

Lord God, sometimes we are very aware of the consequences of bad decisions. When we read the paper or watch the news. Even with our own friends and family. Then of course, there's us.

We haven't always chosen wisely. And sometimes we've had to live with the consequences. Lord God, we are here now to confess our bad choices...

We are so sorry, Lord, and we ask you to forgive us and help us to put things right.

Amen.

Let us picture the Lord standing before us, his arms outstretched, forgiving us. Let us spend a moment silently thanking God for the power in that forgiveness.

Thank you, God, for your blessing, and that we can go out as new.

Nothing is hidden from you,
and if we acknowledge that,
and confess our sins,
we know you will forgive us.

Amen

One Sabbath day as Jesus was walking through some grainfields, his disciples began breaking off heads of grain to eat. But the Pharisees said to Jesus, “Look, why are they breaking the law by harvesting grain on the Sabbath?”

Jesus said to them, “Haven’t you ever read in the Scriptures what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He went into the house of God (during the days when Abiathar was high priest) and broke the law by eating the sacred loaves of bread that only the priests are allowed to eat. He also gave some to his companions.”

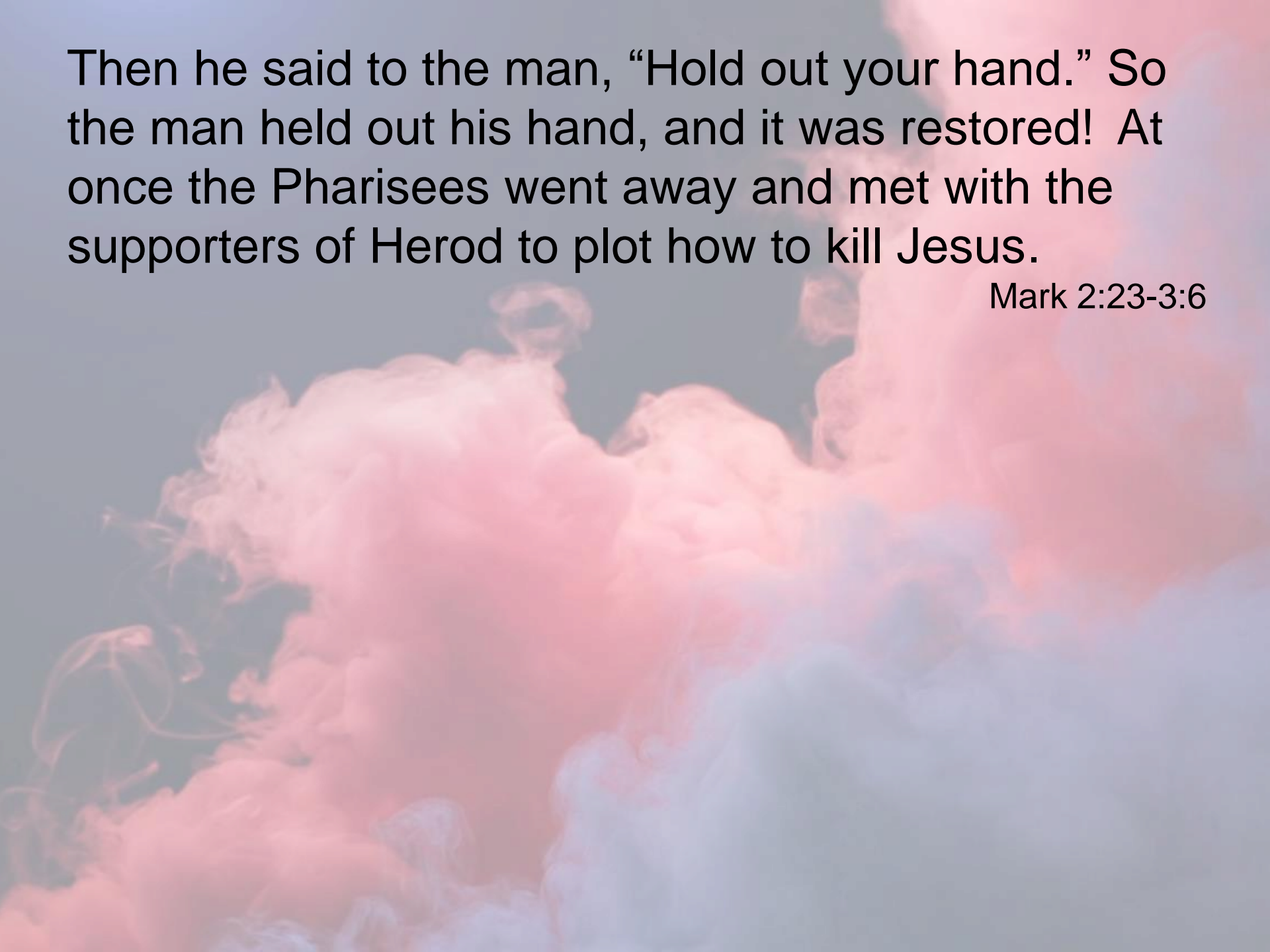
Then Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath.

