

## HANDS OF LOVE

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Luke 24:36-40 (text v. 36—*Behold my hands...*)

A person's hands will reveal much about him.

- Finger prints reveal a person's identity (Job 37:7— *He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work.*).
- A person's handwriting may reveal some things about them.

Hands are used more than any other part of the body. (I know some will say it's the tongue, and for many, that may be true.)

This week my hands will turn the pages of my Bible... write a sermon... drive a car/motorcycle... answer the telephone... send dozens of e-mails ... greet people shaking their hand... pick up a fork to eat with... button my shirt... tie my shoes... lift a cup of coffee to my lips... wave a sign next Saturday... brush my teeth... brush my "hair"... the list goes on.

➡ The hands of Jesus are \_\_\_\_\_ in the Gospels (Mt. 8:3, 15; 9:18, 25; 12:49; 14:31; 19:13, 15; 20:21, 23; 25:33, 34, 41; 27:29; Mk. 1:31, 41; 5:23, 41; 6:2, 5; 7:32; 8:23 25; 9:27; 10:16, 37, 40; Luke 8:54; 13:13; 24:39, 40, 50; John 3:35; 10:28; 13:3; 20:20, 25, 27).

In our text we find the disciples distraught, discouraged, and disconcerted after Christ's death (Luke 24:36-40). Jesus appears to them and they are TERRIFIED and AFFRIGHTED thinking they are seeing a ghost (v. 37)! Jesus calmed their fears with three words—*"Behold my hands..."*

➡ Have you ever felt like these disciples—doubting... discouraged... fearful... filled with anxious thoughts? It is during those times we all need a fresh glimpse of the Lord Jesus — who He is, and what He has done for you. His hands tell the whole story!

In John 20:19-20, we have another account of this event— *"...Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."*

- What was it about seeing His hands that made them glad? They were glad for the same reason you'll be glad when you realize the significance of His hands.

- What did they see when they looked at His Hands? They saw what Thomas saw eight days later (read John 20:25-28).
- What must it have been like to gaze on the hands of the One who had only a few days earlier endured the suffering of Calvary's cross?

➡ Notice 7 things about Jesus' "hands of love."

## I. **Loving hands of divine SOVEREIGNTY.**

### A. The PERCEPTION of Thomas—

When Jesus held up His nail pierced, Thomas saw more than the nail prints. Those scars in Jesus' palms probably reminded him of a practice of the scribes who copied the Scriptures. They had such a reverence for God's name that they would not write it for fear of taking God's name in vain. Instead when a scribe came to the name "Jehovah," he would substitute two small marks, like apostrophes. The empty space between those two marks [ ' ' ] would signify the name of God.

As Thomas looked at those two nail prints held before him and between the nail prints he saw the resurrected and glorified Christ, he was reminded of those two marks in Scripture with the name "Jehovah" implied in between. He immediately "sees" the connection and makes one of the most profound statements in the Bible saying, "*My Lord and my God.*"

### B. The PROFESSION of Thomas. He recognized Christ's —"*My Lord*"—and His —"*my God.*" Jesus accepted Thomas' profession!

### C. The POWER of His hands—

1. These were not the hands of a weakling... Not the hands of a defeated martyr... Not the hands of a frustrated politician.
2. These are the hands that created the heaven and the earth! Isaiah 45:12, "*I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens.*" David wrote in Psalm 95:4-5, "*In **his hand** are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: and **his hands** formed the dry land.*"

3. As the song goes, “He’s got the whole world in His hands!”

➡ You can trust these hands—They are able to do all He said.

## II. **Loving hands of eternal SECURITY** (John 10:24-28).

➡ I’m in His hands and part of His hands.

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In Isaiah 49, Israel was suffering great affliction and facing Babylonian captivity. It was a low time in their history. They thought God had forsaken and forgotten them. They felt God abandoned them. Sometimes a Christian may feel this way during times of adversity. God assured His people saying, *“Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have GRAVEN THEE UPON THE PALMS OF MY HANDS...”* (Isa. 49:13-16). Likewise, every child of God is graven in the hands of Jesus!

