourself

lead me, Lord. I pray

Take me, mold me, use me, fill me

I give my life to the potter's hand

Call me, guide me, lead me, walk beside me

I give my life to the potter's hand

You gently call me into your presence

Guiding me by your holy spirit



Teach me dear lord to live all of my life through your eyes

I'm captured by your holy calling

Set me apart. I know you're drawing me to yourself

lead me, Lord. I pray

Take me, mold me, use me, fill me

I give my life to the potter's hand

Call me, guide me, lead me, walk beside me

I give my life to the potter's hand

Suggested Songs/Chorus:

- SASB52/TB 826 *Many Are the Things I Cannot Understand*
- SASB337/TB 381 *I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*

- SASB 578/411 *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*
- SASB710/TB 537 *A Wonderful Saviour Is Jesus, My Lord*
- SASB725/TB 21 *He Leadeth Me! O Blessed Thought!*
- SASB732/ TB 687 *I'm In His Hands*
- SASB983 *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*
- SASB Chorus 72 *If On My Soul A Trace of Sin Remaineth*

Worship chorus: *Forever – Give thanks to the Lord our God and King, His love endures forever. (Chris Tomlin)*

Testimony: Have the theme song presented as a mime/or sung as a solo.

Testimony: Invite two or more ladies to testify, using the following statement, I experienced the HAND of God when ...

Did you know: About Song 732 (SASB): *I'm in his hands* by Stanley E. Ditmer

In April 1957, while the author was on the staff of the training college in New York, his brother was seriously ill. A month later he also was still unwell and had to wait six weeks for the diagnosis of his

illness. During this time of uncertainty, the chorus was born. He said that it 'evolved' at the piano keyboard, and the first verse was written that same afternoon. Six months later, after he had taken up a corps appointment at Newburgh, New York, he added what is now the third verse. This song is an expression of virile faith and forthright courage. (Companion to the Song Book — of The Salvation Army North American Edition) While using the original tune for the verses a new melody has been written for the chorus — music can be obtained, upon request from the Women's Ministries Dept. at THQ, Canada & Bermuda Territory.

Benediction:

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish.

Though you search for your enemies, you will not find them. Those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all.

For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you." Isaiah 41: 10 – 13 NIV



*With open hands, I come to you, O God;
Touch me and fill me;
Equip me to serve You daily.*

Patsy Rowe

Monologue – Touched by a Loving Hand

Deborah Coles – Simcoe Community Church, Ontario



A group of us women were sitting by the well, enjoying the coolness of the morning, when one of my neighbours asked, “Where’s Talitha? We hardly see your daughter any more.” You can’t imagine their shock when I told them she was out with Rose, taking food to the lepers who live just outside Capernaum! They were horrified that Jairus and I would expose our daughter, our adored only child, to such danger and degradation.

“Don’t worry about Talitha,” I told them. “I know it seems dreadful to allow her out among the unclean, but we don’t have the heart to stop her — she is so eager to do good. She loves Jesus so much, she is determined to bring hope to them.”

When Talitha was born, we named her “Sarah”, meaning “princess.” But she was so tiny and delicate that her father began to call her “Talitha,” “Little One.” In our home and among our friends, Sarah was always known as Talitha.

She was a delight to us. We took pleasure in her charming, winning ways. We admired her dainty, slender fingers — she was always very particular, never liked to have sticky hands. Perhaps because she was an only child, Jairus and I were especially protective of her. We tended to keep her away from the streets where she might see beggars, cripples, or anyone suffering. We wanted to keep her from all harm and offer her nothing but good.



Then one day, she got sick. It all happened quite suddenly. We tried all the remedies we knew. But when herbal teas, cool baths and resting in bed all failed, old Leah, the midwife who had helped to deliver Talitha, said we should send for a doctor. We sent for one, alright, and another, and another — we tried them all. But it was no good. In just a few days, our lively, sparky-eyed daughter had become “a hopeless case.”

“*Jairus, what can we do?*” I wept in my husband’s arms. But he had an idea. “*They say Jesus of Nazareth is in this area. He is known as a great teacher and a holy man. I have heard that he even heals the sick!*”

Go to Him! Hurry, Jairus!

Jairus raced into town. It wasn’t hard to find Jesus — there was always a crowd around him. Jairus pushed his way through the mob. He was a ruler in the synagogue, and well-respected by everyone. They let him pass.

He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and pleaded “*My little daughter is dying. Come and put your hands on her and she will live!*” Jesus agreed to come.

Progress was agonizingly slow. There were so many people. Suddenly Jesus stopped. “*Who touched me?*” At first, his disciples, eager to get on with saving the life of an important man’s child, said, “*Jesus anyone could have bumped you! Look at this crowd!*”

But Jesus is never rushed. Jairus told me how he stood there quietly, forever, it seemed to my poor, anxious husband, until a terrified woman approached him.

