

Open Hands~ Mark 10: 1-31

Main Theme: Three scenes: marriage, children, possessions. Different subjects, same question underneath them all: **Will you receive the kingdom of God with open hands, on Jesus' terms, or hold life in a clenched fist on your own terms?** Trust or control.

1. Open your hands in your marriage — God's authority.

God made marriage. God defines marriage. God joins husband and wife together. Marriage is something we receive from Him, not something we rewrite when faithfulness becomes costly. Scripture recognizes grievous covenant-breaking through sexual immorality and abandonment, but **the exceptions cannot change the rule**.

And this is why Mark puts this here. The kingdom is received the same way. You don't define it. You don't negotiate its terms. You don't ask, "How much authority can I keep?" **You open your hands**. God says, "This belongs to Me. I made it. Trust Me with it."

For married people: don't begin with, "How can I get out?" Begin with, "How can my marriage display Christ's covenant-keeping love?" For singles, the same principle applies to sexuality and chastity. Is God allowed to define your body, or are you? **Open your hands. Receive what God has given. Submit to His design.**

2. Open your hands to the children — and become like one yourself.

People bring children to Jesus, and the disciples push them away. Jesus becomes indignant: "Let the children come to me... for to such belongs the kingdom of God." Then: "Whoever does not **receive** the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

Notice the word: **receive**. A child brings no résumé, bargaining power, moral record, or claim. A child receives because someone stronger gives. That is the opposite of the Pharisees. They came with arguments and control. The children simply come.

Parents can grip children so tightly that fear begins to masquerade as faithfulness. We try to engineer outcomes only God can give. Open your hands. Bring them to Jesus. Do your children see that Christ is precious to you? Do they see it in your marriage, priorities, worship, and life?

3. Open your hands until they are empty — and let Christ fill them.

Now comes the rich man, the opposite of the children. He runs, kneels, and asks, "Good Teacher, what must I **do** to inherit eternal life?"

That question reveals him: **What must I do?** Give me the requirement. Give me the list. I can accomplish this.

"Jesus, looking at him, loved him." Jesus loves him enough to expose the idol: "You lack one thing. Go, sell all that you have... and come, follow me." Jesus isn't teaching salvation by poverty. He is showing this man what owns him. He can obey as long as obedience doesn't touch what he loves most. There is the tragedy: eternal life stands before him saying, "Follow Me," and he walks away because **his hands are full**.

The children have nothing, and Jesus says the kingdom belongs to such as these. The rich man has everything and cannot receive what he needs.

Only empty hands can receive Christ. Christianity begins with the confession that **I bring nothing that can save me**.

The disciples ask, "Then who can be saved?" Exactly. In our natural state, we will never gladly surrender our idols because we love them. We need God Himself to intervene. We need the Spirit to make us new and give us a new appetite, to make Christ more precious than money, praise, comfort, reputation, or control.

Do your possessions possess you, or do they belong to God? Are you a steward or a slave? Abraham was blessed to be a blessing. So which life will it be — the clenched fist or the open hand?

Open your hands in your marriage. Open your hands with your children. Open your hands with your possessions, plans, reputation, righteousness, and future. Ask the Spirit to make Christ your greatest treasure.