

Matthew 12:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

Analysis

Jesus commands 'Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.' This healing demonstrates Christ's divine power and compassion triumphing over legalistic opposition. The command to 'stretch forth' (ἐκτεινον/ekteinon) required faith—the man had to obey before seeing results. His obedience brought instant, complete healing: 'restored whole' (ἀποκατεστάθη ὑγιής/apokatestatē hygiēs), perfectly matching the other hand. Reformed theology sees this as illustrating salvation: we're spiritually paralyzed, unable to save ourselves; Christ commands and enables obedience; trusting His word brings complete transformation. The healing occurred through Jesus's word alone—no physical contact, no ritual, just authoritative command. This demonstrates His deity: only God creates and restores with mere word (Genesis 1, Psalm 33:9). The timing is significant: Jesus healed on sabbath despite Pharisaic opposition, demonstrating that genuine sabbath observance includes works of mercy and compassion.

Historical Context

The healing occurred in the synagogue (v.9) with Pharisees watching, seeking grounds to accuse Jesus (v.10). Ancient Mediterranean culture valued honor and shame highly; Jesus's public healing in synagogue before hostile authorities was both courageous and provocative. The man's cooperation—stretching forth his withered hand publicly—also required courage, risking ridicule if nothing happened. Luke adds he was a stoneworker (Luke 6:6, some manuscripts), making

the disability especially devastating to his livelihood. The immediate, complete healing eliminated any possibility of natural explanation or gradual recovery. Witnesses could verify the miracle. Yet the Pharisees' response wasn't faith but fury (v.14)—plotting Jesus's death. This pattern continues: clear evidence of God's power either produces worship or hardens opposition. The early church proclaimed resurrection with similar polarizing effect: undeniable miracle producing vastly different responses depending on heart condition.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does this healing teach about the relationship between Christ's command, human faith-obedience, and divine power producing transformation?
2. How does Jesus's willingness to heal despite certain Pharisaic opposition model faithfulness to truth regardless of cost?
3. In what ways does religious tradition blind people to God's clear work, as happened with the Pharisees?

Interlinear Text

τότε	λέγει	τῷ	ἀνθρώπῳ	ἐξέτεινεν	τὴν	χεῖρά	σου·	καὶ
Then	saith	G3588	he to the man	Stretch forth	G3588	hand	thine	And
G5119	G3004		G444	G1614		G5495	G4675	G2532
ἐξέτεινεν	καὶ	ἀποκατεστάθη	ὑγιῆς	ὥς	ἡ	ἄλλη		
Stretch forth	And	it was restored	whole	like as	G3588	the other		
G1614	G2532	G600	G5199	G5613		G243		

Additional Cross-References

Luke 13:13 (Parallel theme): And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

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