So the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!”

Jesus went into the synagogue again and noticed a man with a deformed hand. Since it was the Sabbath, Jesus’ enemies watched him closely. If he healed the man’s hand, they planned to accuse him of working on the Sabbath.

Jesus said to the man with the deformed hand, “Come and stand in front of everyone.” Then he turned to his critics and asked, “Does the law permit good deeds on the Sabbath, or is it a day for doing evil? Is this a day to save life or to destroy it?” But they wouldn’t answer him.

He looked around at them angrily and was deeply saddened by their hard hearts.



Then he said to the man, “Hold out your hand.” So the man held out his hand, and it was restored! At once the Pharisees went away and met with the supporters of Herod to plot how to kill Jesus.

Mark 2:23-3:6

What you cannot do on the Sabbath Day ! A handful picked from 24 chapters of rules just for this commandment !

Do not light a candle

Or buy or sell anything

Don't take a bath or wash

Do not move any furniture

Do not look after sick people unless they would die if you didn't!

Women weren't allowed to look into a mirror.

Do not travel more than 1,999 steps from your home.

Lord, we lift our world up to you. We look at all the places of war and unrest: Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, Myanmar and many parts of Africa. There is so much anger, hatred and distrust. Lord, speak your words of peace into the nations. Bring a ceasefire to all hostilities, we pray. Lord teach us how to be peacemakers where there is conflict.

Leader: O Lord, when you call, let us answer:

All: Lord, we are listening.

As so many countries of the world will have elections this year, we pray for the leaders of the nations, that you will raise up women and men of integrity and peace. We pray for Christian politicians, that they will not be torn between

their faith and their job. Give them courage to speak and act for you and to be an influence for good. We also pray for ourselves, that you will show us how and where we can be influencers for you, Lord. We think of where you have placed us: in our families, our homes and streets, our work or school, our leisure. Help us to bring your wholeness into every situation this week and always.

Leader: O Lord, when you call, let us answer:

All: Lord, we are listening.

We pray for the work of this church during the week ahead. Show us where we can be your hands, eyes, ears and voice in our local area.

Lord, is there someone or somewhere you particularly want us to go to this week? We pause in silence to listen again for your still, small voice.....

Help us to take our love for you out into our streets, shops, schools and businesses this week. We pray that our community will be flooded with your love and glory.

Leader: O Lord, when you call, let us answer:

All: Lord, we are listening.

We pray for the young people of our community, particularly those taking exams at the moment. Lord, may all students feel an air of calm and peace in their hearts and in the exam rooms.

Help parents, teachers and friends to speak words of encouragement and support and may all our young people be safe in the knowledge that they are loved and valued by you no matter what the outcome of their exams.

Leader: O Lord, when you call, let us answer:

All: Lord, we are listening.

We pray for those we know who are struggling at the moment: for those who are sick ,for the elderly and those who are confused; for those who are sad ,especially if someone they love has died Lord, help us not to pass by on the other side when we see someone in need or in pain. Help us to be good listeners to one another

and to give up our time just to sit with those who need our support.

Leader: O Lord, when you call, let us answer:

All: Lord, we are listening.

Finally, Lord, we offer the coming week to you. In the stillness, we picture the places where we are expecting to be and the people we are expecting to be with. Go before us to prepare our way.

Help us to see you in every situation and to follow where you lead.

Leader: O Lord, when you call, let us answer:

All: Lord, we are listening.

Go before us, guide us and help us to follow you always. Amen.