! You are secure in His loving hands!

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➡ You can place your life in His hands and be safe. You can rest in His hands.

## III. **Loving hands of gracious SUBSTITUTION** (Ps. 22:16; Isa. 53:5).

➡ Wounded for us. The only One who can save you is the One who has nail prints in His hands. Those scars were put there in my place. I should have been crucified. Look at your hands.

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How many of you have a scar on your hands? I have a couple scars on my hands. One when I was cut by some broken glass and another when my knife slipped while I was whittling wood.

➡ Jesus says, “Look at my hands.” Jesus’ hands were not scarred because of some broken glass or a slip of a knife. His hands are scarred because they were paying the price for your salvation.

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➡ : A former Roman Catholic lady who had become a Christian late in life was dying in the hospital. Her Catholic relatives called the local priest to visit her. When the priest entered her hospital room, He said, “I’m a priest. I’ve come to absolve you of your sins. Would that be OK?” She answered, “Maybe. First let me see your hands.” He

held out his hands and she said, “No, you are not my priest. My priest has nail prints in His hands, and only He can forgive my sins.”

#### **IV. Loving hands of unfailing SUPPORT** (Mt. 14:31).

A. Upholding hands: Psalms 37:23-24—*The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for **the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.***

B. Lifting hands: Mark 1:31— *And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. Mark 9:27— But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.*

#### **V. Loving hands of tender SOLACE and comfort** (Luke 24:50).

A. When ascended back to heaven the Bible says, “*He lifted up his hands, and blessed them*” (Luke 24:50).

➡ His hands were used to confer a blessing—This blessing conveyed comfort, peace, and happiness to His disciples as He departed from them.

B. In Mark 10:16 we see the gentle, tender touch of His hands as He took little children in His arms and “*put his hands upon them, and blessed them.*”

Lord, when I'm weary from straining,  
And burdensome seem Thy commands,  
If my load should lead me to complaining,  
Lord, please show me Thy Hands—  
Thy nail-pierced Hands, Thy cross-torn Hands,  
My Saviour, show me Thy Hands.

#### **VI. Loving hands of healing STRENGTH** (Mk. 1:40-41; 6:2-5).

A. Jesus' hands (lepers/unclean). Jesus did not have to touch lepers. He could have healed them from a hundred yards away. But He touched them.

➡ “Lord, don't touch that leper. He's unclean. What's he's got might get on You. ” Instead, Jesus touched the leper and what Jesus had got on the leper!

- B. His touch changed lives. His hands never touched anything that He did not change it.
- C. "HE TOUCHED ME!"

**VI. Loving hands of our SALVATION** (Isa. 59:1—*"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save..."*).

- A. These are the hands that bled, to save your soul. No matter what you've done, His hand can save you, if you'll take it by faith!
- B. We are saved by His hand, not our own hand!

**VII. Loving hands of invitation STRETCHED forth to you.**

- Romans 10:21—*"All day long I have stretched forth my hands..."*
- Proverbs 1:24— *I have called, and ye refused; I have **stretched out my hand**, and no man regarded.*
- A. Christ's hand's were stretched out on the cross.
- B. Those same hands are stretched forth to you today saying, *"Come unto Me!"*
- C. If you die and go to hell, it won't be God's fault. It will be because you never took His outreached hand by faith.

: TODAY, Christ has no body on earth, but your body—no hands, but your hands; no feet, but your feet; no tongue by your tongue. He does His work through your hands. Yours are the feet that He goes about doing good. He uses your tongue to speak His Word.

Sometimes after church on Sunday evenings when the weather is nice I enjoy taking a walk with Barb around our block. While we walk, I usually hold her hand. As I hold her hand, I think how her hands have taken care of our children/grandchildren... cooked delicious meals... mended clothes... designed church publications... writing encouragement cards. I see in her hands the hands of Jesus—serving, sacrificing, and witnessing to God's love.

What are your hands doing for Jesus? Ask yourself: How are my hands the hands of Jesus? How does He want to use my hands today? How can my hands be a witness to the love of Christ?