It was Rose. We had been good friends as children, but shortly after her wedding day, her

troubles began. I think she may have lost a child, but whatever the reason for it, she was constantly bleeding. This was an “unclean” disease. It prevented her from worshipping with us in the synagogue, and from enjoying a normal life in the community. She had known much suffering for the past 12 years, and treatment by many doctors had impoverished her. People wondered what she had done to be so punished by God. Everyone knew who she was and knew about her problem, but no one really knew her anymore.

Trembling, Rose whispered and Jairus heard because he was right there beside Jesus. “*I thought, if I only touch the edge of his cloak, I will be healed!*” Jesus said, “*Take heart, daughter, your faith has healed you!*” It wasn’t His robe that did it. It was her faith! Rose told me later that when He called her “daughter”, it made her feel as though she finally, after all these years, belonged somewhere again!

Then Jesus told Rose to go in peace. That’s “shalom” peace; the word for us is loaded with meaning ... “shalom” implies whole-ness, and right-ness with God as well as freedom from anxiety. Truly, this is the kind of peace Rose has enjoyed since she experienced Jesus’ loving touch.

But this delay, while thrilling for Rose, proved fatal for my darling daughter. Jairus told me he wondered why Jesus chose to spend time with Rose just then. After all, she had suffered already for 12 years. Could she not have borne with her pain for another hour, so Jesus could save our little girl?

Back at home, I didn’t know when Jairus would bring Jesus. Every second counted, bringing Talitha closer to death. And as she moaned and sighed, she slipped away. Gone.



I stilled my grief long enough to send one of the servants into town. “*Let them know she has died. Save Jesus an unnecessary trip.*” If only they had hurried!

Outside, the mourners were already assembling. Old Leah had been hovering for days.



Now she had sent out the word. There was the music of the flutes. There was the crying of the wailers. Jairus was an important man, so there would be lots of people, lots of noise. I wept in Talitha’s room as the women of our household prepared food for the mourners.

Then Jesus Came

“*Why all this noise?*” I heard him ask. (a dense question, really. Why would mourners be raising their voices if not for a funeral?) “*Send them away. She is not dead, she is just asleep.*”

Of course, they laughed at him. No one would start the funeral if there was any hope that the girl was alive! They left the house, but they didn’t go far. They would be ready when the funeral started again.

Jairus led Jesus and his three companions into the room where she lay, my lovely Sarah. My heart

breaks again, seeing her. But what is Jesus doing? I am surprised at the hope that springs into my heart. He takes her hand and speaks: “*Talitha, I say to you — get up!*” It wasn’t loudly said, but powerfully, from deep within. Outside the room, no one heard but for us it was as intense as loud shouting, loud enough to wake the dead.

She gets up! She and Jesus smiled at each other, then hugged. We are ecstatic!! I hug Talitha, I hug Jairus, and I hug Jesus. I am excited enough to hug even Jesus’ three friends!

“*Don’t tell anyone about this*”, Jesus says. I’m mystified. I want to tell everyone, starting with Old Leah and the flute players outside. But maybe they wouldn’t believe Talitha really was raised from the dead because Jesus

himself had said she was only sleeping. They don’t realize how it is for Him to defy death like waking someone up.

“*Give her something to eat,*” Jesus commands. Wonderful words! Haven’t I been trying to do just that for days? But of course — now she’s well. Now she’s walking around the room! Now she needs to eat. So everyone eats and celebrates — what a party!

Jesus changed me when he brought my precious daughter back to life. He restored my joy. Now I don’t resist my generous impulses, or Talitha’s! So I fill baskets for the lepers, and watch with a grateful heart as Rose and Talitha carry them out. Both have been brought back by the touch of Jesus’ loving hand, one from despair, one from death. Now they respond by reaching out to others — one loving touch deserves another.

Clay in the Potters Hands

June Newbury, Toronto, Canada

Praying hands can be formed from ceramics, clay, carved from wood, drawn on paper or painted. When a baby is born fingers are among the first to be counted. Parents want to make sure the hands are totally functional. I have in my office a set of olive wood praying hands from Israel. As I glance from time to time at these hands I am reminded of the Mighty Hand of God at work in my life. The Old Testament records for us that the mighty hand of God was/is at work.

A word study on 'The Mighty Hand of God' in Scripture reveals that it is often spoken of in connection with God's outstretched arm. A picture of God's active involvement with His Sovereign governance over all creation. When the Israelite people crossed the Jordan river they were instructed by God to take 12 stones from the middle of the Jordan and carry them to their camp where they put them down. Joshua set the stones up where the Priest stood and to this day they remain. The stones are a reminder to all the peoples of the earth that they would know that the hand of the Lord is powerful.

Genesis 2: 7 states, *"the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being."* The word 'formed' in Hebrew is commonly referred to the work of a potter. We are drawn to the book of Jeremiah chapter 18: 6 - *"...like clay in the hand of the potter, so you are in my hand, O House of Israel."*

Scripture uses a variety of ways to describe our relationship to Him. He is the Creator and we are His creation. In Jeremiah's time, potters placed a lump of clay on a round platform which they turned with their feet. Under their skilled hands, the clay took whatever form they intended. As Jeremiah watched a potter at work, God told him to remind Judah that the nations are like clay in His hands — He could destroy



or restore. God desired that His people seek him in obedience so that they would become a restored people in a deep relationship with Him.

Jeremiah 18 reveals that God is sovereign in His relationship with his people. Thus, we learn from the clay in the potters hands.

There is a Process:

Verse 3-4 (Have a piece of clay with you)

- Clay must be suitable
- Clay must be dirt and stone free
- Clay must be soften with water and shaped
- Clay must be set aside to dry
- Clay must be heated/baked to strengthened

Importance of the Process:

Verse 6. In The Father's hands.

- God desires to build Christ-like character
- God desires to remove our pride
- God wants to prepare us for service

Where is God in the process of your life?

Lessons learned:

- God longs to be involved in our lives (Jeremiah 18:3; Isaiah 29:16)
- We need to allow Him to shape us (Isaiah 45:9)
- We need to let Him do what He deems is best (Jeremiah 18:4)

Application:

- Don't resist what God wants to do.
- Choose to not have self in the way

Hands of God

Adapted from *Word and Worship Resources for Salvationists 3rd Qtr. 2007 – Southern Territory, U.S.A.*
(Sermon Outlines on Old Testament Bible, Character pgs. 34,35, Al Bryant)

Possible Sermon Titles:

“A Sling in the Hands of God”
“How to Be an Overcomer”

Possible Sermon Outline:

(I Samuel 17:1-11, 16) David's view of Goliath was not the stature of the giant, but rather the challenge that he presented by degrading Jehovah God as inferior to the gods of the Philistines. David had known the protecting presence of God as a shepherd boy; therefore when evil presented itself, the evil must be faced and defeated.

The challenge of faith is accepted when the Christians can say, “*Let no man's heart fail because of him*” (17:32). Thus, with assurance the enemy can be faced because, “*The Lord ... will deliver ...*” (17:37).

Weapons of Faith (17:40)

A staff, a sling, and five smooth stones out of the brook Kidron, are all the weapons that faith takes. The staff of the Lord's presence (Isaiah 50:10; Psalm 23:4), the sling of God's Word, and the five smooth stones which are found in the stream of Christ's mediatory action and Person are the weapons of faith. The five smooth stones are:

Christ **is** - His living presence is our confidence and consolation. (Isaiah 41: 1 0)

Christ **can** - He can conquer, for He stooped to conquer, and accomplished His purpose. (Luke 11 :22; Hebrews 2: 14; Colossians 2:15; 1 John 3:8)

Christ **has** - All power is His, and He has all power for us. (Luke 10: 19; Mark 16: 17)

Christ **will** - He has promised the victory, therefore, it is sure. (I John 5:4,5)

Christ **does** - Faith makes His promise a present effect, and a continuous reality. (Ephesians 6:16; Revelation 12:11)



Courage of Faith (17:40)

David did not wait till the giant came up to him, he advanced toward the enemy (v. 40). The Christian should not always stand on the defensive, he should be on the offensive at all times. (II Corinthians 10:5)

Persecution of Faith (17:41-44)

Faith is sure to be taunted with folly, and sneered at for its unreasonable action. Christ is the Man of Faith, and as He was “despised” (Isaiah 53:3), “reviled” (I Peter 2:23), “hated” (John 15:18), and scoffed at (Matthew 27:43); so shall we be, for the servant is not above his Lord (John 13: 16).



Confidence of Faith (17:46)

David has no doubt as to the issue of the battle. Note his confidence: “*The Lord will deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee.*” Faith’s confidence is not born of self-asserting, but is begotten by the sure word of God. Since we have a “sure word” (II Peter 1: 19), we have every right to say, “We are sure” (John 6:69).

Resource of Faith (17:47)

“*The battle is the Lord’s.*” Faith recognizes that the battle is not its own but the Lord’s, and what foe can stand against Him? The resource of faith is the Almighty God. The power of faith lies in the Power which faith lays hold of.

Testimony of Faith (17:45)

Not in his own name, nor in his own strength did David come against Goliath, but, in the name and strength of the Lord. In a like manner, the believer testifies that the power of the Lord, and the name of Jesus, are the potent forces by which spiritual results are achieved (Acts 3: 12, 13; I Corinthians 2:4).

Victory of Faith (17:49, 50)

When the man of faith takes the stone of Christ’s victory over evil, and puts it in the sling of Divine utterance, and slings it in the strength of the Holy Spirit, it will bring down any foe The Christian should never expect defeat, but always count upon the victorious Lord for complete and continuous victory.



Faith is the victory!

Faith is the victory!

O glorious victory!

That overcomes the world.

John H. Yates SASB:Chorus 117